

EPOCH INSIGHT



**Inside the
CCP's Military
Balloon Program**

By Eva Fu



A Glimpse Into China's Balloon Program

MOST AMERICANS BECAME AWARE OF Chinese spy balloons for the first time in the past few weeks. But the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been developing and using balloon, or aerostat, technology for decades.

As early as the 1970s, efforts were already underway at the state-run Chinese Academy of Sciences to explore high-altitude balloons.

The CCP's military has a close relationship with universities and civilian organizations, as do the military and companies that provide technology and components—sometimes stolen from the United States.

There's high strategic value in aerostats for the Chinese military. Compared to airplanes or satellites, balloons are cheaper and easier to maneuver, can carry heavier payloads and cover a wider area, and are harder to detect. They consume less energy, allowing them to loiter in a target area for an extended period of time. And critically, they often aren't caught by radars, so they can easily evade an enemy's air defense system or be mistaken for UFOs.

"In the future, balloon platforms may become like submarines in the deep sea: a silent killer that invokes terror," the People's Liberation Army newspaper has stated.

Western countries are also developing balloon technology, but China's authoritarianism gives the latter a lawless freedom.

"Democratic countries are bound by law from infringing other nations' airspace," Su Tze-yun, a Taiwan-based defense expert, told Epoch Insight's Eva Fu. "This is why the same technology, once it's in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party, would become a threat."

Read Epoch Insight's report on Page 52 about China's balloon program and learn about some of the people and entities supporting it.

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-chief



ON THE COVER

A jet flies by a Chinese spy balloon as it floats off the coast of South Carolina on Feb. 4.

RANDALL HILL/REUTERS

EPOCH INSIGHT

JASPER FAKKERT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CHANNALY PHILIPP
LIFE & TRADITION, TRAVEL EDITOR

CHRISY TRUDEAU
MIND & BODY EDITOR

CRYSTAL SHI
HOME, FOOD EDITOR

SHARON KILARSKI
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

BILL LINDSEY
LUXURY EDITOR

FEI MENG, BIBA KAYEWICH
ILLUSTRATORS

SHANSHAN HU
PRODUCTION

CONTACT US
THE EPOCH TIMES ASSOCIATION INC.
229 W. 28TH ST., FL. 7
NEW YORK, NY 10001

SUBSCRIPTIONS
READEPOCHINSIGHT.COM

GENERAL INQUIRIES, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
HELP.THEEPOCHTIMES.COM

ADVERTISING
ADVERTISENOW@EPOCHTIMES.COM

(USPS21-800) IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE EPOCH MEDIA GROUP, 9550 FLAIR DR. SUITE 411, EL MONTE, CA 91731-2922. PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT EL MONTE, CA, AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. **POSTMASTER:** SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE EPOCH TIMES, 229 W. 28TH STREET, FLOOR 5, NEW YORK, NY 10001.

Contents

30 | Bodycam Footage
A police officer says his actions on Jan. 6, 2021, only enraged the crowd.

44 | Wind and Solar
A study reveals that Americans like the idea, but not in their neighborhoods.

46 | Missouri Bill
A new bill states that teachers shouldn't encourage children to get sex changes.

48 | Ohio Train
Security video footage shows the train may have been on fire before it derailed.

58 | Spending Cuts
Sen. Rick Scott's idea isn't more extreme than Joe Biden's 1984 proposal.

59 | China Threat
China's growing nuclear arsenal should alert Washington.

60 | Debt Ceiling
Washington has never missed a debt payment, even in hard times.

61 | Progressive Ideologies
Americans tell CEOs to drop the "woke" and get back to work.

62 | Government Spending
More taxes aren't the solution to the U.S. budget deficit.



EPOCH INSIGHT

- Features
- 14 | College Indoctrination**
Conservative parents describe radical belief changes and seek deprogrammers.
 - 22 | Men's Spaces**
Men see themselves being shut out as a byproduct of cancel culture.
 - 34 | Medical Board Power**
State boards are targeting doctors who prescribed ivermectin, lawyers say.
 - THE LEAD 52 | China's Balloons**
Balloons have been part of China's military toolbox for years.

A vendor sells balloons along a street in Bangkok on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day.

LAUREN DECICCA/GETTY IMAGES

63 | Russian Oil Cap
An embargo on Russian oil helps no country except India.

64 | A Parent's Experience
How parents can protect their children from gender activism in schools.

68 | Details Matter
There are no such things as trivial details—they all matter.

70 | Muy Bueno Hacienda
A charming mission-style home in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

72 | Ecuador's Exotic Capital
Blending Incan and Spanish culture, Quito is a fascinating destination.

75 | A French Quarter Classic
A Vieux Carré cocktail is a little bit of New Orleans in a glass.

76 | Pay It Forward
Legacies are a way of making the world better after we are gone.

79 | Workplace Wonders
These devices can quickly make your office a lot more productive.

83 | Spread Kindness
Living in a nicer world begins with us setting good examples.

SPOTLIGHT

'Olympic' Ship

A PIECE OF THE HULL OF THE BELEM, one of the oldest three-masted ships in Europe, is lifted by a crane during restoration works in Saint-Nazaire, France, on Feb. 13. The Belem will carry the Olympic flame across the Mediterranean Sea from Athens to Marseille in April 2024, where the torch relay will begin ahead of the Paris Olympics.

PHOTO BY LOIC VENANCE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



The Week



An aerial view of a coal mine with wind turbines in the background in Oakland, Md., on Aug. 23, 2022.

PHOTO BY CHIP SOMODEVILLA / GETTY IMAGES

 SHEN YUN SHOP
I LOVE SHEN YUN

Great Culture Revived.

Fine Jewelry | Italian Scarves | Home Decor

ShenYunShop.com Tel: 1.800.208.2384

Wind and Solar in Theory, Not Practice 44

Cult Doctrine

Tactics are used on college campuses to radically change students' beliefs and demeanor, parents say. 14

Absolute Power

Medical boards use their authority to target doctors who prescribe alternative COVID-19 treatments. 34

Derailment Disaster

Video footage shows that an Ohio train carrying toxic chemicals burned for 20 miles before derailment. 48

INSIDE

“We are going to take the Twitter files ... and use that as a road map to go after ... all Big Tech that is trying to silence conservatives.”

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), in an interview on Fox News, as he announced he is starting an “oversight investigation” into major social media and search engine companies.



30 YEARS

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), who has served more than 30 years in office, has announced that she will not seek reelection in 2024.

285 YEARS

A Pennsylvania man who posed as his dead father faces a maximum sentence of 285 years in prison and fines of more than \$3.7 million after pleading guilty in federal court to hiding his father’s death to steal his retirement benefits.

“No American should be denied access to critical care based on a personal medical decision.”



Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), about a proposal to ban federal funding to institutions that deny care to patients for not having a COVID-19 vaccine, in a statement.

70%

Egg prices have gone up more than 70 percent in annualized terms, while many food categories were up by double digits, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



26 MILLION

The Biden administration plans to withdraw **26 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve this fiscal year**, effectively pushing the reserves to their lowest level in four decades.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; RIGHT PAGE FROM TOP: ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY; MADE VANDERVOORT/AFPA VIA GETTY IMAGES

6.4 Percent—The U.S. annual inflation rate eased to 6.4 percent in January, from 6.5 percent in December, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, higher than economists’ expectations of 6.2 percent.



A commercial truck tanker rolled over on Interstate 10 in Tucson, Ariz., on Feb. 14.

ARIZONA

Arizona Shelter-in-Place Order Reinstated by Officials After Hazmat Leak

ARIZONA OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED that a shelter-in-place order was reinstated after a crash resulted in a spill of hazardous chemicals—coming days after a train derailed and released toxic materials in Ohio.

“Unified Command has reinstated the shelter-in-place order for a one-mile perimeter around the incident. While crews were attempting to remove the load from the commercial vehicle, gassing occurred. Interstate 10 remains closed in both directions between Kolb & Rita roads in Tucson,” the Arizona Department of Public Safety wrote in an update.

The driver of the vehicle that was transporting the chemicals was killed in the crash, officials said.

Officials say the chemical involved in this incident is nitric acid, which is used to manufacture ammonium nitrate for fertilizers as well as plastics and dyes. Exposure to the substance can cause eye and skin irritation, and more severe exposure can result in pneumonitis, bronchitis, dental erosion, and delayed pulmonary edema, according to the National Library of Medicine.

TAX

IRS Issues Long-Awaited Clarification on Taxing Stimulus Checks

THE IRS HAS ISSUED long-awaited guidance about how to handle state stimulus payments after it issued an alert advising millions of taxpayers to delay filing tax returns until it could provide “additional clarification” about the payments’ taxability.

In a statement, the agency said that most relief checks issued by states last year aren’t subject to federal taxes.

All told, taxpayers in 17 states don’t have to report last year’s stimulus checks, while in another four states, many people will be able to avoid paying federal taxes on their relief payments if they meet certain requirements.

VACCINE

FDA Reveals Why It Changed End Date of Study of Post-COVID Vaccination

THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) has changed the end date of a study that it’s requiring Pfizer to conduct regarding heart inflammation after COVID vaccination because the company requested a delay, the agency says.

When the FDA approved Pfizer’s vaccine in August 2021, it said Pfizer was required to conduct postmarketing studies to evaluate the safety of the vaccine.

One of the studies was meant to assess post-vaccination subclinical myocarditis, or heart inflammation, following a third dose of the vaccine in people aged 16 to 30.

That study was supposed to be completed on June 30, 2022, with Pfizer submitting a final report on the results to the FDA by Dec. 31, 2022.

After the deadline passed, the FDA quietly changed the end date to June 30, 2023.

2024 ELECTION

Nikki Haley Announces 2024 Presidential Bid

FORMER SOUTH CAROLINA GOV.

Nikki Haley has issued a video statement in which she officially threw her hat into the ring for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, becoming the first major challenger to former President Donald Trump.

“I’m Nikki Haley and I’m running for president,” Haley, also a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, says in the video, which she shared on social media and on her campaign website.



Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley speaks in Las Vegas on Nov. 19, 2022.



A view of the aftermath of the deadly earthquake in Hatay, Turkey, on Feb. 9.

MIDDLE EAST

Turkey Promises Swift Reconstruction After Earthquake; Syrians Seek Aid

TURKEY SAYS IT will demolish buildings heavily damaged by a huge earthquake and swiftly start a mammoth reconstruction effort, as thousands of families struggle to survive amid the rubble and freezing conditions.

Rescuers who flew in to save people trapped in the debris were starting to pack up and go, though one woman was pulled out of a collapsed building on Feb. 15 after being buried for 222 hours.

In neighboring Syria's opposition-held northwest, already suffering from more than a decade of bombardment, the earthquake left many fending for themselves amid the rubble, with aid slowed by the complex politics of humanitarian assistance there.

The combined death toll in the two countries has topped 43,000, and millions are in need of humanitarian aid, with many survivors having been left homeless in near-freezing winter temperatures. The number of new rescues is diminishing.

US-RUSSIA

US Intercepts 4 Russian Military Planes That Entered Alaska's Air Defense Zone

U.S. FIGHTER JETS intercepted four Russian military aircraft that entered Alaska's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) on Feb. 13.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), which oversees North American airspace and its defense, responded to the incursion by the Russian bombers and fighters with two F-16 fighters and five other supporting aircraft, including two F-35s, according to a statement.

The NORAD forces successfully intercepted the planes.

The NORAD statement said the action was more routine than escalatory, as Russian forces attempt to penetrate the country's ADIZ several times a year in an effort to test U.S. responses.

EUROPE

European Parliament Approves Law to Ban Sale of New Gas, Diesel Cars by 2035

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT has formally approved a law to ban the sale of new gas and diesel cars in the European Union from 2035, in a bid to achieve net-zero carbon-dioxide emissions from vehicles.

The new legislation is part of the EU's broader climate ambition: to achieve a 100 percent reduction in emissions for new passenger cars and vans by 2035 within the EU's 27-country bloc.

UK

Nicola Sturgeon Says She's Resigning as Scotland's 1st Minister

NICOLA STURGEON has announced she is resigning as first minister of Scotland, a month after the UK Parliament blocked radical gender reforms that had been approved by the Scottish government, a move she described as a "full-frontal attack."

On Jan. 17, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said the UK government was making a Section 35 order prohibiting the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill from gaining royal assent in its current form.

Under the legislation, Scotland became the first country where people could legally change their gender based on simple self-identification.

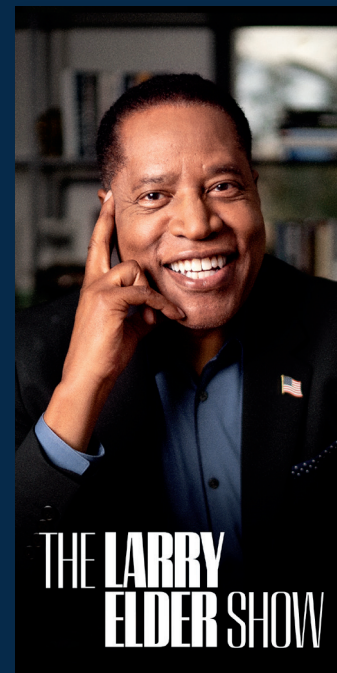
But Sturgeon came under pressure from campaigners, members of Parliament, and Downing Street over concern that a transgender rapist convicted of attacks on two women was set to be sent to a female jail.

Sturgeon eventually confirmed that the rapist would be held in a men's jail prior to sentencing.



Nicola Sturgeon makes the announcement at Bute House in Edinburgh, UK, on Feb. 15.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: EMILIE MADRI/REUTERS; JANE BARLOW - POOL/GETTY IMAGES



INCLUDED IN YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

EPOCH TV

Exclusive interviews, shows, documentaries, movies, and more.

Visit **THEEPOCHTIMES.COM**

The Week in Photos



1. Tourists pose for a photo as a plane flies overhead on Mai Khao Beach, Thailand, on Feb. 13.



2. Athletes compete in the Nike High School Girl's Invitational Mile during the 115th Millrose Games at The Armory Track in New York on Feb. 11.



3. A Ukrainian serviceman walks with the flowers and balloon he bought for Valentine's Day in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, on Feb. 14.

4. Bobi, a 30-year-old Portuguese dog that has been declared the world's oldest dog by Guinness World Records, in the village of Conqueiros, Portugal, on Feb. 12.

5. A car burns on a street during nationwide rallies against a deeply unpopular pensions overhaul, in Paris on Feb. 11.

6. Surfers head out into large waves from Cyclone Gabrielle at Goat Island Marine Reserve in Auckland, New Zealand, on Feb. 13.



COUNTERTOP/CKW/ISE FROM TOP L.; MADAREE TOH/ALFA/AFIP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES; YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AFIP VIA GETTY IMAGES; PATRICIA DE MELO MOREIRA/AFIP VIA GETTY IMAGES; CHRISTOPHE ARCHAMBAULT/7/AFIP VIA GETTY IMAGES; FIONA GOODALL/GETTY IMAGES

College students face psychological manipulation techniques to get them to believe ideas counter to their upbringing, an expert says.

PHOTO BY SCOTT OLSON/
GETTY IMAGES

Conservative parents describe radical belief changes, seek deprogrammers

STAY
OUTRAGED

PROGRESSIVE IDEOLOGY

College Education Is Like *Cult Indoctrination*: Parents

By Darlene McCormick Sanchez

IT WAS FREEZING IN WORCESTER, Massachusetts, when Beth Pensky pulled her SUV into the dark parking lot of her daughter's apartment complex after a marathon 24-hour drive.

She'd loaded her German shepherd and Yorkie in the vehicle and closed the gym she runs in Florida for the week, embarking on what she saw as a do-or-die mission to see her adult children again, she told *The Epoch Times*.

After they'd gone off to college, she saw a startling change in her son's and daughter's values. They'd distanced themselves from her. And she feared that the estrangement was more profound than the typical tension between parents and their children growing into adulthood.

But she never expected what happened next.

Instead of opening the door to her apartment and embracing her mother, Pensky's daughter—who had been alerted to the visit by a call from her father—opened the door looking fearful and clutching a baseball bat.

In that moment, Pensky feared that something far more sinister had come between her and her child. It's the same realization that's causing parents around the country to enlist the help of specialists trained in deprogramming people brainwashed by cults, experts told *The Epoch Times*.

Those experts disagreed on whether "woke" beliefs of the political left qualify as a cult. But they did agree that the tactics used to spread those beliefs mirror strategies used by cults to indoctrinate followers and solidify allegiance.

Cult or Cultural Movement?

Parents seem split along political lines on whether they approve of students being taught so-called "progressive"



A childhood photo of Beth Pensky's daughter and son. After both went off to college, Pensky saw a startling change in their values.

ideas. One that's popular on college campuses is that racism is inherent in America and must be countered to form a better society.

Religion is criticized by some historians, too, for its alliance with Western civilization, seen as treating native populations unfairly.

Still, some conservatives hold that woke culture uses coercive brainwashing tactics developed by communist revolutionaries.

"It is a cult," James Lindsay, an author who has written about critical race theory and Marxism, told *The Epoch Times*.

Lindsay, creator of the "New Discourses" website and podcast, argues that "wokeism" is a cult because it reprograms a person's thinking and paints as dangerous anyone who might resist that belief system.

College students in particular face psychological manipulation techniques to get them to believe ideas counter to their upbringing, Lindsay said.

On-Campus Transformation

Pensky's daughter, now 27, went to the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Her son, now 24, attended Northeastern University in Boston.

In college, both young adults developed strong new beliefs that shocked their mother. Soon, everything she said to them seemed to provoke a disagreement.

Both came to reject God and profess

One 'progressive' idea that's popular on college campuses is that racism is inherent in America and must be countered to form a better society.

atheism. Her daughter wasn't concerned about the COVID-19 vaccine and couldn't accept their mother's hesitancy. They objected to her move to Florida because, they insisted, that's where "white supremacists live."

"They'd say, 'You're moving down to a racist area. There are too many Confederate flags around. It's very unsafe,'" Pensky said. "All this rhetoric would start coming out of their mouths."

It also became clear that her daughter's college roommate was, in fact, her romantic partner.

Instinct nudged Pensky to drive up the Atlantic coast. She'd make things right with a visit, she told herself. She and her children had once been so close.

While driving, she imagined a reunion with hugs from her son and daughter. But when her daughter opened the door, she asked if Pensky had a gun. She seemed afraid.

"She opened the door with a bat in her hand," Pensky said, still incredulous.

Pensky stood there shaking with emotion and disbelief, she said. How could her daughter think she was a threat?

After some convincing, the young woman let her mother and the two dogs into her home. They sat at the kitchen table for hours, talking about their differences. At times, Pensky wept.

"I'm here because I love you," Pensky told her daughter. "I don't want to argue. I want to talk to you!"

Grappling With Groupthink

Pensky didn't understand what possibly could have destroyed her relationship with her adult children until she heard in November 2022 about Annabella Rockwell.

Rockwell has been speaking publicly of her belief that she was brainwashed while attending an elite private college. Now 30, she works as development director for PragerU, a nonprofit organization that promotes conservative points of view on a wide range of topics through short educational videos that reach millions online.

But Rockwell's life nearly went in a very different direction.

She said that under pressure from friends and instructors, she turned away from her conservative beliefs. She began to reject her belief in God while



Beth Pensky drove from Florida to Massachusetts to reunite with her adult children. Pensky feels that her children distanced themselves from her while attending college.

Beth Pensky's son attended Northeastern University in Boston.



attending college. She started seeing gender as a choice. She felt convinced that America was a nation built on racism and oppression.

When Pensky heard Rockwell's testimony, she realized what likely had caused the division between her and her children.

"I always had my suspicions [that it had to do with college], because I was extremely tight with my kids, and for them to turn around and not speak to me without giving me reasons—I knew it was something that had to do with the school," Pensky said. "I just didn't know where the influence was. Was it professors or friends?"

Rockwell grew up on Manhattan's Upper East Side before her family moved to Palm Beach, Florida.

She started at Mount Holyoke College as a bubbly college freshman who loved God, her family, and America, she told *The Epoch Times*.

But soon she was an atheist battling depression. She came to believe that gender was fluid. She felt oppressed by America and alienated from her family.

"It is very heavy to think everyone is out to get you, and that you have the weight of the world and all of society's injustice is on your shoulders," Rockwell said.

She was anxious, too, because her new belief was that America was so morally corrupt that it needed to be rebuilt from the bottom up.

Feminist professors at her all-women's college taught that men had

subverted women's rights, Rockwell said. So when she expressed support for then-presidential candidate Mitt Romney, a Republican running against Democratic contender Barack Obama, her friends were fuming.

A Republican win, they insisted, would erase all progress in women's rights, she said. "I was really shamed and pressured by my peers."

Friends and professors talked about religion, portraying it as a way to control people. Some repeated the views of Karl Marx, who called religious faith "the opiate of the masses."

"[If] you hear it over and over again, you eventually believe it," Rockwell said. "I totally stopped believing in God."

The drinking that is common in college helps make young adults more susceptible to ideologies that clash with their upbringing, she believes. Looking back, she thinks that alcohol made her vulnerable to the incessant push to accept woke ideas.

"There was not a class that I took that

didn't have some sort of leftist bias in it with the goal of me believing that men are evil, [and] Americans are racist," she said.

