

# EPOCH INSIGHT

## **‘Failure of Gigantic Proportions’**

*COVID-19 lockdown policies were  
‘disastrous,’ new report says*

*By Kevin Stocklin*





A World ‘Gone Mad’

AS THE PANDEMIC FADES INTO THE PAST, a clear-eyed look at the responses from governments and their media proxies brings renewed concerns.

A new meta-analysis that screened nearly 20,000 global studies to examine the benefits and harms of pandemic public health policies came away with a conclusion: They were “a global policy failure of gigantic proportions.”

Public health best practices were thrown out the window in favor of lockdowns, school closures, and mask mandates.

“In each case, the same pattern was followed: flawed modeling, hair-raising predictions of disaster that missed the mark, and no lessons learned,” said Steve Hanke, co-author of the analysis and economics professor at the Johns Hopkins Institute for Applied Economics, Global Health, and the Study of Business Enterprise.

“The same mistakes were repeated over and over again and were never challenged.”

The other authors of the study are Jonas Herby, special adviser at the Centre for Political Studies in Copenhagen, and Lars Jonung, an economics professor at Lund University in Sweden.

The authors said governments ignored or downplayed the potential negative effects from lockdowns, including damage to mental health, loss of jobs, company bankruptcies, an increase in crime, loss of freedom and other infringement on civil liberties, inflation, an increase in public debt, and harm to children’s education and well-being.

“Lockdowns were a failed promise. They had negligible health effects but disastrous economic, social, and political costs to society,” Mr. Jonung said.

Read this week’s cover story by Kevin Stocklin to better understand the flaws in the pandemic policy response.



ON THE COVER

COVID-19 lockdowns were a failed promise that crippled societies worldwide, findings show.

AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES



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229 W.28TH ST., FL.7  
NEW YORK, NY 10001

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GENERAL INQUIRIES, LETTERS  
TO THE EDITOR  
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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.

EPOCH  
INSIGHT

**30 | Exclusive Interview**  
Presidential candidate  
Nikki Haley talks health  
care, foreign policy,  
and more.

**40 | Route to USA**  
Tourist paradise  
Costa Rica is  
beleaguered by floods  
of illegal immigrants.

**44 | Private Space Boom**  
Rival billionaires turn to  
space in new high-ticket  
tourism ventures.

**48 | Malaria Reemerges**  
After 20 years, five cases  
of the disease have been  
detected in Florida and Texas.

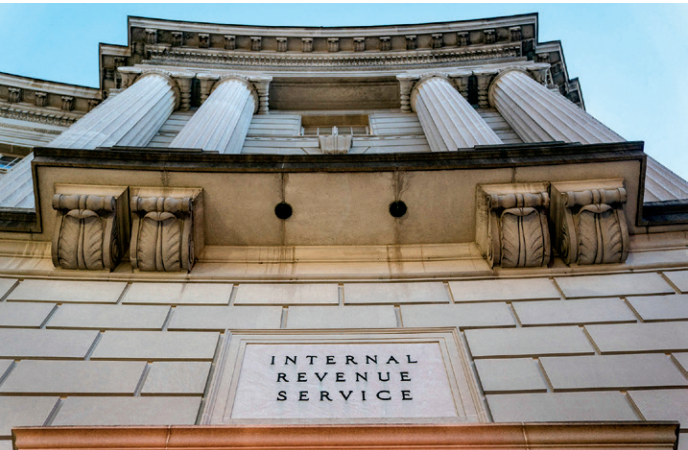
**56 | Travel Chaos**  
Politicians are  
responsible for flight  
delays, not airlines.

**57 | TikTok Ban**  
The company’s secret use  
of U.S. courts against free  
speech shows its hypocrisy.

**58 | Inflation**  
The Fed expects another rate  
hike as Powell gives a more  
realistic policy outlook.

**59 | Banking Crisis**  
Regional banks are scram-  
bling to unload commer-  
cial real estate loans.

**60 | Stagnation**  
Bloated government  
spending is  
masking a recession  
in the private sector.



Features

**THE LEAD** **14 | ‘Disastrous’ Policies**  
The pandemic lockdowns were a “failure of  
gigantic proportions,” say report authors.

**20 | 3,500 Wind Turbines**  
Clean ocean advocates say new project  
could have catastrophic consequences.

**24 | Vying for Attention**  
Political candidates are adapting to a  
changing media landscape.

**36 | Transgenderism**  
Europe is backing off transgender procedures,  
while the U.S. is ramping them up.

**50 | Millions Lose Senses**  
Clinicians share potential treatment options to  
regain taste and smell post-COVID.

The IRS is warning taxpayers about a new  
scam involving mail sent in cardboard  
envelopes as an attempt to trick people into  
believing the government owes them money.

STEFANI REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

**61 | Artificial Intelligence**  
Is all the excitement about AI  
justified, or is it just hype?

**62 | Spike Proteins**  
Dr. Paul Marik on  
vaccines, vitamins, and  
the enormous potential  
for self-repair.

**68 | Remain Calm**  
Stress happens, making  
it important to learn  
to respond to it with  
equanimity.

**70 | A Texas-Sized Estate**  
This ranch has room for  
the whole family and  
plenty of guests, too.

**72 | Kiss the Blarney Stone**  
Join in on a tour of  
Ireland’s largest and most  
delightful county.

**75 | Enjoy It Cold**  
Iced coffee is proof this  
beverage need not be hot  
to be delicious.

**76 | Stretching  
Travel Dollars**  
Some ideas on how to  
keep travel costs low  
and enjoyment high.

**79 | Love Matches**  
Gear designed to get more  
out of time spent on the  
tennis court.

**83 | Electronics Etiquette**  
How to behave in public  
while using phones,  
drones, and tablets.



# SPOTLIGHT

## Independence Day

**PEOPLE ENJOY WATCHING FIREWORKS** over the Manhattan skyline during Macy's Independence Day fireworks display on July 4. Each year, Macy's holds the Fourth of July fireworks show along the East River.