Conservatives she knew on campus moved off campus or transferred to other universities, she said.

By the time she graduated, she'd been conditioned to aim to "change the world from the inside out," she said. The mission: spread the beliefs she adopted in

"[If] you hear it over and over again, you eventually believe it. I totally stopped believing in God."

Annabella Rockwell,
development director, PragerU



Annabella Rockwell (R) with her father, Thorson, and mother, Melinda. "There was not a class that I took that didn't have some sort of leftist bias in it," Rockwell said.

college into the workplace.

Pivot Point

Her belief in woke ideology began to crack in 2020 during the Black Lives Matter riots that resulted in millions of dollars in damage to buildings and property. The looting and burning of neighborhoods didn't make sense to her.

Browsing for information about police and racism, she clicked on a PragerU video called "Are the Police Racist?"

She began to feel that her new liberal and progressive views made less sense than her old conservative views, which seemed to represent truth.

It took seven years to find her way back to her faith, family, and country, she said.

Annabella Rockwell's story is similar to those of six conservative university students in Florida, who spoke to The Epoch Times on condition of anonymity. The students described their troubles navigating an anti-white, anti-Christian, anti-American culture on their campuses.

One of the students, who asked to be called Mia, described being forced to repeat the "leftist political views" of her professor on race, gender ideology, and other topics, in order to pass the class. The more she repeated the ideas she didn't believe, the easier it became—and the harder it was to remember why she'd found those ideas objectionable. She worried she was a victim of brainwashing techniques, she told The Epoch Times.

'Cult Indoctrination Centers'

Professors often tell impressionable teens that their parents and the establishment have hidden the "truth" about America's roots, race, and gender, Lindsay said.

It's true, the Florida students affirmed.

Colleges and universities "are cult indoctrination centers of the first order," Lindsay said.

He added that wokeism is pushed with techniques similar to those used in Mao Zedong's communist takeover of China, pointing to the work of author Robert Jay Lifton.

For the book "Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism—A Study of 'Brainwashing' in China," Lifton interviewed people who were released from Chinese prisons or kicked out of the country for failing to submit to re-

FROM L'ANNIE WATT, COURTESY OF MELINDA ROCKWELL, BRENDON FALOW/THE EPOCH TIMES

education.

One of the Chinese communist oppressors' techniques was "milieu control," a mind-control tactic that keeps members isolated from society as a way to deepen ties to an ideology.

Another was the "struggle session"—public shaming and humiliation used to crush ideas in opposition to Mao's Cultural Revolution.

These tactics are used today on university campuses, Lindsay said.

Struggle sessions occur when professors and peers pressure students to accept ideas now common on campuses. One that's popular is that America was founded on racism and continues to oppress women, gays, and minorities. If students refuse to profess acceptance of those ideas, they're often bullied and ostracized socially.

"This is exactly like the struggle session, the social environment they erected in the prisons and schools in China," Lindsay said.

Alternative viewpoints on campus are often eliminated by shouting down or canceling people, he said. That explains why conservative views are virtually nonexistent on most campuses.

"They've converted our universities into brainwashing centers," he said.

The goal of communism—often called socialism, Marxism, or progressive policy—is to break down the family, religion, the existing culture, and its values, Lindsay said.

A communist takeover is often called "the long march through the institutions."

Lindsay believes the march is complete, because wokeism has infiltrated America's institutions, including the workplace, education, entertainment, medicine, law, the media, and the military.

Wokeism Is 'Cult-Like'

Rick Ross, a 40-year deprogrammer of cult members, has helped families break loved ones away from cults such as the Church of Scientology and the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas.

Ross told The Epoch Times that he has seen more calls from parents worried about their college students adopting a passion for woke ideas in the past few years, but believing wholeheartedly in woke culture does not equate to



James Lindsay, co-founder of New Discourses, says that colleges and universities "are cult indoctrination centers of the first order."

"They've converted our universities into brainwashing centers."

James Lindsay, author

belonging to a cult.

He added that likewise, the MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement, started by former President Donald Trump, isn't a cult, either, despite the claims of some.

Destructive cults have three characteristics, he said. The most salient feature is a totalitarian leader who becomes an object of worship.

"They create unreasonable fears of the outside world" in followers, Ross said. "They socially isolate them, and they use coercive persuasion techniques that can be identified."

The leader knowingly and methodically manipulates followers who are then exploited and harmed through such things as providing free labor.

And cults demand members to believe their way of thinking is the only correct way, he said.

Cult doctrine requires members to see the world through the group's beliefs and confess "wrong" thoughts. People who leave the group are often shunned, he said.

"There are some of those things that are evident in the woke movement," Ross said. "In that sense, you could look at the woke movement as in certain aspects being cult-like or cultic."

But labeling people who believe in that movement as "brainwashed" only produces more polarization, he cautioned.

Signs of Indoctrination

Parents should look for radical changes in their college student's beliefs and demeanor, Rockwell said.

Young adults often go off to college happy and excited, but come back during a break seeming serious and joyless, she said. Radical changes in their beliefs may be to blame.

If they say things like "you don't understand the horrors of this country and world," it is cause for alarm, she said. They may denounce their long-held religious faith.

Her mother, Melinda Rockwell, told The Epoch Times that she consulted with several deprogrammers to get her daughter back.

"These people smashed my soul—they smashed her soul," Melinda Rockwell said of the influencers at ❖



Students at the Yang Dezhi “Red Army” elementary school in Wenshui, Guizhou Province, China, on Nov. 7, 2016. “Wokeism” is pushed with techniques similar to those used in communist China, an expert says.

Some conservatives hold that ‘woke’ culture uses coercive brainwashing tactics developed by communist revolutionaries.

her daughter’s college, the same school she had attended.

Melinda recalled that Annabella’s friends at school ridiculed a video she sent her daughter showing images of her ice skating through the years to celebrate her journey from childhood to becoming a college graduate. They assured Annabella that her mother just wanted to be a social climber, that her mother didn’t love her because she wanted a perfect Barbie doll instead of a daughter.

Advice on Bridging the Gap

Parents should not automatically affirm radical new beliefs of their children—especially if they seem harmful or based on falsehoods, Annabella Rockwell advised.

Instead, it’s best to ask questions that will remind them of their roots—a time before their views changed, she said.

When her uncle reached out and invited her to lunch with love and not judgment, it helped “just knowing that that line was still open,” she said.

Rockwell began reading more and soon recognized that her new beliefs were wrong. She realized the foolishness of people who’d taught her that, for instance, all whites are oppressors.

The consequences of affirming radical new beliefs can be devastating, Rockwell said.

A college friend’s mother took the advice of a therapist and affirmed her daughter’s new beliefs on gender ideology.

The girl would likely snap out of it, the therapist reassured her.

But that didn’t happen, Rockwell said. Now, her old friend is trying to transition to a man.

It helped Rockwell return to her long-held values to reconnect with people from her childhood, such as a Christian tennis coach she respected, who stayed in touch via email.

Students committed to their long-held conservative beliefs should consider attending colleges more aligned with their values, such as Hillsdale

College in Michigan, Rockwell advised.

And parents should keep their children busy in high school and involve them in sports and church, her mother said.

Lindsay urged parents to reconsider sending their children to college at all and to remove them if they see a troubling change in values.

Ties That Bind

If adult children do show their values have changed dramatically, it can be difficult for parents. But it’s important to stay connected, he said.

Lindsay recently heard from a Canadian mother who won back her three children with home cooking.

“She said, ‘Food is love,’ and baked her way back into her kids’ lives by making cookies and cakes and having them around for tea,” he said

Parents should not confront or argue with their adult children because it will drive them away, Ross said.

Instead, parents should tell their children they love them but don’t fully understand their new beliefs, then suggest they talk about it at some point. He said that in some cases, a family therapist might help.

The main objective is to keep the lines of communication open.

A Parent’s Pain

Beth Pinsky was encouraged after talking to her daughter until 2 a.m. on that November night.

The young woman offered to help her find a hotel, but Pinsky declined because of the dogs.

Instead, she spent a fitful night trying to doze in the freezing SUV, snuggling with the two dogs for warmth.

The next day, she and her daughter walked the dogs together, talked, and hugged.

“She started crying,” Pinsky said. “And she’s like, ‘I’m so sorry. I really miss you.’”

They agreed to keep politics and religion off-limits, and they kept in touch through phone and video calls after the visit.

Two weeks after she returned to Florida, Pinsky told her daughter about how happy she was to have reconnected. That’s when her daughter crushed her, saying the feeling wasn’t mutual.

The young woman said she was still

dealing with the trauma of her mother showing up at her door unannounced. She added, “And I feel that this is just not going to work out.”

She said she’d felt pressure to give her mother a hug during their reunion.

“I was so involved in their lives,” Pinsky said, trying to understand the rejection. They vacationed together, shared belief in God, and didn’t discuss politics when the children were growing up.

After the children went to college, Pinsky noticed that her daughter’s increased interest in LGBT topics coincided with college writing assignments on such topics as how bisexuals are portrayed in the media. She joined an LGBT club as a sophomore.

She talked of America’s racism in a history assignment. One of her reading lists included books on how white supremacy controls America, Pinsky said.

Pinsky’s son started advocating for “women’s rights” as a freshman and became “hypervigilant,” she said, about climate change, a topic that hadn’t concerned him before. His anger flared if she didn’t recycle at home.

When her children came to Florida for a visit, she wanted them to watch a Christian movie on creationism. Her daughter shouted during the film that it was “stupid,” Pinsky said. Her son indicated he no longer believed in God.

She tried to stay in touch with her son with daily text messages after his last visit to Florida. But one day, she got no response.

Several days passed, and Pinsky was so worried she sent one last text saying she was going to contact police to check on him.

He finally texted her back saying he was busy and would contact her when he could, adding that he didn’t take kindly

to her idea of calling the police, she said. She said she never heard from him after that.

Neither of Pinsky’s children returned phone calls from The Epoch Times. Likewise, Mount Holyoke College didn’t respond to a request for comment.

Neither the University of Massachusetts–Amherst nor Northeastern University responded to requests for comment.

Pinsky blames campus culture for her shattered relationship with her children. By sharing her story, she hopes to help others avoid the same pain. And she hopes schools that seek to steer students away from traditional values eventually stand empty.

“If somebody would have given me the heads up like I’m doing now,” she said, “I would have thought differently about trade schools, homeschooling,” or online studies—to keep her children close. ■

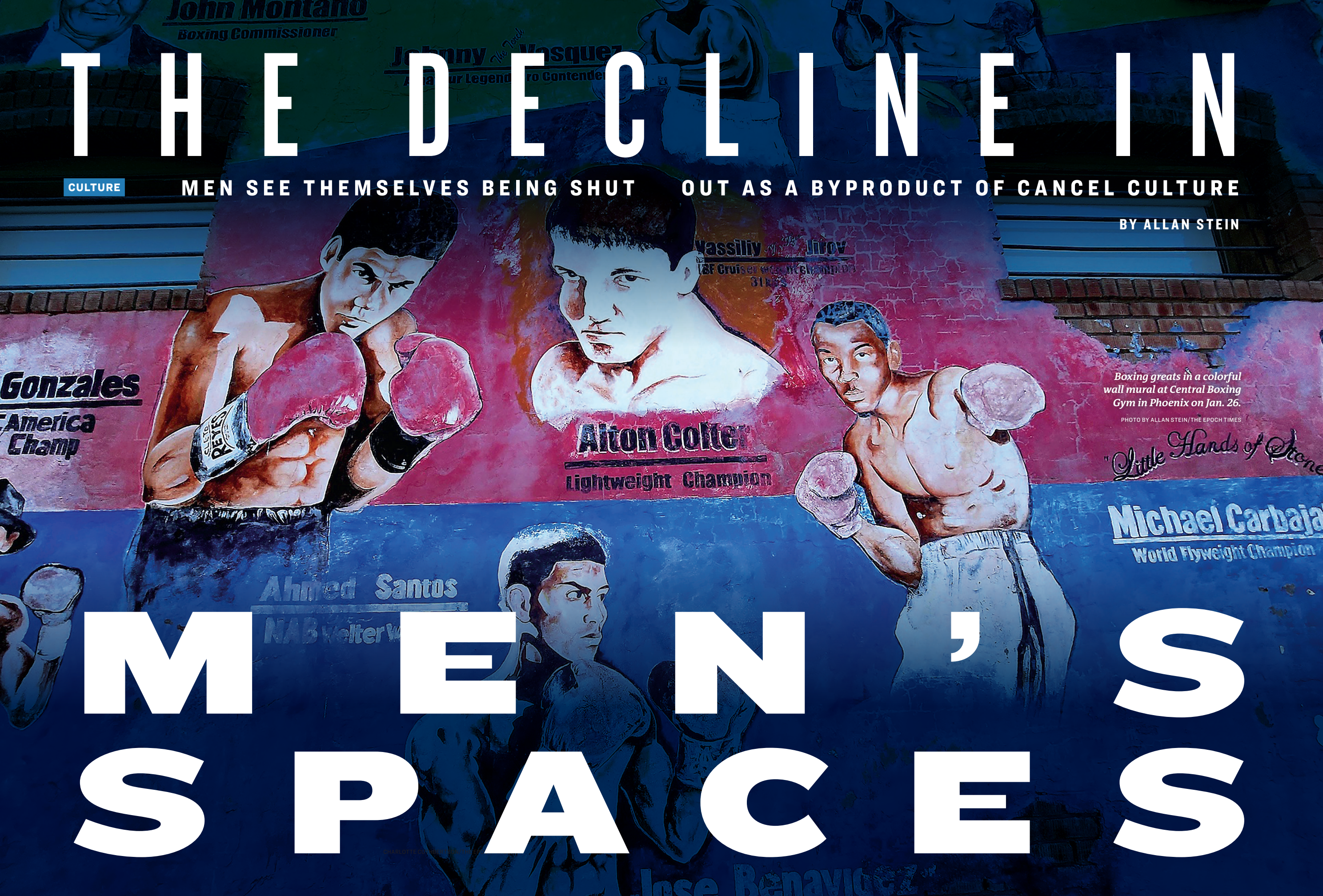


Protesters gather at a rally at the University of Virginia organized by the group Students Act Against White Supremacy in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 11, 2018. Conservative students have described their troubles navigating an anti-white, anti-Christian, and anti-American culture on their campuses.

THE DECLINE IN

CULTURE MEN SEE THEMSELVES BEING SHUT OUT AS A BYPRODUCT OF CANCEL CULTURE

BY ALLAN STEIN



Boxing greats in a colorful wall mural at Central Boxing Gym in Phoenix on Jan. 26.

PHOTO BY ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES

Little Hands of Stone

Michael Carbajal
World Flyweight Champion

MEN'S SPACES

Gonzales
America Champ

Ahmed Santos
NAB Welterweight

Alton Colter
Lightweight Champion

Vassily Litov
IBF Cruiserweight Champion

Jose Benavidez

PHOENIX—BRIAN VIERA DOESN'T pull any punches when discussing his future in boxing.

After a year of intense training at Central Boxing Gym in Phoenix, he confidently proclaims his destiny to become the world's next light-weight champion.

"You heard it in here first," Viera said wryly. "Though I might be a middle-weight—I don't know."

You could see in his determined eyes that he was feeling pumped about his prospects.

Some people might consider Viera's male competitive spirit politically incorrect—toxic even.

Viera brushes off the words "toxic masculinity" like so much trash talk. He believes the term's purpose is to cast a dark spell on true masculinity.

"It meshed at a certain point where real masculinity is now associated with that term," he said. "Real masculinity is a whole different thing on its own. It's not a bad thing—it's natural. Boxing is one of the best sports to display that masculinity, I'd say."

Viera stepped into the boxing ring to prove he was the real deal. He began moving about the squared circle, throwing jabs and left hooks, ducking, bobbing, weaving—part dancer, part warrior.

"The healthiest part [of boxing] is just being comfortable in your body and knowing what your body is capable of doing. How much work do you have to put in to attain the goals you want?" Viera said, stopping for a quick photo as he flexed his biceps.

What better place than a dim, noisy boxing gym to learn traditional masculine values like strength, honor, respect, and fair play?

In the boxing gym, real men don't shrink from a challenge, and they don't drink soy milk lattes. They guzzle water or Gatorade and take care of business. Then they shake hands when it's over.

An Existential Crisis

The problem is that there are fewer such spaces for men these days, observed Jeremy Slayden, a former professional baseball player with the Philadelphia Phillies.

Slayden said a prime example is the former Boy Scouts of America, rebranded as the gender-neutral "Scouts BSA," which recently celebrated its first girl Eagle Scout.



Amateur boxer Brian Viera, 20, demonstrates a left jab at Central Boxing Gym in Phoenix on Jan. 26.

Today, women in health clubs segregate themselves in gender-specific "safe spaces" while surrounded by men. Due to threats of boycotts and legal challenges, only about a dozen men-only private golf clubs still exist, but they face extinction, much like the Neanderthals did.

Slayden said that with so much disdain aimed at men, it's no wonder they are afraid to speak out in their defense.

"When you can only whisper about what you believe and who you are, and the other side is shouting from all angles, who's going to get to play?" Slayden said.

"Who's going to be the dominant driving force?"

ALL PHOTOS BY ALAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES

As the founder of Warrior MBS, a website promoting men's well-being, Slayden believes the American man is in an existential crisis.

It's also an identity crisis; men don't know who they are or where they belong in a world gone "woke."

Slayden feels some "mansplaining" might be in order.

"Generally speaking, there is a multi-pronged attack on men in general and masculinity in particular," Slayden said.

It all started harmlessly with television sitcoms like "Married With Children" and "Everybody Loves Raymond," which portrayed male breadwinners Al Bundy ♦♦



Amateur boxer Brian Viera believes the purpose of the term "toxic masculinity" is to cast a dark spell on true masculinity.

“[Real masculinity] is not a bad thing—it's natural.”

Brian Viera, boxing trainee

and Ray Romano as naïve, gullible buffoons—“if nothing else, a kind of a goober,” Slayden said.

Fueled by feminism, amplified by the legacy media, and reinforced by higher education and progressive politics, the message that men are useless in today’s inclusive society became ingrained in the American male psyche.

“It’s really on us as men to speak up confidently and begin to see ourselves confidently.”

Jeremy Slayden, founder, Warrior MBS

Slayden said traditional men feel lost, having few men’s spaces to fall back on for support.

“So you keep adding these layers, and men do not know how to define themselves. They don’t know their role or what to do with their strength,” Slayden said.

“Many have taken the bait—especially the youth.”

Slayden said globalism is another threat as it pushes forward with a social agenda to weaken men and male institutions.

“What they’re doing is overwhelming,” he said. “We are up against it in a sense,” as leftists and progressives believe men should just “shut up and be quiet.”

Slayden said men could choose not to participate in a mainstream culture that derides them based on gender. They could form new groups and ignore the legal challenges.

“I think there are fewer spaces where men can be themselves,” Slayden said. “It’s really on us as men to speak up confidently and begin to see ourselves confidently.”

“That permits other men to do the same.”

Men’s Spaces

Tom Golden, creator of the website “Men Are Good,” believes that men and boys need “shoulder-to-shoulder spaces” to grow and mature.

“Think Boy Scouts. Title IX [anti-sex discrimination legislation] has been a great loss for males since it is usually on sports teams that boys make friendships. That and work,” said Golden, author of “Swallowed by a Snake: The Gift of the Masculine Side of Healing.”

From a traditional viewpoint, Golden said toxic masculinity is “truly bizarre” and is just a fantasy created by the left.

Scientists now understand that “men are different,” Golden said. “But the media refuses to touch this.”

Golden said the Australian Men’s Shed movement that revolutionized male spaces in Australia is one way men have tried to hold the line against feminism. The organization boasts offshoots in 14 countries since its founding in 2007.

“For years, Australian men were gathering in sheds, shoulder-to-shoulder in an informal environment and enjoying each other’s company,” Golden said.

“Then the feminists came along and demanded including women.”

Mark Winston, founding director of the American Men’s Shed Association, said the movement recognizes that men need a common space to

share goals and interests. A men’s shed could be a church or senior center—any place where men can feel at ease working together on projects.

Call it the adult male equivalent of a tree house. Only in Australia, it began with men puttering in the backyard shed, looking for interesting things to do.

There are now 1,180 men’s sheds and about 100 women’s sheds in Australia.

Winston said men quickly “lose their social connectedness” when they lose their sense of purpose in relation to other men.

“Guys—we’re different from women. We have a saying that women talk face to face,



Former professional baseball player Jeremy Slayden believes traditional men are facing an existential crisis in America due to progressive politics.

FROM COURTESY OF JEREMY SLAYDEN
ALAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES

but guys talk shoulder to shoulder,” he said.

He elaborated that men need a reason to get together, something to do that is the primary reason for interacting.

Cancel Culture

Former health club owner Lysander Caligo of Tempe, Arizona, said men perform at their best interacting with other men in a mutual endeavor. Lifting weights. Raising skyscrapers. Building civilizations.

A U.S. Marine who worked counterintelligence in Iraq and Afghanistan, Caligo currently works in executive protection and security for high-end clients throughout the United States.

It’s a manly profession, he said. But some women like it, too.

Caligo said being in the military required strategic thought and planning. In time, he became increasingly disillusioned with military service.

What did PowerPoints on transgenderism have to do with counterintelligence?

“We in the military aren’t supposed to have an identity,” Caligo said. “We’re not supposed to have any special labels attached to us to make us stand out from the pack. That was frowned upon.”

“If you showed you weren’t playing the game, they wanted you out. That’s what started happening. Some of the best men I ever met in the military started getting forced out.”

Having seen the “writing on the wall,” Caligo said the problem was identity politics in the military.

Slowly, they started “flushing masculine men—competent men—out of the military” in favor of more political and bureaucracy-minded recruits.

“I no longer wanted to belong to a bureaucratic institution. I wanted to do my own thing. I was tired after nine years of deployment, training, and this other stuff,” Caligo said.

Caligo, 38, said he had become “jaded” when he left the Marine Corps in 2013. He later ran a successful health club in San Diego until the

pandemic forced him out of business in 2021.

At 6 feet, 2 inches tall, Caligo has kept his muscular physique, lifting weights daily and practicing Brazilian jiu-jitsu, his arms and torso covered in tattoos.

Inked on his right bicep is the iconic image of Argentine Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara, and the all-seeing eye of the Federal Reserve’s one-dollar note is etched on his left forearm.

“Now, the model for being in service is to be effeminate and considered nice and not offend to get better customer results.”

Lysander Caligo, former health club owner

Caligo said there’s humor and irony in contradictory tattoos, though he’s not a Marxist.

At a busy Tempe restaurant one sunny afternoon, Caligo lamented the “feminization” of men in the service industry.

“Now, the model for being in service is to be effeminate and considered nice and not offend to get better customer results. I would say that has infiltrated the security industry as well,” he said.

Caligo admits his ideas sometimes go over poorly with women and even with some men. But he stands by his beliefs.

When the discussion turned to time-honored men’s spaces, Caligo said good luck finding them in 2023.

Once there were men’s spaces everywhere, back when men had respect and status as providers and protectors, he said.

As time moved on, Caligo watched in dismay as leftist “outrage culture” removed men from their social spaces under the guise of inclusiveness.

But the goal, he asserted, was not equality. ♦



Former U.S. Marine Lysander Caligo, 38, strikes a serious pose in Tempe, Ariz., on Jan. 26.



(Left) This Old Barber Shop owner Luis Bermudez stands in front of his traditional establishment in Phoenix on Jan. 26. (Above) Luis Bermudez puts the final touches on a customer's haircut. Bermudez enjoys sharing stories with other men.

“You can’t let boys go into the Girl Scouts, can you?” Caligo said. “If it weren’t for double standards, the left wouldn’t have any standards. That’s what it’s come down to—rules for thee, not for me.”

Caligo blamed feminism and cancel culture for pushing traditional men out of the mainstream and into the blogosphere to avoid discrimination lawsuits.

But even in cyberspace, Caligo ran afoul of the censors with his social media project, “Master Your Masculinity,” designed for young men in their 20s.

He was eventually banned on Twitter and shadow-banned on Facebook.

“They’ve thwarted me every step of the way trying to help men become better men,” Caligo told The Epoch Times.

“At some level, Elon Musk believes [cancel culture] has been a blight on our society. That was why he decided to make Twitter a free-speech platform.”

Creating a Tribe

In depriving men of their traditional spaces, society has entered into a “state of insanity,” Caligo said. “Why is there so much depression and suicide? Why are we so neurotic today? It’s because we’ve strayed too far away from our natural progression,” Caligo said.

To “turn the ship around,” men must now create a “tribe” of their own.

“I know men that don’t know how to change a tire. These are simple things our dads taught us. It’s crazy. Now, AAA shows up in a van and fixes your tire for you.”

Luis Bermudez, owner, This Old Barber Shop

“Why do I care?” Caligo said. “At a deep level, I want to be a father. I want to have the best children possible. We’d see fewer societal issues if we invested in our children correctly.”

He said men “thirst for information” on how to navigate the cultural minefield. While he believes change is inevitable, the solution could come at a price, namely pushback from leftists and feminists who want traditional men to disappear as they struggle to reclaim their place in society.

“The fact of the matter is when we have men who live with a purpose, driven men, strong, capable, and competent men—that’s

the biggest threat to any [woke] institution out there,” he said.

Caligo is the author of “A Patriarch’s Vision: Purging Feminism,” a book for men that unapologetically dissects what’s wrong with modern feminist society.

At This Old Barber Shop in Phoenix, owner Luis Bermudez said that since he runs a traditional barbershop, most of his customers are men.

“I would say it’s 99 percent men,” said Bermudez, smoothing a dollop of shaving cream on the back of a customer’s neck.

“We have a few ladies come in to get a hairstyle.”

Bermudez, 45, said he built the business from scratch four years ago. He doesn’t necessarily view it as a last bastion for men.

“I don’t know if it’s a last bastion, but it’s where people feel comfortable speaking freely,” Bermudez said.

“It used to be said that you shouldn’t talk about God or politics. That’s changed a lot. Especially in the political climate today. It’s something me and my clients speak about—my other barber and me when he’s here.”

Politically conservative, Bermudez said if a

The American man is facing an identity crisis; men don’t know who they are or where they belong in a world gone ‘woke.’

Demonstrators at the Women’s March in Washington on Oct. 8, 2022. The far-left push for “inclusiveness” is depriving men of their traditional spaces.



FROM L. ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES; ROBERTO SCHMIDT/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES

customer leans to the left, “we’re going to agree to disagree.”

It’s about mutual respect.

Bermudez said he enjoys being around other men, sharing stories, and talking about manly things, such as hunting and fishing.

“We talk about marriage and relationships. We talk about politics, the election, and who knows what’s happening. You walk into my shop, and you see an American flag here. We are 100 percent red-blooded American,” Bermudez said.

“I get to talk to men all day. They know what I’ve gone through and vice versa. I’ve got guys coming in seven or eight years, coaching them on marriage. We discuss how we feel, how the system has been against us for a long time.”

Bermudez said it’s a different story with younger men compared with when he was growing up, when men were trained to be resourceful and self-reliant.

“I know men that don’t know how to change a tire. These are simple things our dads taught us. It’s crazy. Now, AAA shows up in a van and fixes your tire for you,” Bermudez said. ■

JANUARY 6



Washington Capitol

AFTER MORE THAN AN HOUR SHOOTING tasers, throwing rubber-pellet grenades, shooting chunks of rubber baton, and tossing a smoke canister at protesters at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, a District of Columbia police officer concluded that the show of force did little more than enrage the crowd.

Nearly two hours of newly released public body camera footage from the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPDC) Officer Daniel Thau shows how conditions along the police barricades on the west side of the Capitol deteriorated after Thau and colleagues began using munitions and chemicals on the crowds.

The heavy police response at the Capitol began before President Donald Trump had finished speaking at the Ellipse, a 45-minute walk away. Most of the huge crowds had yet to start the trek to the Capitol.

Over the next 75 minutes, the west-side crowd became louder and angrier, and it eventually pushed its way past barricades, up the stairs, and into the Capitol.

"It's useless. We're just [expletive] shooting zombies, man," Thau told a fellow officer at 2:16 p.m. "Hey, we're shooting zombies. That's it."

"We're taking out one and 10 are getting more angrier [sic]," Thau said to Cmdr. John Haines two minutes later. "We're multiplying them by hitting them."

Earlier that afternoon, Thau and a group of MPDC officers had walked toward the west side of the Capitol from the President James Garfield Memorial, just after 1 p.m.

About 10 minutes prior, a crowd had breached a lightly defended barricade near the Peace Monument and streamed across the sidewalk toward the west front of the Capitol.

From the moment the MPDC officers emerged from under the scaffolding on the west-side ground level at 1:12 p.m., they engaged protesters standing along the bike-rack barricades.

Several officers used pepper spray on the protesters. Others relocated sections of barricades to contain the growing crowd.

After surveying the police line, Thau ran up to the scaffolding behind him and shouted, "We need more [expletive] munitions."

(Clockwise from top l) D.C. police officer Daniel Thau's bodycam footage shows the moments after Thau used a Taser on a protester at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. The protester drops to the ground after being tased and is tended to by police. Thau picks a grenade from another officer's pack. Thau loads a 40-mm grenade round with rubber projectiles into a launcher. Thau throws the grenade, which explodes over the heads of protesters.

A POLICE OFFICER'S BODYCAM FOOTAGE

Use of grenades, projectiles, tear gas on Jan. 6 only enraged crowd, says police officer

BY JOSEPH M. HANNEMAN

ALL PHOTOS BY METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT/SCREENSHOT VIA THE EPOCH TIMES

'We Need Blast Munitions'

Thau approached a U.S. Capitol Police officer a short time later, and said, "Hey Capitol, we need blast munitions. What do we got?"

When the officer said he didn't have any munitions, Thau replied: "[Expletive], we've got to get something, man. We've got to get some [expletive] help here."

A minute later, Thau approached the bike racks with a yellow Taser in his right hand. He fired the weapon twice, dropping two protesters to the ground, his bodycam footage shows.

He then approached MPDC Commander Robert Glover and said, "Hey I got 2 ECD, 2 ECD, 2 ECD, 2 ECD deployed," using the acronym for the electronic control device.

As a group of officers dragged one of the injured men away, Thau approached them and dropped the cartridges from his weapon, saying: "I'm out of [expletive] ammunition. [Expletive] it. We got nothing left."

Over the more than 75 minutes that Thau was behind the police lines at ground level, he was like a one-man strike force. He felled at least four protesters with a Taser, tossed countless explosives into the crowd, and fired a munition launcher with a 40-millimeter shell at point-blank range over the barricade.

At 1:16 p.m., Thau told U.S. Capitol Police Capt. Sean Patton, "We need munitions bad." He then told an MPDC colleague a minute later, "We need a lot of [expletive]."

Thau made another plea for blast devices to a USCP officer. "We're going to get [expletive] overrun. We need blast munitions immediately," he said. "We're gonna lose it. We're gonna [expletive] lose it."

Looking up to officers standing on the inauguration platform on the Lower West Terrace, Thau shouted: "Let's go. [Expletive] shoot it! Go! Shoot! Shoot!"

He approached MPDC officer Tara Tindall, looking for refills. "Tara! Tara! I'm out. I'm out. What else we got?"

"Sting balls. I got stinger rounds," Tindall said. "I got Skat." Skat is the brand name of a type of crowd-control projectile shell.

"I'm out of my ECD. I've literally used everything," Thau said. "I've used everything. All I got is an ASP [baton] right now."

Thau walked up to MPDC Sgt. Ricardo Minier. "Give me your [expletive] Taser," he said, pulling the weapon off of Minier's vest.

'I Got Him With a Taser'

Thau strode up to the police line and fired the Taser at a man standing in a group a few feet from the barricade. He pointed at the man as

he fell to the ground and shouted, "Get back! Get back."

A protester in the crowd yelled, "What the [expletive] is wrong with you guys?"

About a minute later, Thau approached a gap between two officers along the barricades and fired his Taser for the fourth time, striking a man with a beard who was holding a wooden pole. The man then charged at Thau, and the two scuffled briefly.

"Hey, I got him with a Taser," he told Tindall and Glover. "I'm good."

Just over a minute later, a protester just across the barricade shouted at the officers: "Look what you're doing to us! Are you proud?"

At 1:33 p.m., Thau took a silver canister from MPDC officer Eric Coates. "I'm coming out with smoke," he said, pulling the pin. "That's a burner, by the way," Coates advised.

Moments later, someone in the crowd threw back the smoke canister, which landed behind the officers.

"Eric, do you have any Skat rounds?" he asked Coates.

"Just sting balls," Coates said.

"I need Triple-Chasers," Thau said, referring to a pyrotechnic canister that separates into three grenades when deployed.

After a nearby captain advised Thau not to use the Triple-Chaser, he handed it to Coates, took a rubber-ball grenade from him, and tossed it into the crowd.

Thau went back to Coates. "I need more," he said, retrieving another grenade that he threw into the crowd. Grabbing a third grenade from Coates, Thau threw it toward the crowd. The grenade exploded just above head level.

At 1:42 p.m., Thau tossed two more rubber ball grenades that he retrieved from another officer's pack. "Alright, we've got ourselves a cluster[expletive] right now," he said.

Broken-Arrow Call

At 2:12 p.m., Tindall gave Thau a projectile launcher. He loaded it with a rubber-ball shell from Sgt. Frank Edwards, ran to the barricade, and fired it into the crowd.

Thau then got a baton round from another officer, stuck the launcher between two officers, and fired at protesters. A baton shell typically holds five projectiles, which can be made of foam, rubber, or wood.

At 2:16 p.m., Thau told Cmdr. Glover it was time for them to retreat. "This is it. We've got to call Broken Arrow on this," Thau said. "We've got to get the National Guard. Honestly. This is it."

Cmdr. Haines did not like the sound of a retreat. "We can't lose the steps of the Capitol," he



said. "No! It's not going to happen."

At 2:25 p.m., Thau told officer Rich Khoury to fire a gas projectile up into the reviewing stands.

"Hey Rich, put it up in the [expletive] scaffolding," Thau said. "Fire it up in the air, Rich, over there. Just [expletive] shoot!"

The round misfired, landing in a large group of officers on the ground. A giant cloud of tear gas spread over the entire area.

After Thau helped a colleague who had been pepper-sprayed get up the steps underneath the scaffolding, he told Cmdr. Jason Bagshaw that things looked bleak.

"We're going to have to make a tactical disadvantaged move out here, or we're going to get people seriously [expletive] hurt, man," Thau said. "We got 20,000 people out there. We can't stop them. We need to make a [expletive] decision. We don't need to get our people [expletive] killed, man."

Moments later, the crowds pushed past the barricades and headed for the scaffolding. Thau and other officers moved up to the top level. He told a group of officers about to head down not to go.

"I'm going to be as real as I can [expletive] be. We are going to get overrun on the steps of the Capitol," Thau said. "We're getting [expletive] hammered. If you guys go down there, the pain compliance is working very minimally.

"There's 10,000 to 1," he said. "We are going to

lose the [expletive] steps, and we're getting people hurt like a mother [expletive]. Do not go down there because you're going to get [expletive] up."

Use-of-Force Protocol

Use-of-force expert Stan Kephart said Officer Thau misused his Taser and the variety of munitions shown on the bodycam footage.

"Your coverage and the video make a compelling criminal-negligence case here," Kephart told The Epoch Times. "These tools were not designed by the maker to be used in this way, and no qualified user would have conducted him/herself in this way."

Thau was "completely out of control," Kephart said.

"If you tase somebody, you're obligated to cuff them, now that you've neutralized them, [and] arrest them," he said. "That's not what he was doing. He was using those devices to punish people, not to arrest them, and that is unconscionable."

Kephart said that instead of misusing crowd-control tools and risking the lives of protesters and officers, the police should have set up a system to arrest those who did not disperse.

"A skirmish line outside of the buildings should have been established with backup officers assigned and equipped to strip-cuff and arrest those protesters who violated the skirmish line," he said. ■

Protesters and police and security forces clash at the U.S. Capitol in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021.



"[Officer Daniel Thau] was using those devices to punish people, not to arrest them, and that is unconscionable."

Stan Kephart,
use-of-force expert

FROM: TALAT ZION/THE EPOCH TIMES; JOSEPH REZIOSO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Outsized Power of State Medical Boards

Boards have targeted doctors who are advocating for and prescribed ivermectin, lawyers say **By Katie Spence**



Medical boards are retaliating against physicians for using ivermectin, a lawyer for the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons says.

M edical boards across the United States act independently and have full decision-making authority regarding discipline and investigations, with the exception of nine states, according to the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB).

IN ALL BUT 19 STATES, MEDICAL BOARD members are appointed by the state’s governor and don’t require additional confirmation. Where separate confirmation is required, the state Senate or Legislature is responsible, according to FSMB.

In general, state medical boards drive the public health policies of their state. They also have the authority to investigate if complaints are lodged against doctors and nurses and can strip individuals of their medical licenses.

Consequently, according to lawyers representing doctors facing medical board investigations, many doctors and nurses are being targeted by their boards for advocating for alternative medications during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“There have been a lot of medical boards harassing physicians over ivermectin, also hydroxychloroquine. Also, some of their public statements against mask mandates and questioning the vaccine,” Andrew Schlafly, a lawyer who’s filed several lawsuits on behalf of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, told The Epoch Times.

“These medical boards, they’re not respecting First Amendment rights, not respecting the patient-physician relationship. They’ve basically been pushing the agenda of the pharmaceutical companies and the opponents of

early treatment with inexpensive medications—ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, inexpensive medications known for decades to be safe.”

Beth Chambers, an attorney in Colorado who represents several doctors and health care providers facing investigation by the Colorado Medical Board, concurs.

She said that on March 26, 2020, right after COVID-19 began to surge in the United States, the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies released draft guidance for prescribing COVID-19 medications on behalf of several medical-related state boards. The guidance had first been disseminated by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

Among other guidance, it states that health care professionals need to “be cognizant” that hydroxychloroquine is “not the standard of care” for COVID-19 and that pharmacists “should verify and document diagnosis with the prescriber” when they see a prescription for hydroxychloroquine. It also notes that such measures should be taken for “other COVID-19 investigative medications.”

“Please note that the Colorado State Board of Pharmacy, the Colorado Medical Board, and the Colorado Nursing Board have the authority to discipline their corresponding licensees who fail to meet

“If there’s no standard of care for COVID because it’s an emergency, why are doctors already having their hands tied?”

Beth Chambers, attorney

ONOT/SHUTTERSTOCK

their corresponding generally accepted standards of practice,” the directive reads.

Chambers said the guidance was a threat.

“They basically threatened providers at that point and said that your medical license could come under review because there’s no standard of care for COVID,” she told The Epoch Times.

“Well, if there’s no standard of care for COVID because it’s an emergency, why are doctors already having their hands tied and other providers having their hands tied in this way?”

Despite approving ivermectin as a safe and effective antiparasitic drug for humans in 1996, on April 10, 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a statement that said, “Ivermectin is FDA-approved for use in animals for prevention of heartworm disease in some small animal species, and for treatment of certain internal and external parasites in various animal species.”

The directive had the desired result, and complaints against health care providers prescribing hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin for COVID-19 began rolling in.

Notably, Chambers said, almost every complaint was filed by another doctor or pharmacist. And it wasn’t because they witnessed harm to the patient.

“What happened is a patient may have a primary care doctor and then seek an opinion in some other specialized area. And the primary care doctor will send their chart over, and the chart will show ivermectin for prophylactic COVID-19. And that doctor will file a complaint with the medical board,” she said.

“The patient hasn’t made a complaint. I’ve never seen a case, actually to date, where a patient has complained to the medical board that ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine damaged them.”

Absolute Power

According to Chambers, in cases where

a doctor didn’t file the complaint, the complaints usually came from a former employer or someone who heard a health care provider publicly back ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine.

“I’ve seen where somebody might speak on a podcast, and then somebody in Arizona will make a complaint with the Colorado Medical Board saying that the provider is ‘medically dangerous,’” Chambers said. “I’ve seen that phrase a lot.”

Schlafly confirmed Chambers’s account and noted that neither the FSMB nor the FDA has “any real authority” over how doctors and nurses practice medicine. But they can pressure state boards.

“State medical boards do have authority,” he said. “And so, these other entities have been pushing state medical boards to retaliate. And trolls on the internet—who have filed complaints just by trolling the internet and finding doctors who’ve spoken out—these trolls file complaints with medical boards, and medical boards are improperly acting on their complaints.”

Schlafly noted that state medical boards have discretion over complaint investigations and can either dismiss them or pursue an investigation.

“The complaint’s not by the patient. Medical boards should just dismiss the complaint and not bother the physician with it, but state medical boards are harassing physicians over this,” he said.

Chambers said that when the medical board receives a complaint in Colorado, it sends the provider a “30-day letter” asking for a response. Once the provider responds, the medical board can choose to drop the issue or continue to pursue the investigation. Once a medical board decides to pursue an investigation against a health care provider, it has absolute power, she said.

In every single case where the complaint involved ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, or COVID-19 vaccines, she said the Colorado Medical Board issued an ❖



“Doctors have the right to make important medical decisions, as long as they have the informed consent of their patients.”

Alan Wilson, South Carolina attorney general

“amended supplemental request” and started asking “targeted questions.”

“At the administrative level, they do not have to go to a court. They don’t need anybody to give them the permission to do it. The medical board themselves can issue a subpoena to produce documents—it’s always [for] patient records. What they’ll usually say is, ‘Can we have the complete medical history of every patient that you prescribe ivermectin, either for active COVID or prophylactic COVID,’” Chambers said.

And that’s when the true investigation starts.

Gone Fishing

On Feb. 1, 2022, Dr. Yusuf Saleeby, a medical doctor in South Carolina with more than 30 years of experience, received a letter from South Carolina’s medical board detailing that it had received a complaint that he prescribed ivermectin to one of his patients. The board stated that it was opening an investigation.

On Feb. 11, 2022, South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson released a statement saying doctors in his state have the authority to treat COVID-19 by prescribing “off-label” drugs. Off-label prescribing is a legal and widespread practice among doctors.