PHOTO BY ADAM GRAY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES







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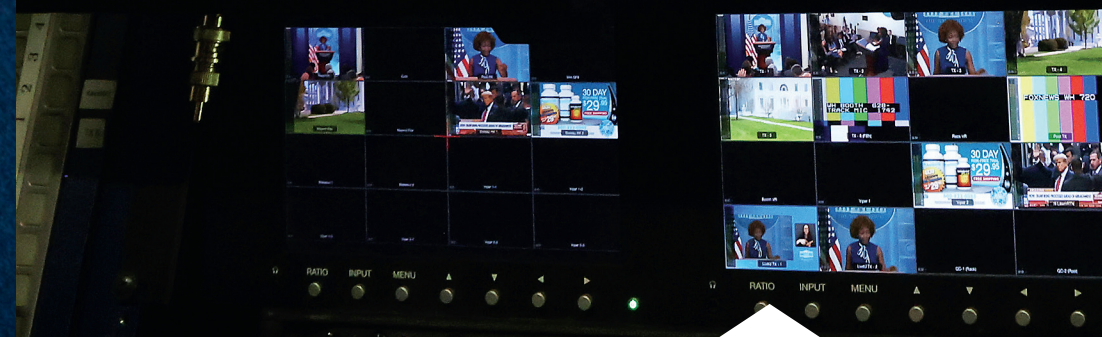
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NATION • WORLD • WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Week 27

# The Week



Former President Donald Trump is shown on a screen as White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre holds a press briefing at the White House on April 4.

PHOTO BY KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

## Political Candidates Adapt to Changing Media Landscape 24

### A Struggling State

Costa Rica is experiencing a surge of illegal immigrants, leaving the small nation desperate for solutions. 40

### Space Boom

Traveling to space is no longer a dream, as rival billionaires start high-ticket space tourism ventures. 44

### A Deadly Return

After two decades, malaria cases have been detected in the United States once again. 48

INSIDE



“We do not seek to decouple our economy from China’s.”

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, in a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. Xie Feng ahead of Ms. Yellen’s July 6 visit to Beijing



“[Companies] need to be doing absolutely everything they can to get the deadly drugs off their platforms.”



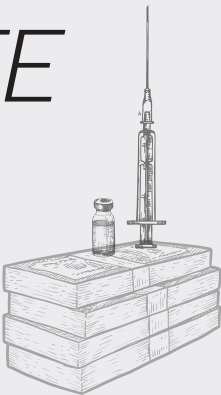
Anne Milgram, administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration, on seeking cooperation from social media companies in addressing the fentanyl crisis

**\$8.1 MILLION**

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) says his election campaign for the U.S. Senate has **raised more than \$8.1 million** since his Russiagate-related censure.

**\$14,050 FEE**

New York City health officials have regularly overpaid Executive Medical Services, a contractor, to administer COVID-19 tests and vaccines, **paying as much as \$14,050 for a single COVID-19 vaccination**, an audit shows.



THIS PAGE FROM TOP: MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; RIGHT PAGE FROM TOP: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY ALEF AERONAUTICS

**\$52 BILLION**—Oregon’s most populous county, Multnomah County, is suing more than a dozen fossil fuel and coal companies for nearly \$52 billion in damages related to an extreme weather event that it attributes to climate change.

**25%**

The number of suicides in active-duty military rose **25 percent** in the first quarter of this year compared to that of 2022, according to the Defense Suicide Prevention Office.

**45%**

“Forever chemicals,” or per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), were found in **45 percent** of tested tap water sources in the United States, in a study by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TECHNOLOGY

Flying Car Gets FAA Approval

A FLYING CAR from mobility firm Alef Aeronautics has been granted certification by federal regulators, the first time such a vehicle has received “legal approval to fly” from the government.

Alef’s Armada Model Zero has been granted an experimental special airworthiness certificate by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. The certification is issued for purposes like research and development, training of crews, market surveys, exhibitions, and showing compliance with regulations.



President Joe Biden at the White House on June 30.

CENSORSHIP

Judge Delivers Major Blow to Biden Admin in Social Media Censorship Case

A FEDERAL JUDGE has made a historic ruling by partially granting an injunction that blocks various Biden administration officials and government agencies from working with big tech firms to censor posts on social media.

The injunction came in response to a censorship-by-proxy lawsuit brought by attorneys general in Louisiana and Missouri, who have accused Biden administration officials and various government agencies of pressuring social media companies to suspend accounts or take down posts.

The judge, Terry A. Doughty, wrote in a judgment that various government agencies, including the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, the Department of Justice, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are prohibited from taking a range of actions with regards to social media companies.

Specifically, the agencies and their staff members are prohibited from meeting or contacting by phone, email, or text message or “engaging in any communication of any kind with social-media companies urging, encouraging, pressuring, or inducing in any manner for removal, deletion, suppression, or reduction of content containing protected free speech,” per the injunction.

JUDICIARY

Supreme Court Strikes Down Biden Student Loan Forgiveness Program

THE SUPREME COURT voted 6–3 last week to strike down President Joe Biden’s controversial plan to partially forgive student loans.

The now-invalidated program would have canceled as much as \$20,000 in loan principal for each of 40 million borrowers. The Congressional Budget Office said the plan could have cost about \$400 billion, while the Wharton School estimated it could have blown past \$1 trillion.

Biden denounced the ruling, saying there were “millions of Americans in this country who feel disappointed and discouraged or even a little bit angry about the court’s decision today on student debt.”



A computer-generated image of the Alef Model A flying car.

ENVIRONMENT

White House Report Says Blocking Sunlight Can Prevent Global Warming

THE WHITE HOUSE has published a report on the “possible deployment” of techniques like artificially blocking sunlight to combat climate change.