“Our doctors, as well as their patients, need to know that doctors have the right to make important medical decisions, as long as they have the informed consent of their patients. In fighting COVID, the doctor should be given the broadest possible leeway,” Wilson said.

On Feb. 16, 2022, Saleeby received an update from the South Carolina state medical board, amending the charge by stating that instead of investigating Saleeby for prescribing ivermectin, the investigation was due to his alleged failure to obtain “informed consent” from his patient.

Saleeby said “obviously” the person who filed the original complaint didn’t

suddenly file the second one after the attorney general’s statement.

“The board did. It’s politically motivated. They want to come after me one way or the other,” Saleeby told *The Epoch Times*.

He called the amended charge of failing to obtain informed consent “ludicrous.”

“My attorney drafted an eloquent three-page letter explaining our position and how this is ludicrous, and I had two recorded informed consents on my SOAP notes and in my charting,” Saleeby said.

SOAP stands for “subjective, objective, assessment, and plan” and is a structured way for clinicians to document patient encounters.

Despite the explanation, the investigation continued until it finally came to a head on Jan. 23, when, in an informal meeting, the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners subcommittee recommended that the complaints against Saleeby move forward to a full formal hearing.

Outraged, Saleeby filed a formal complaint for harassment with the Office of Inspector General and reached out to a senator friend who’s the chairman of the state’s oversight committee.

On Jan. 25, two days after recommending a formal hearing, the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners informed Saleeby’s attorney that they planned to drop the case.

“I haven’t gotten my formal dismissal letter yet, but that’s the word from [the board’s] attorney—that they’re not going to pursue this,” Saleeby said.

As for why the board reversed course, he said, “I think it’s because I put some pressure on them. And they knew I was going to get loud and noisy about this. And I was going to ask for a public hearing. Because once this gets out, once people see what’s going on, that they’re bullying doctors and nurses, this might come to a quicker end. ... I’m going on the offensive.”



“Once people see what’s going on, that they’re bullying doctors and nurses, this might come to a quicker end.”

Dr. Yusuf Saleeby

FROM TOP: ONOT/SHUTTERSTOCK; MALIRO PIMENTEL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

To this day, Saleeby said he doesn’t know who filed a complaint against him. However, he does know that it wasn’t his patient.

“No. My patient and I are on very good terms,” Saleeby said when asked if his patient filed the complaint. “I have no idea who filed this complaint.”

He noted that he experienced what Chambers labeled a “fishing expedition” by the state medical board.

“They did subpoena the medical records on this particular patient,” Saleeby said. “And we have the entire, not just related to the incident SOAP note, but also all the informed consents, the waivers—they requested a lot of stuff. We sent them everything they requested.”

Saleeby said the files included the details his nurse discusses with patients.

“My nurse, when she did the triage, always discusses supplements and medications with patients. Side effects and all that stuff,” he said.

“And then there was a general informed consent on the general waiver that says ... we don’t adhere to practice guidelines. We’re outside of mainstream medicine. We do things different. It’s all outlined. I mean, I had three lawyers look at that waiver when I had it designed. So [the board’s investigator] sort of neglected all that.”

Saleeby said he’s only had the one complaint filed against him, but a fellow practitioner in Alabama told him that he had 22 complaints filed against him during the COVID-19 pandemic.

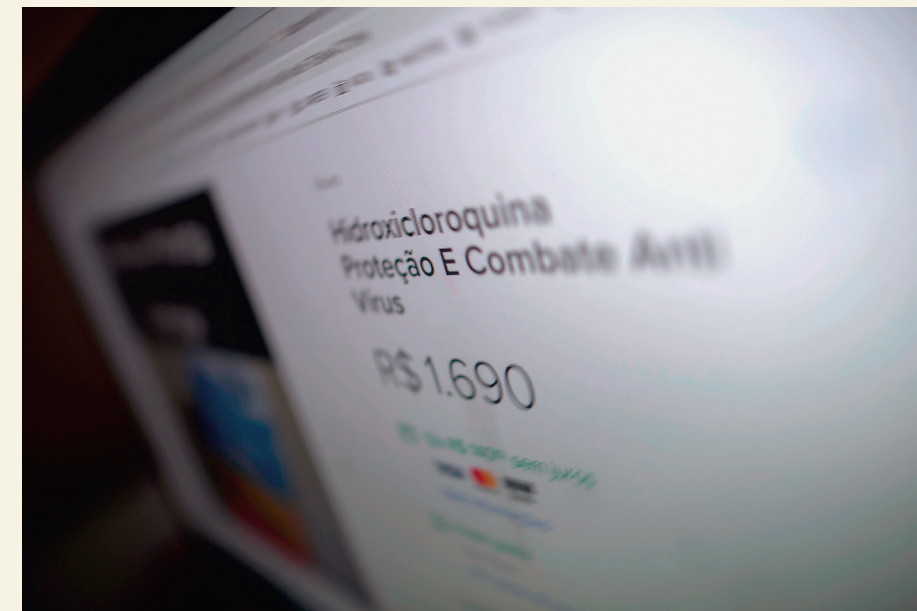
“I just can’t imagine the financials of that,” Saleeby said. “I haven’t gotten my final attorney bill, but I bet it’s in the tens of thousands of dollars to defend myself. If I had to do that 22 times, it’s a kind of attrition.”

“[The medical boards] try to beat you down because they have a lot more funding than I do for legal stuff. So, you know, they’re trying to threaten ♦♦



“[Medical boards] find the target physician who prescribes ivermectin, and they look for some other basis to discipline their physician.”

Andrew Schlafly, lawyer



A laptop screen showing hydroxychloroquine for sale on a website on May 20, 2020. No patient has “complained to the medical board that ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine damaged them,” an attorney says.

and intimidate doctors to basically sit down and shut up and do the practice guidelines and be part of the narrative. Recommend boosters for everybody. I'm not. I can't ethically stand by and do that."

He noted concern over the board's ability to remove his license following complaint investigations.

"I have six nurse practitioners and PAs [physician's assistants] that work under my license. So if anything were to happen to my license and my ability to practice, it would affect 10 employees and six independent contractor nurse practitioners and their families. I mean, it's a domino effect. It would be devastating financially for everybody."

In response to The Epoch Times' request for comment, the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners stated via email, "State law prohibits the Board from saying whether a licensee is being investigated."

Submit or Else

What Saleeby experienced is typical of many state medical boards' behavior across the country, according to Schlafly.

"Medical boards know that if they discipline a physician based solely on ivermectin, that may cause political problems," he said.

Some state legislators are proponents of patients having access to ivermectin.

"So, what medical boards do instead is find the target physician who prescribes ivermectin, and they look for some other basis to discipline their physician," Schlafly said.

"So, they go on a fishing expedition, and they'll try to find some other graph to discipline that physician. And the real reason is they're retaliating against the physician for using ivermectin."

Chambers agrees.

"If you're turning over the complete medical history of patients, there's probably going to be other places where you didn't dot all your I's and cross all your



In every case in which the complaint involved hydroxychloroquine in Colorado, the medical board issued an "amended supplemental request" and started asking "targeted questions," a lawyer says.

FROM L. GEORGE FREDRICK VIA GETTY IMAGES, ONYX/SHUTTERSTOCK

T's," she said. "That's the nature of human record-keeping.

"The doctors that I've spoken to that have received a formal admonishment or a charge, usually it's because they found something in the record that is different than the reason they even asked for [the records]. So the complaint comes in on ivermectin, but maybe they find that you have not done your due diligence on fibroids prescribing or some-

thing else. It's something completely different than ivermectin."

According to Schlafly, medical board targeting varies between states. In states where the governor has taken a more active approach to regulate the board's power, such as in Florida, medical boards are "OK." But the chilling effect is pervasive in states such as Colorado, Oregon, California, and others.

As to why medical boards are taking

such a hardline stance against doctors who prescribe ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine, Schlafly alleged that the boards' targeting is ultimately being directed by "a handful of bureaucrats and people who are connected to Big Pharma, and people who have a certain mindset about vaccination and masks."

"People forget, but a year ago, [President Joe Biden] ordered basically all employers having more than 100 employees to vaccinate all their employees. That was one thing," he said. "He ordered all government workers to be vaccinated. He ordered all government contractors to be vaccinated. And he ordered everyone in the military to be vaccinated. So it's that kind of a mindset, which is one of command and control."

On July 12, 2022, Schlafly, on behalf of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons Educational Foundation, filed a lawsuit against the Biden administration and medical specialty boards, claiming violations of the "First Amendment right to freedom of speech," among other charges.

He detailed in the suit that the foundation co-sponsored a medical conference in which numerous physicians spoke. After the conference, the presenters received letters from medical boards "threatening revocation of their earned board certifications for statements they made or repeated at these conferences."

"Defendants wrongly misuse their authority in a politically partisan manner to chill speech critical of positions taken by Dr. Anthony Fauci, lockdowns, mask mandates, COVID vaccines, and even abortion. Defendants have acted in an apparently coordinated manner, using similar timing and terminology, to censor those who exercise their First Amendment rights on issues of public concern," the suit reads.

It's one of many suits brought by Schlafly to fight for medical freedom and doctors' and nurses' rights. ■



Some complaints are filed by people trolling on the internet finding doctors who support prescribing ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine.

SPOTLIGHT

Apocalyptic Aftermath

A MAN SLEEPS ON A SOFA NEAR a collapsed building in Hatay, Turkey, on Feb. 13. A 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit the country on Feb. 6, leaving many people who are now homeless struggling to survive amid the rubble in the harsh winter weather.

PHOTO BY BURAK KARA/GETTY IMAGES



ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Wind and Solar in Theory, Not Practice

Americans like the idea of renewables, but reject them in their neighborhoods, study reveals

By Kevin Stocklin

A RECENT REPORT BY THE Brookings Institution claims that “the American public overwhelmingly favors renewable power.” While this may be true in theory, when Americans experience the reality of it, they don’t seem to like it much at all.

Brookings, which sees local resistance as an impediment to overcome, conceded that “even though people like wind and solar power in the abstract, some still object to large projects near their homes.” The report, “Renewables, Land Use, and Local Opposition in the United States,” notes that wind and solar generation takes up at least 10 times as much land as coal- or gas-fired plants, while other estimates have put it as high as 75 times.

“Most wind turbines being installed in the United States today are the height of a 35-story building,” the report reads. “The expanding land needs of a renewable energy system raise con-



Power generating windmills tower over a farm near Steward, Ill., in this file photo. Cases of local communities rejecting renewable energy have increased from virtually none to more than 450 cases in the past decade, an expert says.

cerns about ‘energy sprawl.’”

Extensive networks of power lines must be constructed to transmit between the remote areas where wind and solar are located and the cities that use their power. Fossil fuels are mobile and those plants, as with nuclear plants, can be located close to end users. Wind and solar, for the most part, can’t.

“Offshore wind eliminates land use, but it raises opposition among those concerned with the impact on the environment and scenic views. ... Transmission for renewable power can also be unpopular, and even more difficult to site when the power is just passing through an area, rather than directly benefitting local residents,” the report reads.

Renewable Rejection Is on the Rise

Author and energy expert Robert Bryce has been tracking just how unpopular renewable power is in his Renewable Rejection Database, collecting data from sources such as local news reports. He has observed an escalation in local community “rejections” over the past decade, increasing from virtually none from 2011 to 2014 to more than 450 cases in the almost 10 years since.

“I’m interested in what’s happening in rural America and how local communities are reacting to the encroachment of these wind and solar projects,” Bryce told The Epoch Times. “From Maine to Hawaii, the bottom line is local people care about what happens in their neighborhoods everywhere, and they are concerned about their views and their property values and rightly concerned about their health and the noise that comes from these wind projects.”

Many Americans feel that what President Joe Biden calls the “incredible transition” to renewables from fossil fuels has been imposed on them by government fiat and corporate net-zero cabals, but Bryce said local democracy is giving people a voice.

“Americans very broadly are having a say, based on the very fundamental issue of property rights and land use,” he said.

The Brookings report states: “An energy system based on renewables will have a different shape than the fossil fuel-based system Americans are accustomed to. Production facilities will cover more land in areas that are not accustomed to energy infrastructure. Trillions of dollars of infrastructure will be needed to achieve a renewable power system, for construction of generation and transmission capacity.”

But according to Bryce’s database, in January alone, wind and solar project permits were denied in six cases by local boards and commissions in Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and Nebraska. Even communities in deep-blue Massachusetts and New York have been rejecting wind and solar projects and blocking transmission lines through their towns.

The Environmental Cost of Mining

In addition to the “energy sprawl” once the systems are built, there’s also the issue of the exploitation of wide tracts of land and habitats for the mining of minerals that are needed for batteries, wind turbines, solar panels, and transmission lines. They include cobalt, lithium, copper, nickel, and other minerals that must be extracted from the earth, creating toxic waste, pollution that has turned rivers red, and extensive carbon dioxide emissions.

Here, too, local communities have put up resistance. In 2022, the Biden administration announced a number of initiatives to increase the mining and refining of minerals for renewables in the United States. His Defense Production Act reclassified lithium, cobalt, graphite, nickel, and manganese as essential to national security, giving the green light to the Defense Department to subsidize domestic mining.

This was soon contradicted by his administration’s efforts to block domestic mining, most recently in an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) decision on Jan. 31 to block the Pebble Mine project near Alaska’s Bristol Bay. Americans appear to want the mining of renewables to be done abroad.

Hailing the decision, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) stated: “We are thrilled with the EPA’s finding and thank the thousands of people in Alaska and around the country who participated in the public process that led to this result, including more than 31,000 TNC

supporters. A ‘no’ on the Pebble Mine is a ‘yes’ to letting local communities decide what’s best for them and a ‘yes’ to preserving some of the last wild salmon runs on earth.”

Pebble Project CEO Disagrees

“The EPA decision to try to destroy the Pebble opportunity is just one more piece of the Biden administration’s war on domestic natural resource development,” said John Shively, CEO of The Pebble Partnership, the company that would control the mine. “The Biden strategy, when it comes to securing the minerals required for its green energy goals seems

to be to give some passing support for the development of boutique minerals such as lithium and rare earths in the United States but to seek the enormous supply of base metals such as copper needed for EVs, solar panels, wind turbines, hydroelectric plants, and the associated infrastructure from other nations.”

According to a report by the International Energy Agency,

the Paris-based intergovernmental organization, these other nations include, most notably, China.

“The Democratic Republic of the Congo and People’s Republic of China were responsible for some 70 percent and 60 percent of global production of cobalt and rare earth elements respectively in 2019,” the report reads.

In terms of the refining of these minerals, China is even more dominant. Its global market share is 35 percent for nickel, 50 to 70 percent for lithium and cobalt, and 90 percent for rare earth elements. ■

10 TIMES
A REPORT SHOWS that wind and solar generation take up at least 10 times as much land as coal- or gas-fired plants.



The Photovoltaic Array in Las Vegas, in this file photo. Trillions of dollars of infrastructure will be needed to achieve a renewable power system, according to a Brookings report.

FROM: SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES, JIM WATSON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

LEGISLATION

Missouri Bill Would Curb School Transgenderism

Teachers shouldn't encourage children to get sex changes, a proposal in Missouri states

By Jackson Elliott

TEACHERS SHOULDN'T ENCOURAGE young children to get sex changes, a proposal in Missouri states.

The Vulnerable Child Compassion and Protection Act prohibits school personnel from affirming or encouraging sex orientation changes in children in middle school and lower grades without parental permission.

Missouri state Sen. Mike Moon, a Republican, introduced the bill.

The legislation addresses a common situation across the United States. From New Jersey to Maine to California to Wisconsin, school authorities have taken the initiative to help children change genders. Often, these actions have happened without the consent or knowledge of parents.

For many parents, these situations have felt like nightmares. Schools have often sided with children identifying as transgender over their parents.

Maine parent Amber Lavigne's daughter told her that she had been secretly identifying as transgender while at school.

A social worker, Sam Roy, encouraged Lavigne's daughter in her transgender identity.

"[A worker] at the school encouraged a student to keep a secret from their parents!" Lavigne said. "This is the very definition of child predatory sexual grooming."

Even without open encouragement, a school's support can make the difference between a child choosing to transition or listening to parents, stories show.

A woman named Rachel said her daughter used the approval of school employees as a justification for her transgenderism. High school teachers referred to Rachel's daughter by a man's name, the child's mother said.

"Ask anyone in my life. I'm a man. You are the only one who doesn't see that, which means you're, by definition, delusional," Rachel recalled her daughter as saying.



"[A worker] at the school encouraged a student to keep a secret from their parents! This is the very definition of child predatory sexual grooming."

Amber Lavigne, parent

Whatever causes people to change their gender, it seems to affect young people the most. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies, transgenderism is nearly three times as common among American teens than among adults.

Schools have often encouraged transgenderism on the grounds of inclusivity. Across America, rainbow flags and stickers decorate publicly funded classrooms and school hallways.

Don't Teach Gender Transition

The measure's text is simple.

"No nurse, counselor, teacher, principal, contracted personnel, or other administrative official at a public or charter school shall discuss gender identity or sexual orientation with a minor student unless such nurse, counselor, teacher, principal, personnel, or official is a mental health care provider licensed under chapter 337 with prior permission from the student's parent or legal guardian," it reads.

The bill further defines "gender identity" as a "preconceived notion of someone's psychological, behavioral, social, and cultural aspects of being a biological male or biological female."

It defines biological males and biological females based on male or female genitalia.

The proposal is likely to be approved by Missouri's Republican-led Legislature and governor.

The bill may find fresh urgency from whistleblower Jamie Reed. Reed, who once worked at the St. Louis center has accused the Washington University Transgender Center of engaging in unethical practices on children.

Formerly, she worked at the St. Louis center.

These practices included continuing to prescribe transition medications even after a child's parent revoked consent—and after patients reported adverse effects after taking those prescriptions, according to Reed.

"We lied to [parents] all the time," she said of her work at the center. "These doctors would push, and push, and push ... and somehow, the doctors thought that was a true good consent."



Parents' Rights and Free Speech

Missouri isn't the first Republican-led state to consider legislation opposing sex changes for children. Oklahoma has legislation that seeks to end child sex change surgeries and cross-sex hormone use.

However, it remains to be seen if proposals such as Missouri's and Oklahoma's will survive challenges in court.

Some clues may be found in how U.S. law treats religion in schools.

According to a First Amendment Center guide, public school teachers must be neutral concerning religion while carrying out their duties as teachers. If students ask public school teachers about their religious beliefs, teachers can answer as long as they aren't attempting to convert children, according to the guide.

"The teacher may answer at most with a brief statement of personal belief—but may not turn the question into an opportunity to proselytize for or against religion," it reads.

In short, these rules allow teachers to talk about religion if children ask about it.

However, Missouri's bill forbids school em-

ployees from even discussing gender identity with students. It remains to be seen whether such a strict ban can survive the courts.

There may be some precedent in laws that allow students to opt out of curriculum that their parents find objectionable.

According to Parents Defending Education (PDE), many states allow parents to opt out of school curricula that they deem objectionable, such as sex education. But opting out isn't a universal right under the law, PDE notes.

"Unfortunately, the ability to opt out of educational material is not universal. The majority of state laws were written specifically with sex and health instruction in mind," according to its guide.

Courts could decide whether parents should have the right to opt out of school speech about gender identity. Or they could decide that teachers should have the right to share their beliefs on gender.

Representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, Moon, and the Missouri chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union didn't respond to a request by The Epoch Times for comment. ■

Transgenderism is nearly three times as common among American teens as it is among adults, studies show.

TRAIN DERAILMENT

Ohio Train Burned for 20 Miles: Video

Security camera footage shows train may have been on fire for 20 miles before it derailed

BY TOM OZIMEK

Drone footage shows the freight train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, on Feb. 6.

PHOTO BY NTSBGOV/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS



SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE HAS emerged showing that the freight train that derailed in East Palestine, Ohio, on Feb. 3 may have been on fire for 20 miles before it finally went off the tracks.

The footage, which was first obtained by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, was taken by a security camera at an equipment plant in Salem, Ohio. East Palestine is about 20 miles from Salem.

As the train passes the plant, what appear to be flames and sparks can be seen in the video underneath the train cars.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is investigating the derailment, appeared to reference the video and others at a news conference in the days after the incident.

“We’re also looking at a lot of different footage that has been provided to the investigators out there to determine if there’s some data on footage that we have from videos and cameras that might tell us something more than what might have happened to cause this accident,” Michael Graham, a member of the NTSB, said in a Feb. 4 briefing.

‘Mechanical Issues’

At a follow-up briefing on Feb. 5, Graham said that investigators had also secured the locomotive data recorder earlier that day, along with forward- and inward-facing camera footage and audio recordings.

Graham said that the locomotive footage would be sent to a Washington lab for analysis and that other videos have emerged suggesting a possible problem with one of the rail car’s axles.

“We have obtained two videos which show preliminary indications of mechanical issues on one of the rail car axles,” Graham said at the Feb. 5 briefing, adding that the NTSB team was working to identify which rail car experienced the potential mechanical issue.

Graham said the train crew received an alarm from a “wayside defect detector shortly before the derailment, indicating a mechanical issue.”

“Then an emergency brake application initiated,” he continued, adding that a preliminary investigative report was expected within several weeks, though a full probe could take as long as 24 months.