Solar radiation modification (SRM), also known as solar geoengineering, is aimed at preventing sunlight from accelerating the warming of the planet.

“Greenhouse gases warm the climate by blocking a portion of outgoing longwave radiation that would otherwise be emitted into space,” states the report, published by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. “By contrast, SRM cools the climate by reflecting a greater amount of incoming solar (shortwave) radiation back into space. ... SRM offers the possibility of cooling the planet significantly on a timescale of a few years.”





Photos of eight democracy activists who are wanted by the Chinese regime, displayed during a press conference in Hong Kong on July 3.

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Offers \$120,000 Bounties for Human Rights Dissidents Abroad

HONG KONG POLICE are offering HK\$1 million (US\$127,860) bounties for information on eight human rights dissidents currently residing in the United States, UK, and Australia.

The National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police Force has issued arrest warrants for the eight individuals, alleging they contravened the National Security Law.

The law was passed by Beijing’s rubber-stamp legislature in 2020 and received widespread criticism for eroding the long-running “one country, two systems” model that ensured British-style rule of law over Hong Kong.

The eight individuals were accused of “endangering” Hong Kong’s national security—more specifically, the allegations of “incitement to secession, subversion, incitement to subversion, and collusion with a foreign country.”

CHINA

China’s \$3 Trillion in ‘Shadow Reserves’ Threatens Global Economy: Former US Treasury Official

THE CHINESE REGIME is hiding trillions of dollars in “shadow reserves,” according to an economist and former Obama-era Treasury Department official.

Brad Setser, who served on President Joe Biden’s 2020 transition agency review team, recently warned that China possesses far more foreign exchange reserves than the regime is reporting. He estimated in The China Project that Beijing likely has roughly \$3 trillion “hidden,” something that could be a future threat to the global economy.

SINGAPORE

More Than 100,000 ChatGPT Accounts Stolen and Traded

SINGAPOREAN CYBERSECURITY FIRM Group-IB says it has identified 101,134 devices infected with information-stealing malware that contained saved artificial intelligence chatbot ChatGPT credentials.

“These compromised credentials within the logs of info-stealing malware traded on illicit dark web marketplaces over the past year. ... The Asia-Pacific region has experienced the highest concentration of ChatGPT credentials being offered for sale,” the company said in a statement.

When unassuming users interact with AI, the hidden malware captures and transfers data to third parties. Hackers can use the information collected to generate personas and manipulate data for various fraudulent activities.

ISRAEL

Tel Aviv Police Chief Quits, Citing Government Meddling Against Protesters

TEL AVIV’S POLICE COMMANDER has said he’s quitting the force, citing political intervention by members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Cabinet, whom he said wanted excessive force used against anti-government protesters.

Tel Aviv District Commander Ami Eshed didn’t identify the minister who had demanded tough action against protesters blocking roads and highways in unprecedented demonstrations against the government’s contentious push to overhaul the justice system.

Soon after Mr. Eshed’s announcement, hundreds of protesters carrying Israeli flags and chanting “democracy” marched through Tel Aviv. Some blocked a main highway, lit fires, and faced off with police on horseback.

In a televised statement, Mr. Eshed said what he called “the ministerial echelon” had broken all rules and had blatantly interfered in professional decision-making.

THIS PAGE: JOYCE ZHOU/REUTERS



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# The Week in Photos

**(Right)**  
Ancient  
windmills,  
famous for  
Don Quixote  
mistaking them  
for giants, in  
the village of  
Campo de  
Criptana, Spain,  
on July 3.



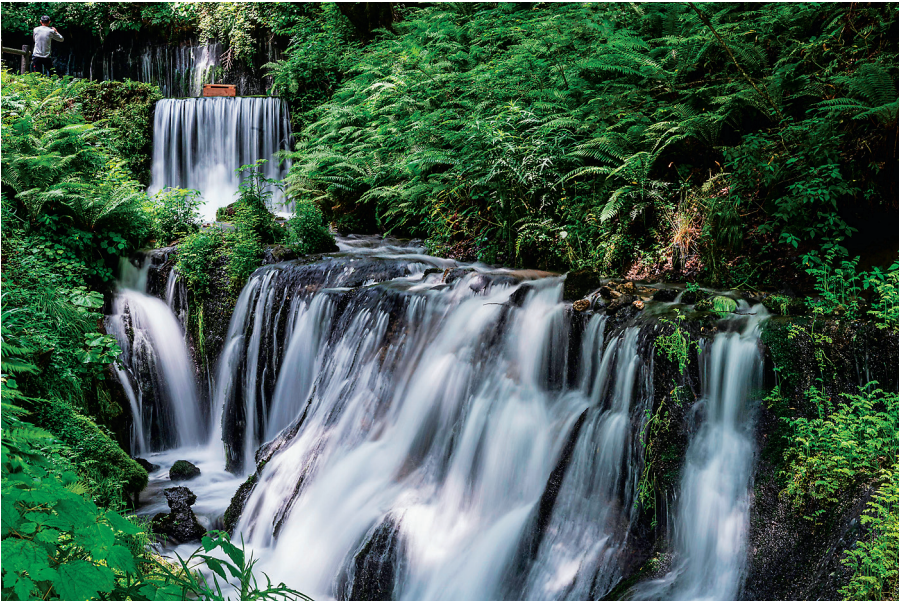
**(Above)** Players  
compete in a polo  
game in Skardu,  
Pakistan, on July 5.



**(Above)** A cat participates in an orange  
cat competition in Bangkok on July 2.  
More than 70 cats were judged on fur  
color, health, and friendliness.



**(Left)**  
A child carries  
dried clay  
bowls at a  
traditionally  
run factory  
northwest  
of Kabul,  
Afghanistan,  
on July 3.