Some of the footage was again referenced in a Feb. 14 update, in which the NTSB said that a surveillance video from a residence showed “what appears to be a wheel bearing in the final stage of overheat failure moments before the derailment.”

“The wheelset from the suspected railcar has been collected as evidence for metallurgical examination,” the NTSB stated.

Investigators have found the suspected overheated wheel bearing, and engineers from ♦



(Above) Heavy load trucks haul away freight cars that were damaged in the Feb. 3 Norfolk Southern Railway derailment in East Palestine, Ohio. **(Top Middle)** Drone footage shows the freight cars on fire on Feb. 4. **(Bottom Middle)** The continuing cleanup of portions of the Norfolk Southern freight train on Feb. 7.



the NTSB Materials Laboratory in Washington will examine it.

Investigators will complete their examination of the 11 tank cars that contained hazardous materials once they're fully decontaminated, the NTSB said.

Chemical 'Plume' Floating Down Ohio River

A total of about 50 train cars derailed in East Palestine on Feb. 3, with some containing the toxic chemical vinyl chloride, which at high concentrations can be deadly.

Short-term exposure to the chemical can cause dizziness, headaches, and respiratory problems. Long-term exposure has been linked to various health problems, including liver damage, immune system dysfunction, and certain types of cancer.

The derailment prompted evacuation orders in East Palestine, a village of about 5,000 residents.

The wreckage burned for days, and officials worried that the highly flammable vinyl chloride could lead to an uncontrolled explosion, so crews engineered controlled detonations.

Besides being burned off in a controlled fashion, contaminants from derailed cars also spilled into waterways, with officials tracking a large "plume"

of chemicals flowing down the Ohio River.

About 3,500 fish have been killed by the chemical spill, according to an estimate by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, with about seven miles of streams affected by the toxins.

Tiffani Kavalec, the head of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) surface water management division, said in a news conference on Feb. 14 that the plume is on its way toward Huntington, West Virginia, and that it consists mostly of "fire combustion chemicals."

Kavalec said that the plume is moving downriver at about 1 mph and becoming increasingly more diluted, adding that the agency doesn't believe the chemicals pose a threat to drinking water.

The Ohio River is "able to dilute the pollutants pretty quickly," Kavalec said, adding that the Ohio EPA is seeing very low levels of contaminants in the river.

The EPA said that water sampling is being carried out at various points along the river to ensure drinking water is safe.

"State and local agencies are conducting sampling throughout the Ohio River to ensure drinking water intakes aren't affected, and EPA is continuing to assist the state with sampling efforts at water treatment intake points along the Ohio River," the EPA said in a Feb. 14 update.



Traffic is restricted in the cleanup area of the train derailment site in East Palestine, Ohio.

water," DeWine said. "And I would be continuing to find out what the tests were showing as far as the air."

"I would be alert and concerned, but I think I would probably be back in my house."

DeWine said on Feb. 8 that it was safe for local residents to return to their homes.

Lingering Questions

People in and around East Palestine have been asking whether the air and water are safe for their families, pets, and livestock since the derailment caused a fire that sent a cloud of toxic smoke over the town.

There have been reports of sick or dead animals and persistent odors, and the EPA said that a number of hazardous chemicals were found at the site of the derailment, including vinyl chloride, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, ethylhexyl acrylate, isobutylene, and butyl acrylate.

The EPA has been carrying out community air monitoring in East Palestine around the clock, saying in its Feb. 14 update that it has "not detected any levels of health concern in the community that are attributed to the train derailment."

As of Feb. 14, the agency had screened 396 homes, and "no detections of vinyl chloride or hydrogen chloride were identified."

Although the EPA has said that air monitoring hasn't detected any hazards to health associated with the derailment, some locals have told media outlets that their health has suffered since returning home. ■

Jack Phillips contributed to this report.

5 Million
PEOPLE RELY ON the Ohio River for their drinking water.

50 Train Cars
AROUND 50 TRAIN cars were derailed in East Palestine on Feb. 3, with some containing the toxic chemical vinyl chloride.

5,000 Residents
OF THE VILLAGE of East Palestine were ordered to evacuate due to the derailment.

3,500 Dead Fish
AROUND 3,500 FISH have been killed by the chemical spill, with about seven miles of streams affected by the toxins.

LOOKWISE FROM L: JEFF LOUDERBACK/THE EPOCH TIMES; U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY; JEFF LOUDERBACK/THE EPOCH TIMES; U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

U.S. Navy sailors sort material recovered in the Atlantic Ocean from a Chinese spy balloon shot down by the U.S. Air Force off the coast of South Carolina, on Feb. 10.

PHOTO BY RYAN SEELBACH/U.S. NAVY/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

BALLOONS IN CHINA'S SPY TOOLBOX FOR YEARS

Compared to airplanes or satellites, balloons are cheaper, easier to maneuver, and harder to detect

BY EVA FU



YEARS BEFORE A GIGANTIC white spy balloon from China captured America's attention, a top Chinese aerospace scientist was keenly tracking the path of an unmanned airship making its way across the globe.

On a real-time map, the white blimp appeared as a blinking red dot, although in real life its size was formidable, weighing several tons and measuring 328 feet (100 meters) in length—about 80 feet longer than a Boeing 747-8, one of the largest passenger aircraft in the world.

“Look, here's America,” the vessel's chief architect, Wu Zhe, told state-run newspaper Nanfang Daily. He excitedly pointed to a red line marking the airship's journey at about 65,000 feet in the air, noting that in 2019, that flight was setting a world record.

Named “Cloud Chaser,” the airship had been flying for just shy of a month over three oceans and three continents, including what appears to be Florida. At the time of Wu's interview in August, the airship was hovering above the Pacific Ocean, days away from completing its mission.

Wu, a veteran aerospace researcher, has played a key role in advancing the Chinese regime in what it describes as the “near space” race, referring to the layer of the atmosphere sitting between 12 and 62 miles above the earth. This region, which is too high for jets but too low for satellites, had been deemed ripe for exploitation in the regime's bid to achieve military dominance.

Despite having existed for decades, the regime's military balloon program came into the spotlight recently when the United States shot down a high-altitude surveillance balloon that drifted across the country for a week and hovered above multiple sensitive U.S. military sites. That balloon, the size of three buses, was smaller than Cloud Chaser.

The U.S. and Canadian militaries have since taken down three flying objects over North American airspace, although the White House on Feb. 14 suggested those may have been private craft.

Wu is turning 66 this month. He has ties to at least four of the six Chinese entities Washington recently sanctioned



A Chinese spy balloon flies over Billings, Mont., on Feb. 1.

for supporting Beijing's sprawling military balloon program, which the U.S. administration said has reached over 40 countries on five continents.

As a specialist in aircraft design, Wu has helped develop the Chinese regime's homegrown fighter jets and stealth technology during his more than three decades in the aerospace field, taking home at least one award for his contribution to the military.

He was the vice president at Beihang University in Beijing, a prestigious state-run aeronautics school, until he voluntarily gave up the title for teaching and research in 2004, and he once served on the scientific advisory committee for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Armaments Department, a now-dissolved agency in charge of equipping the Chinese military.

Public records show that Wu is well-connected in the aerospace field, with stakes in many aviation firms. He is the chairman of Beijing-based Eagles Men Aviation Science, one of the six firms that Washington named as culprits in the balloon sanctions. Its branch in Shanxi was also sanctioned.

Both Beihang and the Harbin Institute of Technology, Wu's alma mater and dubbed “China's MIT,” are on a U.S. trade blacklist, the former for aiding

China's military rocket and unmanned air vehicle systems, and the latter for using U.S. technology to support Chinese missile programs.

‘Silent Killer’

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has long vied for dominance in near space, which Chinese scientists see as a region for a variety of applications, from high-altitude balloons to hypersonic missiles.

As early as the 1970s, efforts were underway at the state-run Chinese Academy of Sciences to explore high-altitude balloons, according to a state media report. Lacking the aid of computers, Chinese researchers drew inspiration from German and Japanese aerospace books and cut up newspapers to piece together prototypes.

The result was a helium balloon with an aluminum basket, altogether about the size of a typical hot air balloon. The team triumphantly named it HAPI and flew it into the stratosphere in 1983 to observe signals from a neutron star.

For the Chinese military, there's high strategic value in aerostats, a technology that was in use as early as the late 1700s by the French as lookouts. Compared to airplanes or satellites, balloons are cheaper and easier to maneuver,

can carry heavier payloads and cover a wider area, and are harder to detect, according to a 2021 article published in PLA Daily, the Chinese military's official newspaper. They consume less energy, allowing them to loiter in a target area for an extended period. And critically, they often aren't caught by radars, so they can easily evade an enemy's air defense system or be classified as UFOs.

Indeed, that appears to have occurred. Biden administration officials said they were able to retroactively detect three Chinese spy balloons that traveled over the United States during the Trump administration.

Both Taiwan and Japan have since identified several suspected Chinese balloon incursions in recent years and are now threatening to shoot down any suspected objects in their airspace.

Chinese military researchers have also touted the utility of these balloons during combat. Newspaper articles and research papers have pored over balloons' potential to screen for missiles, planes, and warships in the lower space,

“**IN THE FUTURE, BALLOON PLATFORMS MAY BECOME LIKE SUBMARINES IN THE DEEP SEA: A SILENT KILLER THAT INVOKES TERROR.**”

People's Liberation Army Daily

serve as a medium for wartime communications, drop weapons to attack enemies, conduct electromagnetic interference, and deliver food or military supplies over a long distance.

“In the future, balloon platforms may become like submarines in the deep sea: a silent killer that invokes terror,” the PLA Daily article stated.

A Thriving Industry

Chinese scientists have made great strides in near space technology since HAPI's launch. In 2017, they sent a yellow-spotted river turtle 68,900 feet over the northwestern Xinjiang region, marking the first time an aerostat was able to bring a live animal into the stratosphere.

The following year, a high-altitude balloon dropped three hypersonic missiles in the Gobi Desert in Inner Mongolia. Last year, a balloon brought a rocket more than 82,000 feet above the earth, making China the first country experimenting with such techniques, according to state media reports.

While the Chinese regime claimed



FBI special agents process material recovered from a Chinese spy balloon that was shot down by a U.S. military jet off the coast of South Carolina, on Feb. 9.

Courtesy of the FBI

the spy balloon was a civilian airship used for meteorological purposes, meteorological officials in China have a history of collaboration with the military.

Meteorological officials under the PLA coordinated with local meteorological bureaus to host a three-city military drill in 2013, according to state media outlet Xinhua. Such co-operation appeared to have deepened in the following years, after CCP leader Xi Jinping ordered a major overhaul of the military. In 2017, the director of the China Meteorological Administration, the country's national weather service, met with officials in the military and vowed to make a priority of "military-civil fusion," a term for the regime's aggressive national strategy to harness private sector innovations for military use.

The manufacturing of balloons has also flourished in the meantime.

Zhuzhou Rubber Research & Design Institute in China's south-central Hunan Province, a subsidiary of state agrochemical giant ChemChina—which is on a U.S. blacklist over its ties to the military—is a dedicated supplier for the national weather bureau, producing three-quarters of the balloons it uses in nationwide weather stations, according to state media reports.

The company, sometimes described as a "made-in-China hidden champion," was millions in debt in the early 2000s until it entered the balloon manufacturing game. It went on to become a leader in the industry, playing a chief role in formulating China's national standard for weather balloons, and has around 30 patents under its name, a local government website shows.

In September 2017, Zhuzhou Rubber invested 30 million yuan (\$4.38 million) in a key provincial-level lab for near-space sounding balloon research that it said aims to provide "security for national defenses on the near space front."

It won a proclamation from the PLA's General Armaments Department for designing a balloon for the return of Chang'e 5, the spacecraft used for China's fifth lunar exploration mission, which was undertaken in 2020.

In March 2022, the China Ordnance Industry Experiment and Testing Institute—whose parent company, state-

owned Norinco, is a major weapons producer for the Chinese military—inquired into prices for obtaining hundreds of sounding balloons from the firm, according to a tender bid on a Hunan provincial government site. It is unclear whether the institute made a bid after the tender.

The company's website has become inaccessible since the recent spy balloon incident.



DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES ARE BOUND BY LAW FROM INFRINGING OTHER NATIONS' AIRSPACE."

Su Tze-yun,
director, Institute for National Defense and Security Research

'China Speed'

Zhuzhou Rubber is but one player in the field. Dongguan Lingkong Remote Sensing Technology has claimed dozens of patents related to stratosphere aircraft, including a maneuverable stratospheric balloon and lightweight high-strength aerostat material. Wu is the statutory auditor of Dongguan Lingkong and the director of Beihang University's Dongguan city research institute, which owns the company.

China Electronics Technology Group Corp. (CETC), a massive state-owned enterprise whose 48th research institute was hit with U.S. sanctions in the aftermath of the balloon incident, once credited itself for helping China bridge the technological gap in aerostats.

In 2010, the company showcased a large white blimp. Through its

high-definition surveillance gear that scans the ground nonstop, it could spot details of objects as small as a book over an area of more than a hundred square miles, according to a Chinese state media report republished on the State Administration of Science website.

The JY-400 balloon that CETC's 38th research institute unveiled in 2021 can meet both civilian and military needs, Chinese media reports said, with the capacity to carry payloads for detecting missiles and eavesdropping on and interfering with communications. The reports cited Russia media expressing surprise at seeing their country outcompeted by China at a breathtaking pace, dubbing it "China speed."

Wu's Cloud Chaser airship was launched near Hainan, the island province that lies in the southern tip of China that U.S. officials have identified as a base for the Chinese surveillance balloon operations.

Considering China's vast espionage program, those sanctioned by the United States represent only the "tip of the iceberg," said Su Tze-yun, director of the Institute for National Defense and Security Research in Taiwan.

But challenges abound for Western nations seeking to blunt the covert operation. The regime, as Su noted, could easily use front companies as a cover to steal or import Western technologies while attracting little notice. Under the civil-military fusion strategy, every private company could be indirectly supporting the regime's military development, making it harder to draw the line and impose punishment. But that at least heightens the need to block Chinese entities from acquiring U.S. firms, he said.

While Western countries are also developing balloon technology, what differentiates the actions is China's authoritarianism, according to Su.

"Democratic countries are bound by law from infringing other nations' airspace," he told The Epoch Times. "This is why the same technology, once it's in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party, would become a threat." ■

Luo Ya and Dorothy Li contributed to this report.

Perspectives



Inside the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in Washington on Jan. 19. Analysts all over the world consider the debt ceiling a nonevent because Congress always agrees to increase it.

PHOTO BY STEFANI REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



REPUBLICANS ARE RIGHT TO BE ALARMED

China has more land-based nuclear launchers than the United States. **59**



DROP THE 'WOKE'

A new survey shows that people prefer politically neutral brands. **61**



LIFTING DEBT CEILING IS NOT SOCIAL POLICY

There's plenty of room for efficiency in the U.S. federal budget. **62**

Thomas McArdle



The Rick Scott Democrats

Under Scott's plan, all federal legislation would have to end after 5 years

FEW THINGS HAVE worked better over the decades for Democrats in attracting the votes of those of modest means than declaring that Republicans are trying to throw Grandma out into the snow to die. President Joe Biden's State of the Union speech continued the tradition.

Go back four decades to when President Ronald Reagan and the Democrats' House Speaker Tip O'Neill agreed to a compromise that promised long-term solvency for the Social Security system "sufficient to pay scheduled benefits in full through 2057," which included rendering half of the value of Social Security benefits subject to taxation, accelerating payroll tax increases, and raising the age for full retirement at a point long down the road.

Reagan was snookered into O'Neill's promise of \$3 in spending cuts for every \$1 in taxes raised. The taxes were imposed, alright, but the cuts in expenditures from the Democrats controlling both houses of Congress never arrived, and Democrats never intended to allow them to arrive.

The Greenspan Social Security commission on which the deal was based failed to foresee reductions in the national birth rate, and today, the Social Security trustees warn that the combined Social Security trust funds are on track to depletion by 2035.

O'Neill bullied Reagan with vicious, personal rhetoric, including charges that the 40th president had "made a target of the politically weak, the poor, the working people," that the economic policies that brought "morning again in America"—so much so that 49 states voted to reelect Reagan in 1984—were

really just "one big Christmas party for the rich."

In 1984, O'Neill said: "The evil is in the White House at the present time. And that evil is a man who has no care and no concern for the working class of America and the future generations of America, and who likes to ride a horse. He's cold. He's mean. He's got ice water for blood."

Top Democrats want to save Social Security and Medicare as much as Rick Scott does, and, in some respects, in a similar fashion.

Fast forward to Biden's State of the Union address to Congress on Feb. 7.

"Some Republicans want Medicare and Social Security to sunset every five years," Biden warned. "That means if Congress doesn't vote to keep them, those programs will go away. ... If anyone tries to cut Social Security, I will stop them."

The "some Republicans" to whom Biden refers is primarily Sen. Rick Scott of Florida, an honest, successful businessman who has sinned against the swamp by daring to bring accountability and democratic review to the monstrous legislation Congress routinely passes.

Scott's proposal would require that all federal legislation sunset in five years.

"If a law is worth keeping, Congress can pass it again," Scott submits, extolling the kind of pure common sense that drives the typical politician to fits of hysteria.

"To suggest that this means I

want to cut Social Security or Medicare is a lie. Does he think I also intend to get rid of the U.S. Navy? Or the Border Patrol?"

Is this really more extreme than what then-Sen. Joe Biden proposed in 1984, with Republican Sens. Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas: a freeze of all federal spending, including Social Security and the other entitlements, for a year? It even included, as Biden described it at the time, a provision "that we cannot increase the debt limit again until we have acted on a budget freeze"—kind of like what he was accusing Republicans of during his speech: "Some of my Republican friends want to take the economy hostage unless I agree to their economic plans. ... if we don't cut Social Security and Medicare, they'll let America default on its debt for the first time in our history."

Biden and other powerful Democrats have been attacked from the left, including by supporters of democratic socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, for supporting such "adjustments." As the leftist magazine *In These Times* complained during the 2020 presidential campaign, "The Democratic Party establishment, including Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, as well as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, have traditionally embraced" the view that "some combination of payroll tax increases and benefit cuts will be required to 'protect' or 'modernize' the program."

In other words, Biden, Pelosi, and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer want to save Social Security and Medicare as much as Rick Scott does and, in some respects, in a similar fashion. But they want to wait until they're sure their party can get the full political credit for doing it.

Anders Corr



Republicans Are Right to Be Alarmed

China has more land-based nuclear launchers than the US

CHINA'S NUCLEAR arsenal is getting more powerful. On Feb. 7, the public learned from U.S. Strategic Command that the number of China's land-based intercontinental ballistic missile launchers exceed those of the United States.

Lawmakers in Washington raised the revelation as a "wake-up call."

"We have no time to waste in adjusting our nuclear force posture to deter both Russia and China," several Republicans said in a joint statement. "This will have to mean higher numbers and new capabilities."

The U.S. military is already modernizing its nuclear forces, but the discovery of China's production speed will quicken the pace.

Another factor in U.S. nuclear modernization is Russia's violation of the New START Treaty of 2011. Russia has refused to fully honor the treaty's inspection requirements, making it unverifiable.

China refuses to join the treaty altogether, claiming it has a smaller number of nuclear weapons than either the United States or Russia. According to the Pentagon, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had more than 400 nuclear warheads in 2021, trending toward 1,500 by 2035.

However, this number is hard to verify, and there are suspicions that the PLA has many more.

Paul Dibb, an emeritus professor of strategic studies at the Australian National University, claims China has 2,000 shorter-range nuclear missiles that could reach much of the Indo-Pacific.

North Korea's mass production of nuclear weapons is also driving concerns. On Feb. 8, Pyongyang paraded at least 11 liquid-fueled Hwasong-17 ICBMs that take hours to fuel and erect but can still reach the

continental United States. Pyongyang also displayed what appeared to be a prototype of a faster-launch solid-fueled ICBM on a transporter erector. Such rockets can be launched within minutes of an order.

China will claim that its nuclear warheads and nuclear-capable missiles are far fewer in number than those of the United States or Russia, which is likely true. However, they're reaching or have passed the number necessary for a survivable second strike in case of a first strike.

China refuses to join the treaty altogether, claiming it has a smaller number of nuclear weapons than either the United States or Russia.

The PLA's expanding nuclear capabilities serve a second function for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which is the ability to threaten non-nuclear U.S. partners in Asia, including the Philippines, Taiwan, Australia, Japan, and South Korea. Such threats against U.S. partners, who can never be sure the United States would risk nuclear war to defend them, can be effective at nuclear compellence. This is the threat of nuclear strikes not to deter, but to obtain concessions from a targeted state.

Over the past few years, the CCP threatened the Philippines over the South China Sea and Taiwan over its claims to sovereignty. Both included threats of war, backed by strategic signaling with nuclear-capable bomber flights. In 2021, Beijing threatened Australia with a missile strike to deter it from joining the United States in a war over Taiwan.

While Japan isn't officially a nuclear

power, repeated threats from the CCP, for example, against the Japanese Senkaku Islands, reportedly led Japan to develop the capability to field nuclear weapons within months.