**(Left)** Portugese  
Air Force and  
Romanian Air  
Force F-16  
jetfighters sit on  
the tarmac during  
a NATO exercise at  
the Siauliai airbase  
in Lithuania on  
July 4.

**(Left)** Shiraito Falls, located north  
of the resort town of Karuizawa,  
Japan, on July 4.

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP: L: THOMAS COEX/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JOE STENSON/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES; LAUREN DECOCK/GETTY IMAGES; RICHARD A. BROOKS/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JOHN THYS/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES; WAKIL KOHAR/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A full-page photograph serves as the background. It depicts a beach scene in Marseille, France, on October 31, 2020. Two police officers, wearing dark uniforms, caps, and face masks, are standing on the sand. The officer on the left is holding a white piece of paper, while the officer on the right is looking down at a device. In the foreground, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a white and yellow patterned sweater, is sitting on a colorful towel, facing away from the camera. In the background, another person is sitting on the sand near the water's edge. The sea is visible in the distance under a clear sky.

PUBLIC HEALTH

# A 'FAILURE OF GIGANTIC PROPORTIONS'

*COVID-19 lockdown policies were 'disastrous,' authors of global report say*

BY KEVIN STOCKLIN

*Police officers check a woman's written statement allowing her to be out in public during pandemic lockdowns on Marseille beach, France, on Oct. 31, 2020.*

PHOTO BY NICOLAS TUCAT/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



THE DAYS OF LOCKDOWNS may be behind us for the time being, but a multinational academic team has conducted a broad analysis of government pandemic actions and found them to be “a global policy failure of gigantic proportions,” often driven by state and media-sponsored fear campaigns.

Their findings, published in a book titled “Did Lockdowns Work? The Verdict on Covid Restrictions,” are based on a worldwide meta-analysis that screened nearly 20,000 studies to determine the benefits and harms of health diktats, including lockdowns, school closures, and mask mandates.

According to economist and co-author Steve Hanke, one of the things that drove countries into a state of panic and draconian policies was reliance on mortality models from sources such as the Imperial College of London (ICL) that generated “fantasy numbers” showing that millions of deaths could be averted by instituting crippling society-wide lockdowns.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, “most countries did have a plan to deal with pandemics,” Mr. Hanke told The Epoch Times, “but after the Imperial College of London’s ‘numbers’ were published, those plans were, in a panic, thrown out the window.

“In each case, the same pattern was followed: flawed modeling, hair-raising predictions of disaster that missed the mark, and no lessons learned. The same mistakes were repeated over and over again and were never challenged.”



Then-National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci pushed for federal lockdown mandates during the pandemic.

**The Imperial College of London’s models predicted that lockdowns would prevent between 1.7 million and 2.2 million deaths in the United States. But a meta-analysis indicated the real number was only between 4,345 and 15,586.**



The streets of Glasgow, Scotland, stand mostly empty during lockdowns on Jan. 5, 2021.

Mr. Hanke is an economics professor and co-director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Applied Economics, Global Health, and the Study of Business Enterprise. The other co-authors of the study are Jonas Herby, special adviser at the Centre for Political Studies in Copenhagen, and Lars Jonung, an economics professor at Lund University in Sweden.

While the meta-analysis surveyed thousands of studies, it found that only 22 of them contained useful data for the study. The report focused on mortality rates and lockdown policies during 2020.

“This study is the first all-encompassing evaluation of the research on the effectiveness of mandatory restrictions on mortality,” Mr. Jonung stated. “It demonstrates that lockdowns were a failed promise. They had neg-

ligible health effects but disastrous economic, social, and political costs to society.”

According to Mr. Hanke, the ICL models predicted that lockdowns would prevent between 1.7 million and 2.2 million deaths in the United States. The meta-analysis, however, indicates that lockdowns prevented between 4,345 and 15,586 deaths in the United States. This fits a pattern of overstated predictions from the ICL, which health officials either didn’t know about or overlooked, he said.

**A ‘Long History of Fantasy Numbers’**

“There is a long history of fantasy numbers generated by the epidemiological models used by the Imperial College of London,” Mr. Hanke said. “Its dreadful record started with the UK foot-and-

mouth disease epidemic in 2001, during which the Imperial College models predicted that daily case incidences would peak at 420. But, at the time, the number of incidences had already peaked at just over 50 and was falling.”

In 2002, the ICL predicted that up to 150,000 people in the UK would die from mad cow disease; in 2019, the BBC reported that the number of UK deaths from mad cow disease was 177. In 2005, Neil Ferguson, who led the ICL, predicted up to 200 million deaths from the H5N1 bird flu, which had at that time killed 65 people in Asia; according to the World Health Organization (WHO), between 2003 and 2023, 458 people died from H5N1 worldwide.

The ICL’s habit of “crying wolf” didn’t prevent the BBC, once COVID-19 struck, from relying on its data to broadcast dire weekly warnings to its 468 million

listeners, in 42 languages worldwide.

“Maybe the Imperial College models are ideal fear-generating machines for politicians and governments that crave more power,” Mr. Hanke said. “H.L. Mencken put his finger on this phenomenon long ago when he wrote that ‘the whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by an endless series of hobgoblins.’”

While there were some U.S. states that never issued lockdown orders, including Wyoming, Utah, South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Arkansas, Sweden was the rare national exception that refrained from forcing people into lockdowns. American governors who refused to lock down their states were harshly criticized in the media, which predicted that this would cause mass deaths.



A ‘National Stay-at-Home Order’

In April 2020, under the Trump administration, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams criticized Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who had lifted lockdowns in his state, telling NBC’s “Today” show that federal guidelines should be taken as “a national stay-at-home order.”

Dr. Anthony Fauci told CNN at the time, regarding lockdowns: “The tension between federally mandated versus states’ rights to do what they want is something I don’t want to get into. But if you look at what’s going on in this country, I just don’t understand why we’re not doing that.”

Left-leaning states such as California and New York kept draconian regulations in place longer than most, with New York City even setting up a system of vaccine passports that prevented the unvaccinated from entering public places such as restaurants, bars, theaters, and museums. While the United States’ federal system, which vested health authority with states, prevented the U.S. government from forcing lockdowns on the entire country, President Joe Biden issued vaccine and mask mandates once he took office that were ultimately ruled unlawful by the Supreme Court.

For Sweden, however, protections from such health mandates were written into their constitution, the Regeringsform.

It reads: “Everyone shall be protected in their relations with the public institutions

The Imperial College of London’s history of generating ‘fantasy numbers’ didn’t prevent the BBC from relying on its data to broadcast dire weekly warnings worldwide.

Police officers detain a demonstrator during a protest against lockdowns, in Sydney on Aug. 21, 2021.



against deprivations of personal liberty. All Swedish citizens shall also in other respects be guaranteed freedom of movement within the Realm and freedom to depart the Realm.” This law permits exceptions only for convicts and military conscripts. In addition, Swedish law doesn’t allow the government to declare a state of emergency during peacetime.

“Also important in the Swedish COVID case was the lead public health official, Dr. Anders Tegnell,” Mr. Hanke said. “His views on public health were the antipode of those held by the COVID Czar in the U.S., Dr. Anthony Fauci.”

In a September 2020 interview, Tegnell described lockdowns as “using a hammer to kill a fly,” and said of the rush among virtually every other country to impose them, “it was as if the world had gone mad.”

Sweden also didn’t impose mask mandates, while at the other extreme, Australia arrested citizens who went maskless or congregated outside, and Austria made it a criminal offense to refuse the COVID-19 vaccine. At the time, the New York Times called Sweden a “pariah state” and “the world’s cautionary tale.”

Some of the differences between modeled and actual results come down to what Mr. Hanke calls the “hot stove effect.”

“When someone is warned that a stove is hot, they voluntarily keep their hands off the stove,” he said, citing evidence that, if credibly warned, people tend to take precautions without being forced.

A Move to Centralize Authority

And yet, rather than allowing citizens to make their own health decisions, most governments were united in forcing populations to follow behaviors that had not been recommended during pandemics up to that point. This year, 194 nations have come together to negotiate a global pandemic accord and amendments to International Health Regulations (IHR) that would centralize pandemic response within the WHO.

There is little in the pandemic accord or the IHR amendments regarding civil liberties and the personal protections against state abuses contained in the Swedish Regeringsform, such as the right to free speech, travel, and association, and nothing regarding the right to refuse experimental drugs. Instead,



An elderly woman interacts with a little boy through a window during the pandemic, in Ventura, Calif., on April 3, 2020.

the negotiations focus on concentrating power and policy in the hands of a finite number of health officials in Geneva.

This includes centralization of medical supply chains, pandemic response policies, and a coordinated suppression of “misinformation.” As the countries of the world, including the United States, proceed down this path, some are questioning the wisdom of centralizing control when the states and countries that reacted to COVID-19 in the least damaging way were the exception rather than the rule.

“Central planning is based on what Nobelist Friedrich Hayek identified as the ‘pretense of knowledge,’” Mr. Hanke said. “The results usually end up in a river of tears. It’s most often prudent to proceed via decentralized experimentation rather than with a global plan.”

In addition, government policies often are unidimensional; they usually enforce a single-minded goal, such as attempting to stop the spread of a virus, while ignoring side effects and collateral damage. The response to COVID-19 is a textbook case of that.



“COVID policies represent one of the greatest policy blunders in the modern era.”

Steve Hanke, co-director, Johns Hopkins Institute for Applied Economics, Global Health, and the Study of Business Enterprise

“The record of public health officials is pretty dismal,” Mr. Hanke said. “COVID policies represent one of the greatest policy blunders in the modern era.”

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly

The book does recognize some benefits of COVID-19 lockdowns.

“Lockdowns, as reported in studies based on stringency indices in the spring of 2020, reduced mortality by 3.2% when compared to less strict lockdown policies adopted by the likes of Sweden,” the authors state. “This means lockdowns prevented 1,700 deaths in England and Wales, 6,000 deaths across Europe, and 4,000 deaths in the United States.”

By comparison, the authors write, a typical flu season leads to 18,500–24,800 deaths in England and Wales, 72,000 flu deaths throughout Europe, and 38,000 deaths in the United States.

Meanwhile, negative effects from lockdowns included damage to mental health, loss of jobs, company bankruptcies, an increase in crime, loss of freedom and other infringement on civil liberties, inflation, an increase in public debt, and harm to children’s education and well-being.

A 2022 psychology report on “The Impact of School Closure on Children’s Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic” found that “those children exposed to COVID-19 related measures, such as mandatory school closure, are more likely to manifest symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), stress, insomnia, emotional disturbance, irritability, sleep and appetite disturbance, negative eating habits, and impairment in social interactions.”

The Congressional Budget Office calculated that real GDP fell by 11.3 percent in the second quarter of 2020 and was still down 5.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2021, relative to CBO’s pre-pandemic January 2020 projections.

The authors of “Did Lockdowns Work?” recommend that in future pandemics, “lockdowns should be rejected out of hand.”

Asked whether he expected that leaders around the globe would consider studies like his and learn from the COVID-19 experience, Mr. Hanke replied, “If the history of public health policy serves as a guide, my answer is ‘no.’” ■





ENVIRONMENT

# 3,500 WIND

*Clean ocean advocates say project could have catastrophic consequences*

# TURBINES IN THE OCEAN

BY MATT MCGREGOR

*The GE-Alstom Block Island Wind Farm, located 3 miles off Block Island, R.I., on Sept. 22, 2016.*

PHOTO BY SCOTT EISEN/GETTY IMAGES

**A** NATURAL RESOURCE THAT'S remained largely untouched by development now faces colossal industrialization of wind energy along the U.S. East Coast.