Polls show that most South Koreans favor developing nuclear weapons to deter both China and North Korea. South Korea already has a submarine-launched ballistic missile that could be used to deliver nuclear weapons if Seoul so decides.

While the United States is developing its nuclear deterrent in response to the increased nuclear belligerence of China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran, the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons is subject to diminishing marginal returns. The first deliverable nuclear weapon a country possesses has a large deterrent effect, but the 4,000th weapon (about how many nuclear warheads the United States and Russia each have, according to the Federation of American Scientists) has relatively less.

A war resulting in large-scale use of nuclear weapons might also produce so much aerosolized ash and smoke as to block out the sun and cause a nuclear winter, killing crops globally and much life on the planet.

The risk of nuclear war thus makes the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" that supposedly protects our allies insufficiently reliable. The United States is not even willing to risk escalation by supplying Ukraine with fighter jets or Taiwan with boots on the ground. Given U.S. risk aversion to conventional deterrence, a nuclear strike on Russia or China in retaliation for their strikes on a U.S. ally are almost inconceivable.

The greater deterrent effect, given incalculable risks from nuclear war and decreasing marginal deterrence from nuclear weapons, is to provide some of these threatened democracies with a modest but independent nuclear deterrent of their own.

MILTON EZRATI is chief economist for Vested, a contributing editor at The National Interest, and author of “Thirty Tomorrows” and “Bite-Sized Investing.”

Milton Ezrati



Could Washington Default?

The stalemate over debt does not threaten default

EVERY FEW YEARS, Washington approaches a debt ceiling limit, and worries about default multiply.

Theoretically, default is possible, but practically speaking, it's never a real possibility. Even in an extended government shutdown, Washington has resources that will allow it to meet principal and interest payments.

In this matter, it's critical to realize that Washington has and will always prioritize its debt obligations. Whatever politicians say about the primacy of programs near and dear to the hearts of important constituencies, they know that the stability of the government, the financial system, and hence on, the economy depends on meeting the government's debt obligations.

In the 234 years since Alexander Hamilton established the reliability of federal debt as the linchpin of American finance, Washington has never missed an interest or principal payment. Even in the most trying times—such as the Great Depression, the Civil War, or World War II—it has always paid in full and on time. It isn't likely to give way now because of a congressional impasse.

Even apart from this powerful historical evidence, Washington has several means to meet its obligations even if Congress balks for a while at raising the debt ceiling. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen all but admitted this only recently. After first engaging in needlessly inflammatory remarks of a global financial collapse, she then admitted that the Treasury has enough cash on hand to meet its obligations easily through June. Five months might not seem like a lot in the grand scheme of things, but no debt debate has ever lasted that long, and it otherwise provides a

lot of wiggle room for Congress to arrive at a more lasting resolution of the matter.

Simple arithmetic also takes some of the edge off worries. If the Treasury issues debt to pay off a maturing bond, which incidentally is the way it proceeds generally, the outstanding amount of debt doesn't increase in the least. The maturing debt decreases the amount of debt outstanding, while the new debt issued to pay off the old bonds brings the total back up to where it was. On this basis, there's no difficulty making good on principal payments even if the nation finds itself up against a legal debt limit.

Washington has several means to meet its obligations even if Congress balks for a while at raising the debt ceiling.

Of course, such calculations don't consider interest payments or the need for more debt to support an expanding government. These could push the total over the limit. In this situation, Washington can reallocate funds from one presumably less vital activity to other more vital activities, such as making good on its interest obligations. Politicians will argue endlessly about what's essential. In the past, they've decided that they can close national parks, for example, and furlough thousands of federal administrative personnel to free cash with which to pay interest on the debt and also to make Social Security payments. Some citizens are inconvenienced, and some suffer hardship, but when Congress reaches a compromise on

raising the debt ceiling, as it inevitably always does, services are restored, and the furloughed workers receive back pay.

Another possibility, though never before used, is to tap the Federal Reserve's huge portfolio of Treasury debt. According to the Fed's own accounting, it holds some \$5.2 trillion in Treasury debt. That's almost a full year of federal spending. In a pinch, the Fed could simply forgive all or some of this debt. That might seem like a drastic move, but since, for practical purposes, the Fed is part of the federal government, such an act would amount to little more than moving money from one pocket to another. Ultimately, such a use of these funds could have inflationary effects, but that matter is separate from default.

If the history of debt ceiling debates is any guide, Washington will not likely need to resort to such extreme measures. The longest such problems have persisted can be measured in weeks rather than months. The sequence of events is always the same. It goes like this: The Treasury secretary—whether Republican or Democrat—points out the debt ceiling constraint and attaches some ominous language around what will happen if the ceiling isn't lifted immediately. Yellen has already delivered these lines in the drama. Media outlets enlarge on the fears expressed by the secretary. That part of the play is presently being enacted. Holdouts in Congress refuse to compromise.

Once, however, the political winds make it plain who will get the blame for the disruption, Congress quickly manages a “bipartisan” compromise that lifts the ceiling before the need for extreme measures, much less default. That's the likely path over the next few weeks.

KEVIN STOCKLIN is a business reporter, film producer, and former Wall Street banker. He wrote and produced “We All Fall Down: The American Mortgage Crisis” and “The Shadow State.”

Kevin Stocklin



Drop the ‘Woke’

A new survey shows people prefer politically neutral brands

AS COMPANIES GEAR UP for an economic downturn, cutting costs and staff, CEOs might want to heed the rising voices of consumers who want them to focus on business rather than politics.

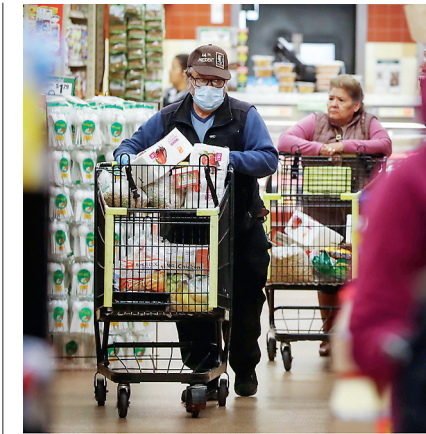
According to a recent poll of more than 1,000 likely voters by the Trafalgar Group and Convention of States Action (COSA), nearly 80 percent said that, given the choice, they'd be more likely to buy from a company that was politically neutral. In a rare case of bipartisan consensus, Democrats (76.9 percent) and Republicans (78.8 percent) both felt this way in roughly equal measure.

COSA President Mark Meckler told The Epoch Times that the message to CEOs is “go back to doing what you were hired to do, which is to make money for shareholders.”

The term “woke” is used by both liberals and conservatives to describe a number of more radical progressive ideologies, including critical race theory, social justice, and gender theory.

Disney is a cautionary tale for CEOs, Meckler said. Disney has become a left-wing political advocate in recent years, introducing sexual content and a “not-at-all-secret-gay-agenda” into children's programs, promoting critical race theory and demanding reparations through shows such as “The Proud Family,” and fighting a parental rights law in Florida that bans sexual topics in public school for kids in third grade or younger.

This has been off-putting for some Disney customers, and the company's share price has been hammered by shortfalls in subscribers to the Disney+ channel, claims of a hostile work environment by conservative staffers, and retaliatory actions by the state of Florida to revoke the privileged status of Disney's theme park near Orlando.



Corporate executives may be seeing ideological pursuits as an increasingly unaffordable luxury.

“Capitalism, luckily for all of us, is a force of nature,” Meckler said. “You either make profits or you don't, and ultimately companies that don't make profits are going to be punished in the marketplace.”

In response to pressure from investors such as Nelson Pelz—who demanded that Disney improve its financial performance—the company fired CEO Bob Chapek, who initiated the fight with Florida, and has announced a corporate reorganization that will include laying off 7,000 employees and cutting more than \$5 billion in costs.

Corporate cost-cutting will likely take a toll on corporate politicization, hitting HR departments and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) executives who are becoming increasingly unaffordable.

A January report in Bloomberg stated that listings for DEI jobs were down 19 percent last year, a greater decline than in legal or HR depart-

ments in general. This follows a dramatic expansion in DEI hiring after the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. Adding to this are claims by laid-off diversity workers at Meta that they received eight weeks of severance pay, while most employees who were let go got 16 weeks. The diversity employees were part of Meta's newly created Sourcer Development Program, which is designed to recruit minority employees.

Corporate executives may be seeing ideological pursuits as an increasingly unaffordable luxury. According to a 2022 survey by management consultancy KPMG, half of the CEOs polled stated that they were putting their ESG plans on hold because of the current business environment.

In addition to consumers, investors seem also to want companies to focus on business over politics. A 2022 survey by Consumers' Research of 2,000 retail investors found that 70 percent of them said their primary goal is to save for retirement or generate income, versus 3 percent who invested for ESG goals such as fighting climate change or promoting social justice.

Despite this, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) moved in March 2022 to implement a new requirement that all listed companies must produce annual audited reports on the carbon emissions of their company and all suppliers and customers, as well as a plan to reduce them.

The SEC, established to protect small investors from securities fraud, claimed as justification that investors were demanding this information. However, the investors who support the SEC rule appear to be large institutional asset managers and progressive state pension fund managers rather than the people who depend on those investments to fund their retirement.

DANIEL LACALLE is chief economist at hedge fund Tressis and author of “Freedom or Equality,” “Escape from the Central Bank Trap,” and “Life in the Financial Markets.”

Daniel Lacalle

Lifting Debt Ceiling Isn't Social Policy

There's plenty of room for efficiency in the US federal budget



EVERY TIME THE United States reaches its debt limit, we read that it's important to reach an agreement to lift it. The narrative is that the debt ceiling must be raised or else the U.S. economy will suffer a severe contraction. The debt ceiling is viewed as an evil and anachronistic burden on growth. It isn't.

Analysts all over the world consider the debt ceiling a nonevent because Congress always agrees to increase it. As such, markets don't even care.

Analysts and commentators say that Congress faces two options: either raise the debt ceiling or suspend it. Really? No one seems to think of the urgent need to cut spending.

The problem of the United States' debt isn't one of receipts. It's created by the constant increase in mandatory spending. Governments continue to raise taxes, and when the economy grows, they spend more. However, when the economy stalls or declines, they spend even more. In fiscal year 2022, the government spent \$6.27 trillion. In 2015, it spent \$4.6 trillion. There's no revenue measure that would cover an increase of such magnitude and maintain it every year.

Blaming the deficit on tax cuts makes no mathematical sense and assumes a confiscatory and extractive view of the economy: that the private sector must always provide rising revenues to a government that always spends more.

It's interesting to see how the debate has shifted to tax cuts, which didn't reduce receipts, instead of spending that never generates the announced fiscal multiplier or reduces the deficit.

Those who say that the deficit would have been solved by eliminating the last tax cuts have a problem



Those who say that the deficit would have been solved by eliminating the last tax cuts have a problem with mathematics.

with mathematics. There's no way that any form of revenue measure could have covered a \$1.6 trillion increase in spending. Even if you believe in the idea that the government will always collect higher receipts from massive tax increases, which is false, only one year of mild recession would balloon the deficit and debt again.

The solution to the U.S. budget deficit isn't more taxes. Even in the most optimistic receipt scenario, there's no tax hike program that would even start to address the structural deficit, estimated at \$1 trillion a year. Expenses are annual and consolidated, but receipts are cyclical and depend on the health of the economy.

Deficits are always a spending problem. However, none of the parties want to address the ballooning levels of U.S. debt by reducing expenditures. Therefore, they always agree

on increasing public debt, which makes the economy weaker.

More taxes hurt the recovery, damage the job improvement potential, and reduce investment in the economy. More taxes means less growth and no deficit improvement. More taxes and more printing mean that—added to those negatives—real wages decline, deposit savings evaporate, and the inflationary tax destroys the middle class.

Those who say deficits are reserves that the government creates for the private sector and that deficit spending is good for growth because a monetarily sovereign country such as the United States can spend and borrow as it pleases are simply lying. If deficit spending were a source of reserves that benefited the private sector, the United States' productivity, growth, investment, and consumption in real terms would be off the charts, not sluggish, and real wages would be rising, not falling.

Printing money and raising taxes aren't social policies. They are profoundly anti-social, as they destroy the middle class and make the economy weaker. Raising the debt ceiling is also extremely negative for the middle class because it means more taxes, lower purchasing power of the currency, and stagnation in the future.

There's plenty of room for efficiency in the U.S. budget. However, if there's an incentive to pass the imbalances to the next generation, governments and voters will agree to do it. There will be a point where the United States' ability to disguise its massive imbalances using the currency and debt markets will evaporate as confidence in the economy and the government diminishes. If uncontrolled spending isn't addressed, that moment may come sooner than many think.

MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

FANYU is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China's economy since 2015.

Fan Yu

Russian Oil Embargo Benefits Only India

The losses of Western nations have become India's gain

RUSSIA HAS AN ACE UP its sleeve to evade oil sanctions imposed by Western nations: India. Most Western nations have barred the direct import of Russian crude. But their losses (both Russia and Western nations) have become India's gain.

Russia has become India's largest oil supplier. And with India's expanding refining infrastructure, the country is poised to be a major player in the export of gasoline and diesel.

Here's the loophole: There are no sanctions against gasoline and diesel refined using Russian crude. And even if there were, sources of crude are hard to track—once crude enters a country, it's effectively become fungible.

The Russian ambassador to India, Denis Alipov, proudly announced to reporters in late January that the country has become India's biggest oil supplier. In January, India increased its importation of Russian crude to 1.7 million barrels per day (bpd), up from 1.2 million bpd in December 2022. That's a dramatic shift from earlier in the year—before Russia invaded Ukraine—when Russian oil made up less than 1 percent of India's imports. In December 2021, India only imported about 36,000 bpd from Russia.

India, as a neutral party in the Russia-Ukraine war, is in a strategically advantageous position to both solve its own energy needs and gain market share as a refined product supplier.

As the world's No. 3 crude oil consumer, India needs to import 85 percent of its oil. Previously, much of that was supplied by West Africa, the United States, and the Middle East. But due to the oil embargo against Russia, African and Middle Eastern oil prices have shot up as European buyers bid up prices because of their inability to buy Russian crude.

This is where India—and China—



India is in a strategically advantageous position to both solve its own energy needs and gain market share as a refined product supplier.

stepped in as a buyer of last resort for Russian crude, at discounted prices. According to Telegraph India, the average discount per barrel is \$10 for India.

According to S&P Global Commodity Insights, India is looking to diversify its crude supplier by importing both Russian and U.S. oil in an effort to stave off future supply shocks.

What is it doing with all of this oil? Indian industrial and energy giants Reliance Energy and Nayara Energy have expanded their refining capacity, and India has suddenly become a major global player in refined oil product. State-owned energy giants such as Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum have also gotten into the refining sector.

The United States used to buy so-called VGO refined oil products from Russia. Now, the United States buys about 200,000 bpd of finished products, such as VGO, from India.

Europe is also a large customer.

VGO is vacuum gas oil, which is heavy oil left over from petroleum distillation. It's a refined product that's easy to transport and can be quickly refined to become diesel or gasoline fuel.

New York state has also become a large importer of Indian oil products. Bloomberg reported on Jan. 31 that New York has imported 89,000 bpd of gas and diesel from India, or roughly 40 percent of the oil fuel needs for the region. Much of that gas and diesel was refined from Russian crude.

With oil prices so high, the United States can't afford to choose. Gas and diesel stockpiles along the U.S. East Coast are at their multiyear lows, leaving the residents of the Eastern seaboard susceptible to a supply and price shock.

All of this makes a mockery of the U.S. and the G-7 nations' intended restrictions on Russian oil, such as price caps and import embargoes. Clearly, the sanctions are ineffective and a waste of time and resources. They were and will always amount to nothing more than political talking points.

And with most of the world starting at a global economic recession, governments would be foolhardy and irresponsible to continue this policy. Residents in the West are already struggling under high inflation, and forcing them to continue paying high prices for oil and gas is political malpractice.

The Russian embargoes were “invented by bureaucrats with finance degrees. None of them really understand oil markets,” Paul Sankey, president of Sankey Research, said during a segment of CNBC's “Street Signs Asia” on Feb. 2.

“It has failed completely,” Sankey said.

THOUGHT LEADERS

A Parent's Experience of Gender Activism in Schools

Behind parents' backs, changing childrens' names, pronouns, restroom preference



January Littlejohn, parental rights activist and mental health professional.

“I T WASN'T JUST CHANGING names and pronouns,” says parental rights activist and mental health professional January Littlejohn. “They asked her which restroom she preferred to use. They asked her which sex she preferred to room with on overnight field trips.”

Then, she said, school personnel asked her 13-year-old daughter how they should refer to her when speaking to her parents, suggesting they deceive them.

In a recent episode of “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek spoke with Littlejohn, who in 2021 filed a lawsuit against her daughter’s Florida school district after school officials met with the 13-year-old—without Littlejohn’s knowledge or consent—to discuss a “gender support” plan.

Littlejohn discussed gender activism in schools; how vulnerable teenagers are influenced, misdiagnosed, and started on a pathway that can cause permanent changes to their bodies; and how parents can protect their children.

JAN JEKIELEK: January, tell us what happened to your daughter.

JANUARY LITTLEJOHN: Ironically, I specialized in ADHD, and my daughter was diagnosed with ADHD. She struggled to fit in at school. When she went to middle school, she found this friend group, and we were thrilled. Then, we started to see warning signs that this wasn’t a healthy place for her.

Fast forward to the spring of 2020, and our daughter, out of the blue, expressed to us that she was confused about her sex. This was after three of her school friends had started identifying as transgender. Back then, there wasn’t a lot of information. So we were struggling, getting help from another mental health professional and trying to get to the root

“Our daughter out of the blue expressed to us that she was confused about her sex.”

of her issue. Like so many other kids that fall into this ideology, she also had issues like anxiety, plus she’s ADHD. She’s gifted, her intelligence is high, but her ADHD keeps her emotional intelligence and maturity low.

And so, we embraced her quirkiness and allowed her to dress how she wanted. When this happened, like many of these kids, she wanted a name change, a change in pronouns. I knew what gender dysphoria was, which is a mental health diagnosis, but it’s rare, and it doesn’t appear in clusters of friends. When she would come home and say these things, I was thinking, “Statistically, this is impossible.”

Several weeks later, my daughter got into the car after school and said, “Mom, I had a meeting today with school officials and they asked me which restroom I wanted to use.” I was taken aback. I didn’t know why they would be having a meeting with my child without telling me, because my daughter, with her ADHD, has a 504 plan on file. I had been present and involved at every 504 plan meeting. I knew by law they could not implement a 504 plan without my signature and because she’s a minor.

MR. JEKIELEK: What is a 504 plan?

MS. LITTLEJOHN: A 504 plan is that by law, children who have learning disabilities are afforded accommodations under the ADA (Americans with

Disabilities Act). That dictated what accommodations she was privy to, to help her be successful in school. I immediately emailed the guidance counselor whom I knew and said, “I have great concerns that my daughter had a meeting I wasn’t aware of, and you asked her which restroom she wanted to use.”

I was called back by the guidance counselor and the assistant principal and was told that by law, my daughter was now protected from me, her parent, under a nondiscrimination law, and they couldn’t give me any information about the meeting with my 13-year-old child.

They told me my only recourse was to speak with the assistant district superintendent, which I did immediately. Just to give you an idea of how long this took, the violation occurred when school had started, but we didn’t get a meeting with the principal until the end of October. We were shown the transgender or gender-nonconforming support plan they had completed with our daughter behind closed doors without our notification or consent.

It was done with a school counselor, the assistant principal, and a social worker I’d never met. You have three adults in a room with a 13-year-old child. And then, they put the burden of whether my parental rights would be respected and whether my husband and I would be invited to attend this meeting on my daughter. She was the sole determiner.

It wasn’t just changing names and pronouns. They asked her which restroom she preferred. They asked her which sex she preferred to room with on overnight field trips. And then, they did something particularly egregious. They said, “How should we refer to you when we speak to your parents? Should we use your birth name and pronouns?” to effectively deceive us that the meeting had ever taken place.

When they socially transition ❖

“They call it a pause button. That’s a lie. They say that these puberty blockers are reversible. That’s a lie.”

these children, they are putting them on a pathway. Social transition is the first step toward medical transition. When parents discover what “gender-affirming care” is—that we are giving children experimental puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones, which will eventually sterilize them—parents are horrified that schools take them along this pathway. And this is not a neutral intervention. They are celebrating these kids.

MR. JEKIELEK: There’s an explosion of children going to these pediatric gender clinics.

MS. LITTLEJOHN: It’s frightening because we’re ignoring a mental health issue. These children and adults struggling with confusion over their sex deserve compassion, but they also deserve ethical evidence-based treatment. What we have seen is activism infiltrating not just our schools but our psychological associations and our medicine.

Think about this. A child who is 9 or 10 years old is put on this medical pathway. They start the child on puberty blockers around 10, or stage 2 of puberty, when the secondary sex characteristics are just starting. That process has never been done on this scale.

They call it a pause button. That’s a lie. They say that these puberty blockers are reversible. That’s a lie. We’re basing this on a feeling the child has, and we’re trying to alter their body before their brain is fully developed. We’ve taken a mental health diagnosis, normalized it, and we’re medicalizing children.