Clean-ocean advocates monitoring its expansion warn that this race to construction undermines an ecosystem that will lead to catastrophic consequences.

"They're moving at such a reckless pace without any real good science or due diligence," Clean Ocean Action (COA) Executive Director Cindy Zipf said.

In total, what's proposed are 3,500 turbines across 2.2 million acres of ocean—twice the size of the Grand Canyon—according to Ms. Zipf.

One turbine, at 1,046 feet, is as tall as the Chrysler Building, she said, with one blade surpassing the height of the Statue of Liberty.

On the floor of the ocean will stretch 10,000 miles of cable emitting electromagnetic fields, connected to substations that will discharge billions of gallons of hot water into the ocean per day.

Tax incentives found in the Inflation Reduction Act have triggered a gold rush of surveying and development.

While the Biden administration's stated goal for these projects is to attain a carbon-neutral energy grid by 2030, what those who make their living from the ocean are finding is that in addition to not having any effect on climate change, the turbines will devastate what's left of the earth's resource that hasn't been overdeveloped.

"Ocean life has evolved and flourished over eons of time in the quiet, dark, and wide open," Ms. Zipf told The Epoch Times. "And now, in less than 10 years, they're going to turn it into a very loud, very complicated concrete

and steel jungle. And somehow marine life is supposed to survive."

COA, headquartered in Long Branch, New Jersey, is focused on one of the 28 projects called the Atlantic Shore Offshore Wind (ASOW) project, a joint venture between Shell New Energies US, LLC and EDF-RE Offshore Development, LLC, itself a subsidiary of EDF Renewables North America.

Atlantic Shores has more than 400 acres of three offshore wind areas under development located off the coast of southern New Jersey between Atlantic City and Barnegat Light, with a third offshore lease area in the New York Bight.

The ASOW projects, located 8.7 miles off the coast of New Jersey, will have 200 wind turbines throughout 102,124 acres of ocean, four offshore and two onshore substations, and 1,025 miles of high voltage cables.

COA issued a petition on June 15

demanding that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management extend its public review and comment period from 45 days to six months.

"These projects will have serious consequences for the public use and enjoyment of the ocean, as well as significant consequences to marine life," COA stated. "Ample time is needed to carefully and comprehensively review these projects. People who will be impacted most directly by these projects earn their living along the shore during the summer season."

## Levels of Harassment

Currently, companies are surveying the ocean for future construction, Ms. Zipf said.

"What that means is that these companies have the authorization to harass thousands of animals with the permission of the National Oceanic and Atmo-

spheric Administration (NOAA) to do these activities that could cause harm to marine life, which is why they're requesting these authorizations," she said.

## NOAA Issues Incidental Take Authorizations

"Provided certain findings are made, NOAA Fisheries may issue incidental take authorizations allowing the unintentional 'take' of marine mammals incidental to specified activities, including construction projects, scientific research projects, oil and gas development, and military exercises," NOAA told The Epoch Times.

"Take" is defined under the MMPA as "to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal."

Amendments to the MMPA divide harassment into two levels.

Level A Harassment is the act of pur-

suit, torment, or annoyance that has the potential to injure a marine mammal. Level B Harassment is any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance that disrupts behavioral patterns such as migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, and feeding.

According to one document, ASOW has applied for a Level B ITA for its site characterization surveys that involve high-resolution geophysical technology using frequencies less than 180 kilohertz spanning 1,450,006 acres from Long Island, New York, to Atlantic City, New Jersey.

NOAA stated that it hadn't authorized permits for offshore wind surveys or construction activities that would allow for injury or death.

## Whale Deaths: 'It Is Not Normal'

Meghan Lapp, a representative for a commercial fishing company in





A crowd gathers around a dead humpback whale at Dockweiler State Beach in Playa Del Rey, Calif., on July 1, 2016. Necropsies of whales that have died recently showed that about 40 percent bore evidence of human interaction, the NOAA stated.

Rhode Island who also works in fishery management, told The Epoch Times that the surveying has potentially been the cause of several whale deaths along the east coast.

“It’s essentially seismic equipment they are using to characterize the sea-floor so they can pile drive the turbines,” Ms. Lapp said.

The difference between what is happening along the East Coast and what has been taking place for much longer with oil and gas surveys in the Gulf of Mexico is the fact that the Gulf of Mexico doesn’t have as many whales as the East Coast, she said.

“On the East Coast, there is a super-highway of large, baleen whale species like fin whales, right whales, sei whales, humpback whales, minke whales, and this is their migration route,” she said. “When there are these overlapping surveys going on, constantly blasting them with intense sound, that has an impact.”

Among the harassments granted in the ITAs is harassment that causes temporary deafness, Ms. Lapp said.

However, temporary deafness can lead to permanent deafness if conditions persist, she added.

“And the fact is, a deaf whale is a dead whale,” Ms. Lapp said. “Now, all of a sudden, with these overlapping surveys in the same area, there are large baleen whales washing up. We know NOAA is issuing incidental take authorizations

2.2  
MILLION

The proposal includes 3,500 wind turbines across 2.2 million acres of ocean, which is twice the size of the Grand Canyon, an expert says.

42  
WHALES

From Jan. 1 to June 21, there were 42 large whale strandings along the Atlantic coast, the NOAA says.

for the temporary deafness, but not for death, so there’s been a lot of public outcry about this.”

From Jan. 1 to June 21, there were 42 large whale strandings along the U.S. Atlantic coast, NOAA told The Epoch Times, a number that includes 26 humpback whales between Massachusetts and Virginia, two sperm whales in Florida and offshore North Carolina, two North Atlantic right whales in North Carolina and Virginia, one sei whale in North Carolina, 10 minke whales between Maine and New York, and one fin whale in Virginia.

NOAA said it’s been investigating

what it calls unusual mortality events for large whales on the East Coast since 2016 and maintains that humans cause the whale deaths.

“Partial or full necropsy examinations were conducted on approximately half of the whales,” NOAA stated. “Of the whales examined, about 40 percent had evidence of human interaction, either ship strike or entanglement. Vessel strikes and entanglement are the greatest human threats to large whales.”

According to NOAA, connecting offshore wind surveys and whale deaths “is speculative and not supported by scientific literature or other data.”

“But NOAA doesn’t have good data on low-frequency baleen whale hearing, so they don’t know what levels of sound cause temporary or permanent deafness,” Ms. Lapp said. “They’re issuing permits that can have a significant impact on these animals without a benchmark ... to measure it against.”

According to Bonnie Brady with the Long Island Commercial Fishing Association, NOAA has no standardized protocol for checking the whale’s ears to determine deafness.

“When they say they have no direct information that shows there is a link between offshore wind and whale deaths, it’s, in effect, the perfect crime if you don’t have a method of practice by which you actually check the ears,” Ms. Brady said. “Of course, you don’t have

information, and you will be guaranteed to never have information.”

The whale deaths’ link to wind turbine development isn’t unprecedented, Ms. Lapp said in a separate interview with Fox News, with similar incidents occurring in Taiwan and the UK.

“In the UK, at the height of their offshore wind activity in 2018, 1,000 whales died and washed up dead on UK beaches, and when people started to make the connection between offshore wind and dead whales, the government and the media and the offshore wind industry quashed it, and people began to think, ‘Well, this is just normal,’” Ms. Lapp said. “It is not normal.”

The Epoch Times contacted ASOW for comment but received none by press time.

In a May statement, ASOW said linking whale deaths to wind turbine construction is misinformation, blaming humans instead.

“These sad whale deaths are extremely disturbing, but it is simply inaccurate to point the finger at offshore wind activities when there is no evidence to indicate a correlation (whale deaths started increasing in 2016, years before offshore wind activities were underway), let alone a causal relationship between regular ocean seabed surveys and whale strandings,” ASOW stated in its release.

Ms. Lapp and Ms. Brady both contend that surveying predates 2016.

“Sub-bottom profiling, high resolution geophysical (HRG) surveys were alive and well beginning in 2015, with at least four sets of surveys taking place,” Ms. Brady said.

Ms. Brady pointed to 2015 and 2016 seismic survey reports off the coast of Delaware and Maryland filed on behalf of US Wind Inc., a 2016 survey south of Massachusetts filed by Dong Energy (now Orsted), 2016 surveys in Massachusetts filed by Vineyard Wind, and an ITA request for the Block Island Wind Farm in Rhode Island dating back to 2014.

“Not all applied for Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHA) for ITAs, but HRG surveys were done with the same equipment that would qualify as Level B and A harassment,” Ms. Brady said. “When I spoke to an NOAA representative about eight months ago, I was told

an IHA is considered a service, it is not a requirement. So, there may be others that did survey work but without an IHA.”

‘This Isn’t Reasonable or Responsible’

Recently, the Government Accountability Office (GAO)—a nonpartisan agency that conducts investigations for Congress—said it would examine how the construction of coastal wind turbines is affecting the environment, the fishing industry, military operations, and navigational safety.

“There’s been no comprehensive investigation into this wide-scale industrialization, so we see this GAO investigation into a really great step to getting publicly available to make sure that the

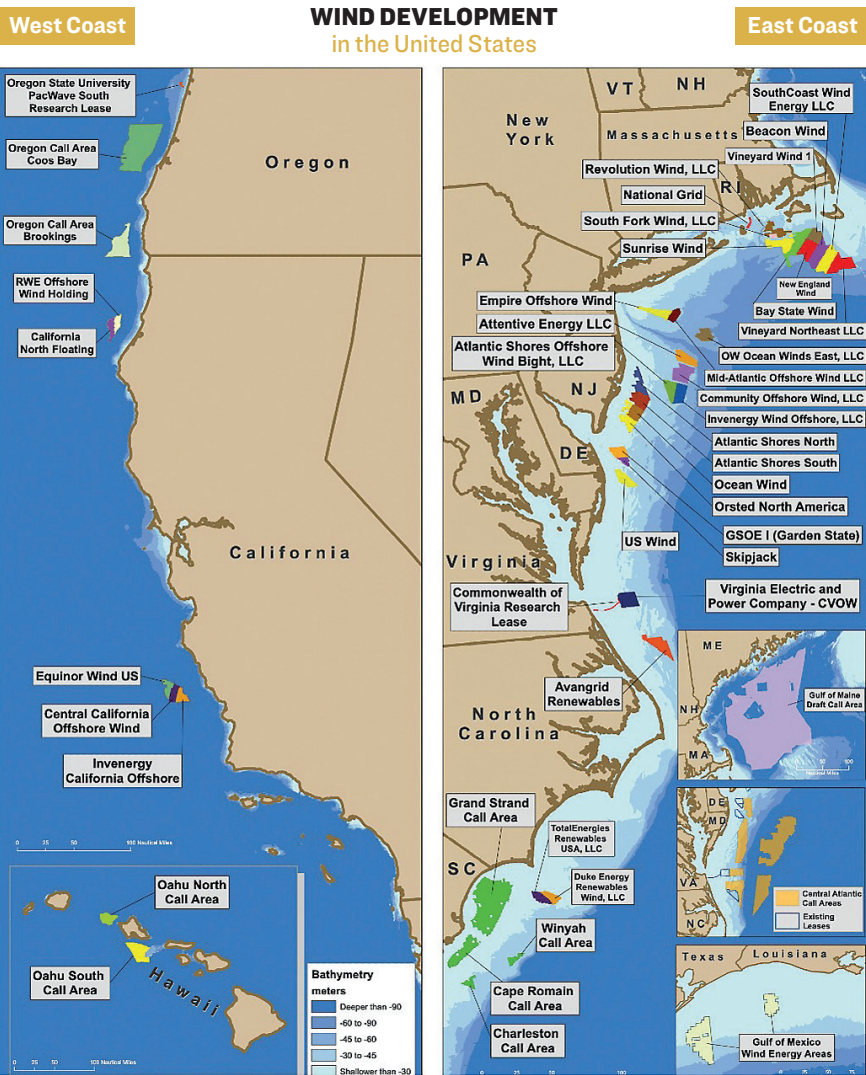
ocean is protected,” Ms. Zipf said.