No matter what these children

or adults do physically, you cannot change your sex. Your DNA stays the same. It’s a war they’re never going to win. You can’t outrun biological truth.

MR. JEKIELEK: You mentioned earlier that it was statistically impossible to have this cluster of gender dysphoric girls in your school. There is this element of social contagion, which I know you’ve been thinking about.

MS. LITTLEJOHN: What’s happening is the normalization of transgender identities, and again, I firmly believe that these people who are struggling deserve compassion. But when you normalize a mental health issue, then you introduce ideology into the school system.

They are creating confusion in children where no previous confusion existed. That is wrong, and that is evil. And that word, transgender, no longer has a coherent meaning. It means whatever that person wants it to mean. We’re making serious medical changes to children’s and teens’ bodies based on a nonscientific feeling.

MR. JEKIELEK: Are there any red flags you can point out to parents?

MS. LITTLEJOHN: Many of these children spend a great deal of time on their phones and the internet. There are a number of trans influencers on YouTube and TikTok. Abigail Shrier, in her book “Irreversible Damage,” dedicated an entire chapter to the trans influencers, because they’re so powerful, intriguing, and convincing. It’s really important that parents monitor what their kids are seeing

and consuming.

I’m not a proponent of children under 16 having a smartphone. And even then, parents, your No. 1 job is to protect your child. You need to know what your children are being exposed to. A kid with a smartphone is a recipe for disaster.

Some of the other warning signs would be drastic changes in mood, being withdrawn, and wanting to alter their appearance overnight. Are they coming home with propaganda, the pronoun pens and flags? What clubs are they in at school?

Do not freak out on your child. Stay calm. Ask questions. Work on your relationship, because one of the biggest indicators of children desisting is a strong parent-child relationship. And do your research. There are many parent organizations, like Genspect, where parents can get accurate information and understand their treatment options.

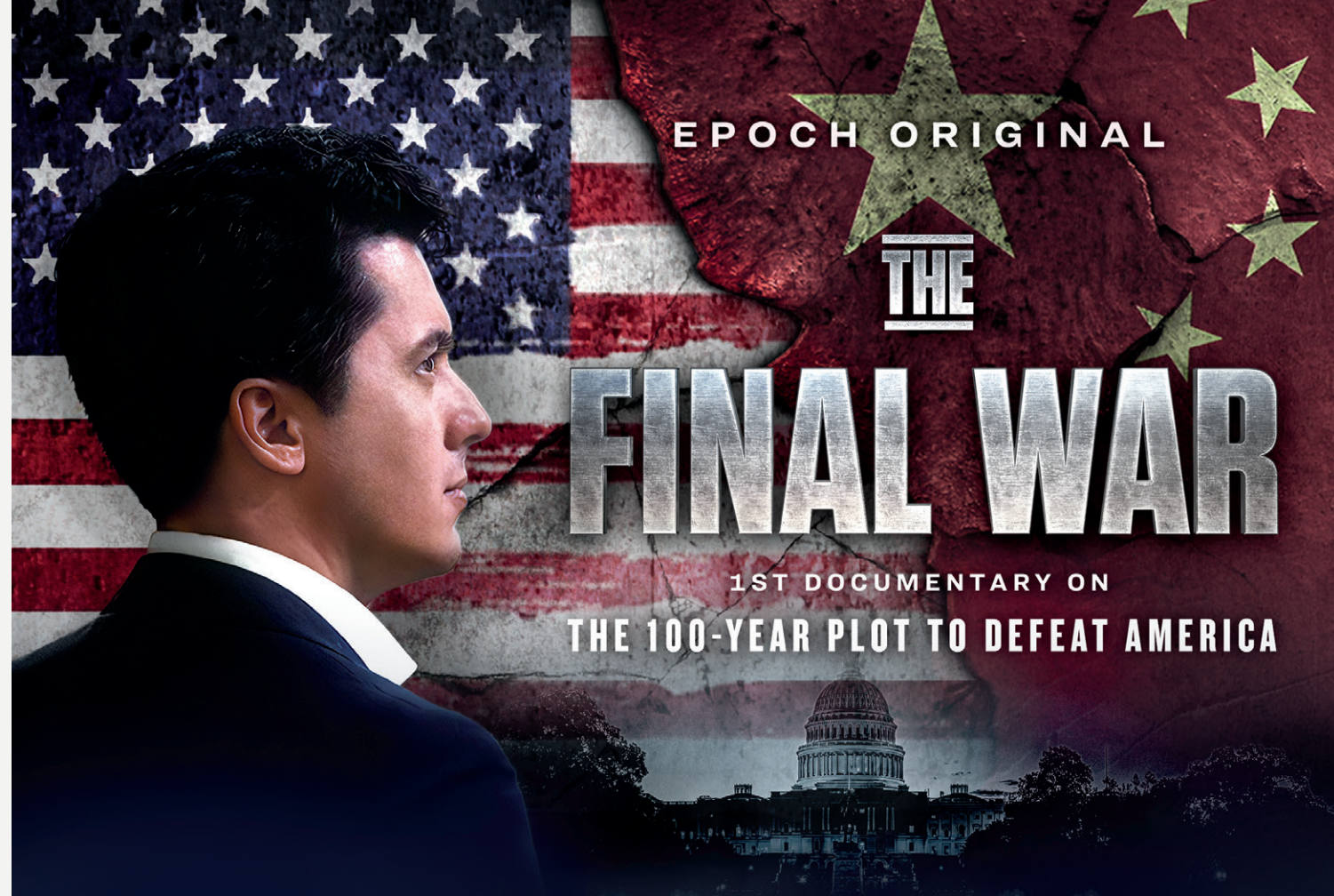
MR. JEKIELEK: I know this is a sensitive question, but how are your daughter and family doing?

MS. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you for asking. I am fiercely protective over my daughter’s privacy now. No child should ever be in the situation she was put in by the school. And after several years, she’s now on a path to self-love. But that’s all I’ll say. This is her story to tell one day if she chooses to do so.

MR. JEKIELEK: What is the core of your message to parents in America right now?

MS. LITTLEJOHN: Parents need to fight for their parental rights. They need to know what’s happening in their child’s school, and we need to eradicate gender ideology in the school system. This nonscientific idea has taken root in our society and our schools, and we need to get it out of there. ■

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.



EPOCH ORIGINAL
THE
FINAL WAR
1ST DOCUMENTARY ON
THE 100-YEAR PLOT TO DEFEAT AMERICA

A MUST-SEE DOCUMENTARY FROM THE EPOCH TIMES

‘THE FINAL WAR’: A FILM ABOUT THE REAL EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

It’s not climate change. It’s not raging inflation or even the national debt. The real threat to the United States and to the world is the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) 100-year plan to defeat America and establish world domination. There’s no urgency in the Mainstream Media. That’s why “THE FINAL WAR” had to be made. Anchored by senior investigative reporter Joshua Philipp, and one-and-a-half years in the making, “THE FINAL

WAR” is a film that is so relevant to current events and so important that we’re offering it to EVERYONE for free. It will answer your questions about the pandemic, the impending invasion of Taiwan, and how the CCP works to keep the U.S. occupied with at least four global adversaries.

See the film. Know the danger. Be prepared. “THE FINAL WAR” is already underway.



WAKE UP AMERICA!
WATCH AND SHARE

NOW STREAMING ON
EPOCHTV.COM

Paying Complete Attention Pays Off

Choose to do every task right the first time

By Jeff Minick



“I DON'T DO DETAILS. I'm a big-picture kind of person.”

The visionaries who make this formula work possess the wisdom to surround themselves with competent subordinates or colleagues, men and women who make the dream come true by focusing on specifics. Whether a CEO in a major corporation or the owner of a small software sales company, a good manager trains and encourages employees to pay attention to the small stuff.

Stick your head in the clouds without keeping your feet on the ground, and you're asking for trouble. For example, with the 2021 withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, our politicians and military commanders achieved the goal of ending the American presence in the country, but it cost the lives of 13 military personnel and left friends, allies, and billions of dollars of equipment behind.

“The devil is in the details” goes the old saying, meaning that attention must be paid to specifics if a plan is to achieve success. That adage applies to affairs great and small, personal and public. The manager of a branch bank seeking to raise the morale of the other employees and so shape them into an effective team must devise specific ways to brighten up the work day: piping in music designed to lift spirits, celebrating employee birthdays, listening to

‘The devil is in the details’ goes the old saying, meaning attention must be paid to specifics.

complaints and solving problems whenever possible, and getting to know his co-workers.

Overlooking the little things can bring ruin to any project. Recently, a friend working for a nonprofit told me a story. Late in the afternoon, before an important meeting the next day with a crowd of donors, an employee tried to run off hundreds of documents necessary for that meeting, but found the copier out of toner. The machine's automatic alert, which was supposed to notify the supplier when the ink supplies were low, had failed, and those in the office who operated the machine daily never manually checked those levels.

The staff scrambled around and ran the material to a local office supply store, which cost time and money. They got the copies, but that one miniscule failure nearly ruined a major presentation.

Having a big picture vision of our home life also requires the buttresses of detail. The husband hoping to put some zing in his marriage maps out specifics to achieve that goal. He brings flowers to his wife at

unexpected times, arranges getaway weekends, and remembers to say “I love you” before heading out the door in the morning. The grandparents wanting a family get-together to go off without a hitch compile a detailed grocery list, decorate the table, and break out the toys to entertain the little ones.

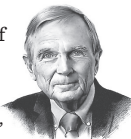
In his 1758 “Poor Richard's Almanack,” Ben Franklin printed this proverb, titled “A Little Neglect May Breed Great Mischief”:

*For want of a nail, the shoe was lost.
For want of a shoe, the horse was lost.
For want of a horse, the rider was lost.
For want of a rider, the battle was lost.
For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.*

During World War II, a framed reproduction of those words hung on the wall of a major military supply depot in London, reminding all personnel that victory meant paying attention to seemingly trivial matters. Missing or damaged equipment could cost lives and bring defeat on the field of battle.

Grand visions can become realities, so long as we remember to line up all those pesky details. ■

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



Unwind

Located on the slopes below a volcano, Quito's 9,800-foot altitude makes it one of the world's highest capitals, and one rich in culture and history.

PHOTO BY ECUADORPOSTALES/SHUTTERSTOCK



Exploring Ecuador's Largest City 72

CONSIDERED BY MANY the signature drink of New Orleans, this sweet, spicy, smoky beverage converts bitters, Benedictine, and cognac into pure bliss. 75

DECIDING TO CREATE A LEGACY is more than just making sure to be remembered; it can provide purpose to a life, while serving to benefit future generations. 76

THIS SELECTION OF UNIQUE upgrades is designed to help improve overall efficiency of traditional workplaces as well as home offices. 79

INSIDE

A Tranquil Mexican Hacienda

A mission-style estate set in San Miguel de Allende

By Phil Butler



This intimate sitting area that opens onto the adjacent central courtyard features soaring ceilings with exposed beams, a fireplace, and integral bookshelves.

THIS RESIDENCE IN THE HEART of colonial Mexico is a charming blend of Mexican architecture and California mission style. Listed for \$1.95 million, the four-bedroom, five-bath, 6,286-square-foot property is an ideal in-town estate.

Located at the lower end of Privada de Sancho Panza, one of San Miguel de Allende's most prestigious streets, the property blends unique old-world charm with luxury and security. The two-story primary residence features a relaxing central courtyard with a bubbling fountain.

The first floor of the home has two luxurious bedrooms with direct access to the courtyard. Also on this level are a den, a cozy art studio, two welcoming living rooms, and an elegant bar/sitting room. The custom gourmet kitchen is equipped with marble countertops and custom cabinetry, while the adjoining breakfast room boasts a hand-sculpted fireplace. Other amenities on the main level are staff quarters with a full

bath and a laundry room, a two-car garage, a whole-house water purification system, two hot water heaters, full house security, and a live street monitoring system.

Upstairs, the master bedroom has a private covered terrace, a sitting room, and an upscale bathroom. The upstairs living area also features an additional private terrace with a fireplace that is an ideal setting to enjoy the views of the glorious San Miguel sunsets.

Adjacent to the main house is a separate, one-bedroom guest casita that matches the warm style of the main residence. The guest house provides privacy via its own patio with a fountain, independent street access, and an adjacent private garden area at the far end of the property.

The property is located at the end of Privada de Sancho Panza, in the sought-after Ojo de Agua neighborhood, a stone's throw from Parque Benito Juárez. ■

Phil Butler is a publisher, editor, author, and analyst who is a widely cited expert on subjects ranging from digital and social media to travel technology.



**IN-TOWN ESTATE
SAN MIGUEL
DE ALLENDE,
GUANAJUATO, MEXICO
\$1.95 MILLION**

- FOUR BEDROOMS, FIVE BATHS
- 6,286 SQUARE FEET
- 0.17 ACRES

KEY FEATURES

- PRIME LOCATION
- COURTYARD
- GUEST HOUSE

AGENT

AGAVE SOTHEBY'S
INTERNATIONAL
REALTY
VANESSA GARAY



(Above) The residence's central courtyard features fruit trees and a classic fountain. Above, covered terraces afford lovely sunset views over San Miguel de Allende. (Top Right) The home's interior common areas feature handcrafted fireplaces, soaring ceilings with exposed beams, custom millwork, and tile flooring. (Right) Warm wood beams, elegant furnishings, and abundant ambient light give this dining room an exceptionally inviting atmosphere.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF AGAVE SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

City of Fire

The unknown and knowable merge in the volcanic capital of Ecuador

By Tim Johnson



The sun rises over Quito and the Cotopaxi volcano.

PHOTO BY FABRICIO BURBANO/SHUTTERSTOCK

QUITO ISN'T A CITY THAT HIDES its passions. High in the mountains, at a (literally) breathtaking altitude of 9,350 feet, it's set between steep hills on one side and the western edge of the Andes on the other. Long and narrow, the city's dense network of streets and buildings snakes 42 miles from north to south, with residential areas climbing up the adjacent slopes. When you walk around town, most streets end with views of big peaks stretching all the way up to the clouds.

And there's a volcano, too. An active one. Looming right over the city. Pichincha's biggest eruption took place in 1660, but it has roared as recently as 1998. My guide for a few days here, Mauricio, showed me a dramatic photo on his phone. "Ash rained down on the city," he recalled, without any sense of alarm, as if retelling a favorite old story.

Ecuador's capital is one of South America's most underrated cities. Home to some 3 million people, it continues to grow quickly. But heading to its heart, which still beats mightily, feels like stepping back in time.

Beating Heart of Ecuador

Emanating from the main square, Plaza Grande, Quito's old town is the largest and best-preserved in the Americas. It was among the first UNESCO World Heritage Sites, granted this prestigious designation back in 1978. While fun to visit, it's much more than just a tourist attraction.

On the way from the new town to the historic center, the road curls down a crowded hillside at an almost impossible angle, the street flattening at the bottom into cobblestones. Looming high above, a 13-story statue of the Virgin Mary rises at the crest of a hill called El Panecillo. Arriving at the center of the city, I emerged from the modest little car on a sunny Saturday afternoon. Immediately, the energy of the place swallowed me up.

The previous day, heavy storms had kept everyone inside. Today, people were reveling in the summer weather. On one side of the pedestrian street, a man strummed a Latin tune and paired it with his off-key voice, his lilting melody somewhat clashing with the deep thrum of an accordion played by another man, just across the way.

At Plaza Grande, palace guards in storybook uniforms strode across the patio in front of Carondelet Palace, the presidential seat. Women wearing traditional felt brown hats sold exotic-looking fruit, calling out the deal of the day in a sing-song patter. Just next

Quito is **NEAR THE EQUATOR**, the world's exact middle.



Ecuador's highest active volcano lies 31 miles south of Quito.

Due to Quito's elevation of 9,350 feet, some visitors experience altitude sickness.

The woolly llama is an iconic symbol of Ecuador's Andean mountains.



FROM TOP: THE EPOCH TIMES; CANAN IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES



San Francisco Square in Quito's old town.

to them, an indigenous dancer in a colorful costume pounded his feet so powerfully that I thought I could feel it in my heart.

I had no idea what any of it meant, and that continued when I entered the Church of La Compañía de Jesús. The interior just absolutely shimmers with gold. A mirror was provided so visitors could see the interior of the church's soaring dome without craning their necks; I noticed some familiar religious symbols and a sun god.

Heritage of Passions

The next day, when I reunited with Mauricio, he explained everything as we sat on hard, wooden benches enjoying a cold, crisp beer. The first arrivals from Europe, when building their churches, integrated Incan symbols of power. At the Church of La Compañía de Jesús, that included the sun. Other places incorporated eagles and snakes, holy animals to the Inca.

We were enjoying a beverage at Antigua Cer-



La Iglesia de la Compañía de Jesús is widely considered the finest church in Quito and one of the most ornate in the country.

veceria Francisca, a sort of pop-up bar within a former monastery. As part of the Basilica of San Francisco, it's a massive complex covering several city blocks, with seven separate cloisters. The central courtyard is colonnaded and palm-lined. Its twin bell towers are one of Quito's most iconic landmarks.

We lunched a couple of blocks away at a historic restaurant called Casa Manuela. This was once the home of a woman named Manuela Cañizares, a schoolteacher. One night in 1809, revolutionaries planned a revolt against the Spanish right there in her house. We dined on traditional Ecuadorian classics, including locro, a hearty soup from the highlands that showcases potatoes and cheese.

Old Meets New

After seeing a few more sights in the old town, we made our way back up the hill to the modern part of the city. Stopping briefly, I snapped a few photos of the Basílica del Voto Nacional, once the most important neo-Gothic buildings in the New World. "You won't ever see a church like this, anywhere else," Mauricio explained. "Just look at the gargoyles." And sure enough, lines of fascinating stone wildlife figures jut out along the side.

Our day ended with the city at our feet, driving up to a high lookout. "Look, we can see the other side of the city," my guide said, pointing across the valley, the hustle and bustle sprawling down below, with so much left to explore. ■

Tim Johnson is based in Toronto. He has visited 140 countries across all seven continents.

If You Go

Fly: You can fly nonstop to Quito's Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) from a number of cities in the United States, including Houston and Miami.

Stay: The Swissotel Quito offers big, modern rooms in a lively neighborhood filled with shops and restaurants.

Getting Around: Quito's first subway system will open soon with one line and 18 stops. For the moment, your best option to get around is ride-sharing services like Uber.

Take Note: All cash transactions in Ecuador use the U.S. dollar.



THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JON CHICA/SHUTTERSTOCK; SHUTTERSTOCK; STEVE BARZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

ANATOMY OF A CLASSIC COCKTAIL: VIEUX CARRÉ

This French Quarter drink is just like its city of birth—a strong-spirited concoction with layers of complexity and a hint of sweetness

By Kevin Revolinski

A NEW ORLEANS original, the Vieux Carré (pronounced vyoo kah-RAY) takes a French name, meaning "old square," and in this context, that's the oldest part of the city: the French Quarter. While there's no precise date of its creation, the recipe first takes the light of print in 1937 in Stanley Clisby Arthur's "Famous New Orleans Drinks & How to Mix 'Em," wherein the author credits the drink to Walter Bergeron ... a year before many writings say the drink was even invented.

We do know that Bergeron served as head bartender at Hotel Monteleone in—where else?—the French Quarter, both before and after Prohibition, and his creation became the hotel bar's signature drink. Since 1949, the historic hotel has been the home of Carousel Bar & Lounge, and as the name suggests, the round bar looks like a carnival ride and even rotates like its namesake (albeit slower, thank heavens).

The ingredients represent a bit of the NOLA melting pot: French Cognac and Bénédictine; American rye whiskey, which became popular here when the pest Phylloxera crippled Cognac production in France; Italian vermouth, for which Cocchi Vermouth di Torino or Carpano Antica are nice options, the latter a bit pricier than the former;

A touch of herbal Bénédictine sweetens the drink just enough.



Peychaud's bitters, a NOLA original, join Angostura.



For an old-school garnish, try a pineapple slice.



Get in the Mardi Gras spirit with one of New Orleans's signature drinks.

VIEUX CARRÉ

- 3/4 ounce rye whiskey
- 3/4 ounce Cognac
- 3/4 ounce sweet vermouth
- 1/3 ounce Bénédictine D.O.M. liqueur
- 2 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- 1 dash Angostura bitters

Add all the ingredients to a mixing glass full of ice and stir until chilled. Then, strain into an old-fashioned glass over ice.

Garnish with lemon peel. Old-school additions of a pineapple slice and a cherry are optional.

Angostura bitters from the Caribbean; and Peychaud's bitters, once sold for medicinal purposes before finding its way into cocktails, from the Old Square itself.

Arthur's recipe calls for 1/3 jiggers (half an ounce) each of Cognac, rye, and vermouth, and a mere half teaspoon (1/12 of an ounce) of Bénédictine. Add a dash each of Angostura and Peychaud's; Arthur also suggests you consider dropping in a slice of pineapple and a cherry.

Those proportions may seem small, but you can

see where this goes when you ratchet them up. The Vieux Carré has a bit of the balanced appeal of a Manhattan, but with a bit more complexity, given both the whiskey and cognac and that touch of the herbal Bénédictine that, when added in Arthur's slight measure, sweetens it just enough without overwhelming it.

Start here and adjust to taste. Like New Orleans itself, the spirits are strong in this one! ■

Kevin Revolinski is an avid traveler, craft beer enthusiast, and home-cooking fan.

The Ultimate Way to Share

We all want to be remembered fondly; creating a legacy is one way to ensure that

By Bill Lindsey

SONGWRITER LIN-MANUEL Miranda may have said it best: “What is a legacy? It’s planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.”

We all want to create a legacy that allows us to be remembered after we’re gone, preferably in a good way. There are many ways to go about this, but first a definition of “legacy” is in order. In most cases, a legacy is something that is bequeathed, such as a gift of money, real estate, or material goods, to a person, group of people, or an organization upon the death of the giver. However, in a broader sense, a legacy can also refer to the effect we have on the world and those around us.

Not all legacies involve tangible goods. Mother Teresa’s legacy is her unflinching devotion to the poor, and Nikola Tesla’s legacy is the incredible collection of inventions that affect our daily lives, such as his system of alternating current that made electricity practical.

In other instances, a legacy can be one of good deeds that in some way inspired happiness, as in the cases of a person who helps injured soldiers with physical rehabilitation, a teacher who inspires once-lackadaisical students to excel in their studies and achieve

A legacy can begin benefitting others while the giver is still very much alive and well.

success, and someone who volunteers at the local pet shelter.

Another example of a legacy is a family-run company that the founder nurtured to success and positioned to continue to prosper, benefitting the founder’s heirs. The uncle who always made time for his nieces and nephews, inspiring them to become adults who take a genuine interest in their nieces and nephews, leaves a legacy; as does the elderly woman from down the street who always showed up to block parties with amazing desserts and who shared her treasured recipes with her neighbors for block parties long after she was gone.

The general idea of a legacy, be it of material goods, ideas, or even inspirational behavior, is to do something that will improve the world or benefit the lives of a person or a group.



An example of leaving a legacy is a successful businessman passing down his store or company to his children.

Rather than huge gifts of money or massive buildings, Nikola Tesla, Marie Curie, and Mother Teresa created legacies of life-changing inventions, discoveries, and incredible kindness.



One way to create a legacy is to put in writing its specific purpose, who you want it to benefit, and how you plan for it to accomplish these goals.



Colleges are dotted with buildings that honor their benefactors, such as this building donated to Harvard Business School by George F. Baker.



LEFT PAGE PHOTO BY DMITRY NAIMOV/SHUTTERSTOCK; THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM L: NAIMOV/SHUTTERSTOCK, SPATULETAL/SHUTTERSTOCK, BORIS/SHUTTERSTOCK, SPATULETAL/SHUTTERSTOCK, RUPUNILU/SHUTTERSTOCK, ORGESSALCEDO/SHUTTERSTOCK



Teachers create legacies by inspiring students to seek knowledge, treat others with respect, and follow their example by becoming a mentor.

The important first step is to clearly define the purpose of the legacy; this differentiates it from being merely a gift. To accomplish this, one needs to decide how a legacy will be of value and who will be the beneficiary.

Those with the means to do so may want to create a legacy that benefits students of their alma mater—this often comes in the form of campus buildings that are named after the benefactor. Some legacies are intended to benefit people the benefactor will never know, as is the case with funds bequeathed to help feed and house people in places far from home. Some establish a foundation to create a legacy. A foundation is often set up as a nonprofit doing philanthropic work. A unique aspect of a foundation is that



A reputation for extending kindness and compassion to animals in need is a legacy to be proud of.

it can provide grants to a wide variety of beneficiaries, to be used in differing ways, as opposed to a gift that is given for one specific purpose. An endowment is yet one more form of a legacy; sometimes, the giver provides specific directions for its use, while in other cases, the gift can be used at the discretion of the recipient. A legacy doesn't even require its leaver to be dead; a legacy can begin benefiting others while the giver is still very much alive and well.

Keep in mind that a legacy doesn't have to be incredibly valuable; a park bench or a habitat for wildlife can be the vehicle of the legacy, accompanied by a brass plaque identifying the giver, in hopes of inspiring future generations to leave behind something to make the world better than how they found it. A legacy letter is another way to reach out to those who will follow; in it, the writer describes how they feel about those in their lives, what motivated them, and what their hopes for the future are. It may include advice and lessons they have learned or stories they never had a chance to share, or it may simply function as a way to communicate with descendants who have not even been born yet. ■

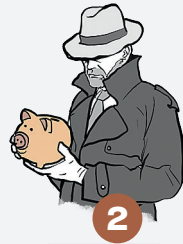
E
LIFESTYLE
GIVING BACK
Doing good for others



1

Not Just Cash

In addition to a cash gift, a legacy can come in the form of real estate, stocks and bonds, or even a collection of art or rare items donated to a museum or other nonprofit organization.



2

Anonymous or Not

Some givers prefer to remain anonymous when creating a legacy, while others want the world to know, as seen in foundations bearing their names or buildings on school campuses named in their honor.



3

Inspire Others

A side benefit of the act of giving and showing an interest in making the world a better place is that it can inspire others to do the same.

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RAMPIXEL.COM/SHUTTERSTOCK, APRICORN, SAMSUNG, KENSINGTON, THE EPOCH TIMES, ANDRYSAVCHENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK

IMPROVING WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY

This selection of gear is designed to help get the job done with best results and less stress

By Bill Lindsey



Stay Connected
ARCHER AXE300
\$599.99

This 6E 6 GHz router is the solution to a common complaint of slow connection speeds. Engineered to minimize the lag between sending and receiving data, it's a good choice for office environments with many people online at the same time and is just as viable for home offices when the kids are streaming videos while you're teleconferencing. The eight dual-band antennas and range extenders help eliminate signal loss.



Rise Above the Clutter
KENSINGTON SMARTVIEW LAPTOP RISER
\$89.99

This system solves the problem of where to place a laptop on a desk piled high with files, notepads, and more. By placing the laptop at the perfect height, the screen is easy to see, the keyboard is easy to reach, and air flows underneath to help avoid overheating. The riser is a must for tight cubicles, where it creates desk space below the laptop and can hold a set of headphones behind it.



Cut the Cords
CANON PIXMA TS3520 WIRELESS ALL-IN-ONE PRINTER
\$89.99

In most offices, the printer is in use all day long by everyone, meaning getting just the one page needed can take a while. This compact, wireless printer from Canon is the answer: It allows you to print what is needed, when it's needed, in color or in black and white. The IT department will like that it doesn't require cables. It also works as a scanner and copier, making it a sound choice for home offices.



Create 'Wow!' Presentations
SAMSUNG FREESTYLE PROJECTOR
\$799.99

This sleek device replaces the need for a large screen and bulky projector to impress your audience when making a presentation. The Freestyle transforms anything you aim at, such as walls or even floors, into a virtual screen displaying movies, videos, charts, photos, ambient light, or text. After working hours, it will be a crowd-pleaser for driveway movie nights. When not in use as a projector, it doubles as a 360-degree speaker.



Lock It Up
APRICORN AEGIS PADLOCK PORTABLE HARD DRIVE
\$209

This solid-state portable drive protects proprietary information when it's being transported and in the office where it needs to be kept away from prying eyes. Available in sizes from 240GB to 4TB, it uses a USB connection to encrypt data as it's being stored. It's compatible with Windows, Linux, and Mac systems. Authorized users simply enter a pin code to access the stored data.

RECOMMENDED READING

This week, we feature a thrilling World War II novel, a collection of amusing sports stories, and a captivating look at the White House and alcohol.

FICTION



'THE WAR LIBRARIAN'
By Addison Armstrong

2 Tales of Triumphant Journeys

Two women. Two time-frames. Two different circumstances. Their lives intersect in a brilliantly woven tale of courage, friendship, and forging new paths. Heartfelt, often horrific in nature, their stories are sure to enlighten, inspire, and definitely entertain.

G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS, 2022,
384 PAGES



'MILA 18'
By Leon Uris

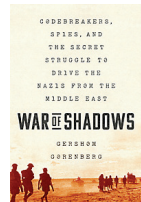
Desperation Forges Heroes

Based on real events, "Mila 18" is a magnificent saga of Nazi atrocities in Poland, the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw, and the freedom fighters who, in the end, battled German forces in the rubble of broken buildings, armed with a motley assembly of weapons and sheer grit. Newsman and protagon-

ist Christopher de Monti eventually casts his lot with this guerilla force. The passion with which these men and women went down fighting is reflected in the fine storytelling abilities of Uris. A powerful and moving story.

BANTAM REISSUE, 1983,
576 PAGES

HISTORY



'WAR OF SHADOWS'
By Gershom Gorenberg

Reading the Enemy's Mail

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, one of the most storied commanders of World War II, gained his reputation commanding the Afrika Korps in Egypt. Rommel claimed his success was due to his ability to put himself inside the mind of his opponent. Rommel was not reading his enemy's mind; he was reading his mail. This book examines espionage and signal intelligence during the 1940-1942 African campaigns. It's told on a personal level yet reveals grand tactics and national strategies. It is gripping.

PUBLICAFFAIRS, 2021,
496 PAGES

HISTORY



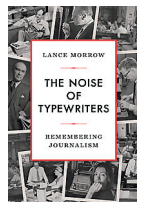
'MINT JULEPS WITH TEDDY ROOSEVELT'
By Mark Will-Weber

What the Presidents Drank

Alcohol has played a role in American history from the Whiskey Rebellion to Prohibition and since. This book tells the role alcohol played with America's first 44 chief executives. It follows their drinking habits, the various other relationships our presidents had with alcohol (Washington was a major whiskey distiller), and the role alcohol (and temperance) played in American politics. It's an interesting tale told in an amusing manner.

REGNERY HISTORY, 2014,
300 PAGES

MEMOIRS



'THE NOISE OF TYPEWRITERS'
By Lance Morrow

The Golden Age of Journalism

Morrow, a longtime essayist for Time, remembers his days

at the magazine, his well-known colleagues (like Norman Mailer, Gay Talese, Joan Didion, and Walter Isaacson), and how the writers made the golden age of journalism golden. He also discusses the influence of his boss and the founder of Time, Henry Luce, on journalism and society.

ENCOUNTER BOOKS, 2023,
200 PAGES

CLASSICS



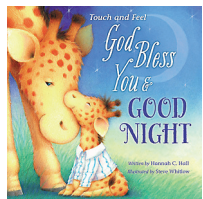
'RING LARDNER'
By Ring Lardner

Baseball's Bard and Humorist

"Shut up," he explained" is from Lardner's story "The Young Immigrants." If that line strikes you as funny, then you'll likely enjoy other stories by this Jazz Age sports writer and short story master. Included here are classics like "Champion," "Alibi Ike," and "You Know Me Al," the first-person narrative baseball tales spun by the egotistical and semi-literate Jack Keefe. Lardner's eye for the absurd and the pompous and his keen ear for American vernacular in the early 20th century still bring his work alive today.

PENGUIN CLASSICS, 1997,
410 PAGES

FOR KIDS

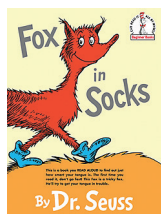


'GOD BLESS YOU AND GOOD NIGHT'
By Hannah Hall

A Bedtime Touch-and-Feel Book

This is a snuggly book designed to send the little ones into a peaceful sleep. They'll love stroking Steve Whitlow's illustrations as they watch the animals prepare for bed and say their prayers. It makes a great gift for new moms and is meant for kids 1 to 3 years old.

THOMAS NELSON, 2018,
18 PAGES



'FOX IN SOCKS'
By Dr. Seuss

Tongue Twisting Glee

With read-aloud silliness that will have your tongue tied in knots to the delight of your giggling audience, "Fox in Socks" makes language exploration hilarious and fun. Even reluctant readers will want to give it a go. Not for bedtime.

RANDOM HOUSE, 1965,
62 PAGES



Ian Kane
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author. He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

MOVIE REVIEWS

This week, we feature a comedy about a man hearing a voice narrating his life and an inspiring drama about a massive '70s spiritual movement.

NEW RELEASE



'Jesus Revolution' (2023)

At the dawn of the 1970s, a young man named Greg Laurie (Joel Courtney) is struggling through life when he meets visionary street preacher Lonnie Frisbee (Jonathan Roumie). Together, they embrace a massive evangelical Christian movement in Southern California that sets off a global chain reaction.

Based on a real story, this is an incredibly positive and thought-provoking film that details a critical time in history. It features captivating performances by its stellar cast and showcases the power of love, peace, and faith.

DRAMA

Release Date: Feb. 24, 2023
Directors: Jon Erwin, Brent McCorkle
Starring: Nicholas Cirillo, Jonathan Roumie, Kelsey Grammer
Running Time: 2 hours
MPAA Rating: Not Rated
Where to Watch: Theaters

★★★★★

A CLASSIC ROMANTIC DRAMA



'To Each His Own' (1946)

As World War I unfolds, American Jody Norris (Olivia de Havilland) falls for charming military pilot Capt.

Bart Cosgrove (John Lund). But Cosgrove leaves for war and Jody must deal with her illegitimate pregnancy. This timeless romantic drama features very realistic

performances by its ensemble cast. There's also a good deal of humor that prevents it from becoming too dark.

DRAMA | ROMANCE

Release Date: March 12, 1946
Director: Mitchell Leisen
Starring: Olivia de Havilland, John Lund, Mary Anderson
Running Time: 2 hours, 2 minutes
Not Rated
Where to Watch: Internet Archive, Xfinity

★★★★★

INDIE PICK

'Ruby Sparks' (2012)

Calvin Weir-Fields (Paul Dano) is an author who's struggling to complete a novel. He has a breakthrough when he creates a spirited character named Ruby Sparks (Zoe Kazan), but this woman of his dreams suddenly appears in his home. To his surprise, Ruby will do whatever he writes—but is that what he really wants?

This whimsical romantic comedy is delightful on many levels and presents a charming "what if" scenario filled with



plenty of funny situations. However, it has mature themes that are more suitable for adult audiences.

COMEDY | DRAMA | FANTASY

Release Date: July 25, 2012
Directors: Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris
Starring: Paul Dano, Zoe Kazan, Annette Bening
Running Time: 1 hour, 44 minutes
MPAA Rating: R
Where to Watch: Apple TV, Redbox, Hulu

★★★★★

AN ODD COMEDY-DRAMA

'Stranger Than Fiction' (2006)

Will Ferrell stars as Harold Crick, an IRS employee who's overly fastidious and obsessed with numbers. Suddenly, Crick hears a woman's voice narrating in his head. With the help of a literature professor (Dustin Hoffman), he begins to track down the woman: the novelist Karen Eiffel (Emma Thompson).

This clever, fantastical comedy is well-paced and keeps the viewer engaged throughout its running time. It



also allows excellent actors like Farrell and Thompson to express a wide range of emotions.

COMEDY | DRAMA | FANTASY

Release Date: Nov. 10, 2006
Director: Marc Forster
Starring: Will Ferrell, Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman
Running Time: 1 hour, 53 minutes
MPAA Rating: PG-13
Where to Watch: Redbox, Apple TV, Amazon

★★★★★

Courageous Reporting

We believe that investigating and exposing the truth is the only way that we can remain safe and free



CROSSFIRE HURRICANE

ON MAY 25, 2017, The Epoch Times published an article headlined “Despite Allegations, No Evidence of Trump–Russia Collusion Found.” The article detailed that—despite a media frenzy at the time—no actual evidence had been uncovered that President Donald Trump or anyone associated with his campaign had colluded with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election.

OUR REPORTING was proven accurate with the conclusion of the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller.

NOT ONLY DID WE NOT BUY INTO the false narrative that Trump colluded with Russia, but we have also been a leader in reporting on the irregular and apparently politicized nature of the FBI’s investigation of the Trump campaign. During the past five years, we have published dozens of articles on the topic, many of them exclusive.



ELECTION INTEGRITY

FOLLOWING THE 2020 ELECTION, The Epoch Times was at the forefront of investigating and reporting on the questions surrounding the integrity of the election. Through our fact-based and independent reporting, we were able to uncover multiple irregularities.



ORIGINS OF COVID-19

ON APRIL 15, 2020, The Epoch Times published its documentary “Tracking Down the Origin of Wuhan Coronavirus.” The film, which received over 100 million views, explored the origins of the virus, including the possibility of a lab leak. It presents scientific data and interviews with top scientists and national security experts.



YEARS AFTER THE RELEASE of this groundbreaking documentary, the possibility of a lab leak is considered by government officials and experts as the most likely explanation for the virus’s spread.

CHINA THREAT

SINCE ITS INCEPTION in the year 2000, The Epoch Times has been at the forefront of reporting on the infiltration of the United States by the Chinese Communist Party. Numerous times over the years, we’ve broken major China-related stories ahead of other news organizations. In 2003, The Epoch Times was the first media outlet to systematically and continuously report on the spread of SARS, well ahead of most other Western media. We were also the first to report on state-sponsored forced organ harvesting in China—one of the most underreported atrocities of our time—in



which prisoners of conscience are killed for their organs, which are then sold for profit on a large scale.

THE EPOCH TIMES also published the editorial series “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party,” revealing the true nature and history of the Communist Party and inspiring a movement that so far has seen more than 400 million Chinese people quit the Party and its affiliated organizations. Another of our series, “How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World,” systematically exposes the evil nature of communism, as well as the harm it has brought and continues to inflict on the United States and the world.



Random Acts of Kindness

How to make the world a better place

Kindness can be contagious. Committing a random act of kindness (RAK) can be as simple as sharing veggies from your garden, complimenting a co-worker on an attractive new tie, or praising the manners of a parent’s exceptionally well-behaved child. It might even result in others following your example.

By Bill Lindsey

1 Be Gracious at Work

RAKs are like seeds: They sprout and make places where you spend a lot of time, such as the office, more pleasant. Bring coffee to the next meeting, or let a co-worker stressing over a huge project use the copy machine ahead of you. Lend a hand to an associate carrying a stack of office supplies. Learn the new person’s name and say hi when you see them in the break room. Compliment someone on a job well done.



2 Driven to Be Nice

There are many opportunities for RAK on the road. On the highway, allow the car next to you to enter your lane, and if you pull up to a four-way stop at the same time, let the other car go first. If traffic is backed up and you see a car waiting for an opportunity to pull onto the street, pause and signal for them to do so. Use turn signals well in advance of needing to change lanes. Turn off the high beams when you see approaching vehicles.

3 Shopping for Kindness

While at the grocery store, if you see someone struggling with a stuck cart or someone who can’t quite reach items high on a shelf, offer to help. Smile and say hi to the cashier—they often feel invisible. If the cashier is really busy, bag your own groceries. Let someone with only a few items in their basket, or a mom with a baby, get in line ahead of you.

5 Out and About

When your neighbor is on vacation, cut their grass and trim the hedges so they don’t return to a jungle. Drop off a big bag of food or old towels and blankets to be used as bedding at an animal shelter or rescue organization. Clean out the closet and donate clothes or home goods to organizations that sell them to raise funds. Pay for the order of the person behind you at the coffee shop.

4 Have a Heart for Strangers

Surprise people; leave a thank-you note in your mailbox for your carrier, and offer a bottle of water to a parcel delivery person. After receiving great service, post a positive review on the Google or Yelp page of your plumber, dentist, or hair stylist. Hold the elevator door for someone hurrying to make it, and hold the door for others as you enter or leave a store, restaurant, or office building.

CSA IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

What Our Readers Say

“It’s a magazine that’s FOR the American people, not against.”

Vanessa Morrison, medical records clerk

“Well thought out material, thoroughly investigated, and I trust [the] sources.”

Gail F. Sauve, homemaker

“It is straightforward, rather than a lot of speculation or pontificating.”

Jan Hamilton, retired professional

“[Insight] reminds me that there are still a LOT of wonderful, good, and dedicated people in this country.”

Creed Haymond, surgeon

“Unbiased reporting. Short, impactful articles.”

Mark Naumann, photographer

“I can trust what I read and make up my own mind how I feel about the subject.”

Jim Edwards, retired

Save up to 45% on your subscription today!



3 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

ONLINE : ReadEpochInsight.com

HOTLINE : 833-699-1888

BY MAIL : EPOCH INSIGHT

Subscription Department
229 W. 28th St., Fl.5
New York, NY 10001

EPOCH INSIGHT

Yes, I'd like to subscribe!

- 1 Year \$199 (\$3.83/week) **Save 45%*** **Best deal**
- 6 Months \$129 (\$4.96/week) **Save 29%***

* Based on a newsstand price of \$6.95/copy.
You can cancel anytime during the trial.

\$1 FIRST MONTH if you subscribe **ONLINE**

SCAN HERE to subscribe:



ReadEpochInsight.com

Please Print Legibly (Include Apt., Ste., Or Unit No.)

First name _____ Last name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Signature _____

By signing this subscription form, I affirm that I have read, understood and agreed to the terms and conditions at ReadEpoch.com/terms I also affirm all info above is complete and accurate.

► **Pay by check** (payable to **The Epoch Times**)

► **Pay by credit card / debit card** at ReadEpochInsight.com
or call us at **833-699-1888**



We'd appreciate it if you'd pass this magazine along to your friends and family after you finish reading it. You can also request FREE magazines for your friends by filling out the form at ReadEpochInsight.com/FreeCopyRequest