She added that COA supports reasonable and responsible offshore wind development.

“But right now, in looking at what’s being proposed up and down the coast, this isn’t reasonable or responsible,” Ms. Zipf said. “We need to know what the impacts are in advance in order to make informed decisions so that these green energy initiatives aren’t going to harm the resources that we’re trying to protect in the first place.”

It should be noted, she added, that the ocean is nonpartisan.

“This isn’t a Republican or Democrat issue. Everyone depends on a clean and healthy ocean. It provides so much, and we don’t have to pay a dime; we only have to ensure that it’s healthy.” ■





News of former President Donald Trump's indictment is being shown on a television at Bill's Bar & Burger in New York on June 13.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/GETTY IMAGES

ELECTION 2024

# POLITICAL CANDIDATES ADAPT TO CHANGING MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Legacy media outlets scramble to snare attention

from distracted and disengaged Americans

News Analysis By Janice Hisle



**B**IG-NAME POLITICIANS—such as former President Donald Trump, President Joe Biden, and their rivals—are jockeying for positions amid a media landscape that looks a lot like the Wild West lately.

High-profile shakeups have recently hit two major networks, Fox News and CNN, leaving candidates and viewers guessing the political direction that each might take next.

After firing conservative megastar host Tucker Carlson two months ago, Fox has seen its prime-time audience shrink by one-third, Deadline reported on June 27.

Mr. Trump, once aligned closely with Fox, criticized the network as being “very prejudiced” against him in a June 26 interview with Newsmax.

Meanwhile, in recent months, Fox’s left-leaning counterpart, CNN, fired longtime on-air personalities Don Lemon and Brian Stelter. Then, the network and Mr. Trump stunned observers by temporarily declaring a truce in their longstanding war over mutual accusations of spreading false information.

A May 10 town hall forum with Mr. Trump, his first appearance on CNN since his successful presidential run in 2015–16, drew more than 3 million viewers. The New Hampshire forum was the first major televised event of the 2024 presidential campaign, Mr. Trump’s third run for the presidency.

For the former president, it meant free publicity. For CNN, it was TV-ratings gold. But the event proved to be kryptonite for the network’s CEO, Chris Licht. CNN fired him shortly thereafter. He had been in charge for only a year and had tried to steer the network toward more neutral news reporting.

These surprising shifts at Fox and CNN come while virtually all TV stations and legacy media outlets continue scrambling to snare attention from distracted and disengaged Americans.

**‘Narrowcasting’ Supplants Broadcasting**

At the same time, the number of alternative information sources has mushroomed. There are now more than 3 million active podcasts, for example.

Steve Bannon, a longtime Trump ally and host of the popular “War Room”

podcast since 2019, predicts that only podcasts that provide “direct value” and “don’t waste people’s time” will survive. Podcasters must provide rich content “every minute of every day, and that makes it insanely competitive,” he told The Epoch Times.

As the American electorate pays less attention to traditional media outlets, politicians have been forced to shift from broadcasting to “narrowcasting,” according to Sean Evans, a political science professor at Union University in Tennessee.

“Everyone’s trying to find a niche market,” Mr. Evans told The Epoch Times.

And politicians are experimenting with how to get the most benefit from their efforts.

**“You cannot reach the same people with the same message or means of communication anymore.”**

*Susan MacManus, professor emerita, University of South Florida*

**Political Junkies Rare**

Decades ago, when Mr. Evans was growing up, he could choose to watch shows on one of three TV networks: ABC, NBC, or CBS.

“Now, we have hundreds of choices; not just on TV channels but streaming, video games, radio, podcasts, and everything else,” he said. “So, the problem every [political] campaign continues to face is: ‘How do I reach voters?’”

Although “the most politically interested are the ones who are paying attention to politics,” political junkies make up a small percentage of the electorate, Mr. Evans said.

Only about 15 percent of Americans pay close attention to politics, researchers at Stony Brook University reported three years ago. However, the share of hyper-attuned Americans increases when major events happen, the Knight Foundation noted.

In March 2020, 56 percent of Americans closely monitored national news as

the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, the foundation reported last year.

About 52 percent paid “a great deal of attention to national news” in November 2020, according to the Knight Foundation, as Mr. Trump battled unsuccessfully to remain president.

Mr. Trump, who has never conceded to Mr. Biden, so far is the clear frontrunner to become the Republican Party’s presidential nominee; likewise, Mr. Biden is seeking reelection and is the presumed nominee for the Democrats.

Both are entangled in major controversies: Mr. Trump’s criminal indictments and Mr. Biden’s alleged influence-peddling scandals. As a result, the two leading candidates’ challengers face an even harder time getting voters to notice them, political commentator Dick Morris pointed out two weeks ago.

Under normal circumstances, political news tends to be a tough sell at this time of year, according to Susan MacManus, political science professor emerita at the University of South Florida.

Summer activities and vacations are filling people’s calendars.

“This is the hardest time in politics to get someone’s attention,” she told The Epoch Times, “because people just have so much else going on.”

Ms. MacManus also senses “a weariness” in much of the U.S. electorate.

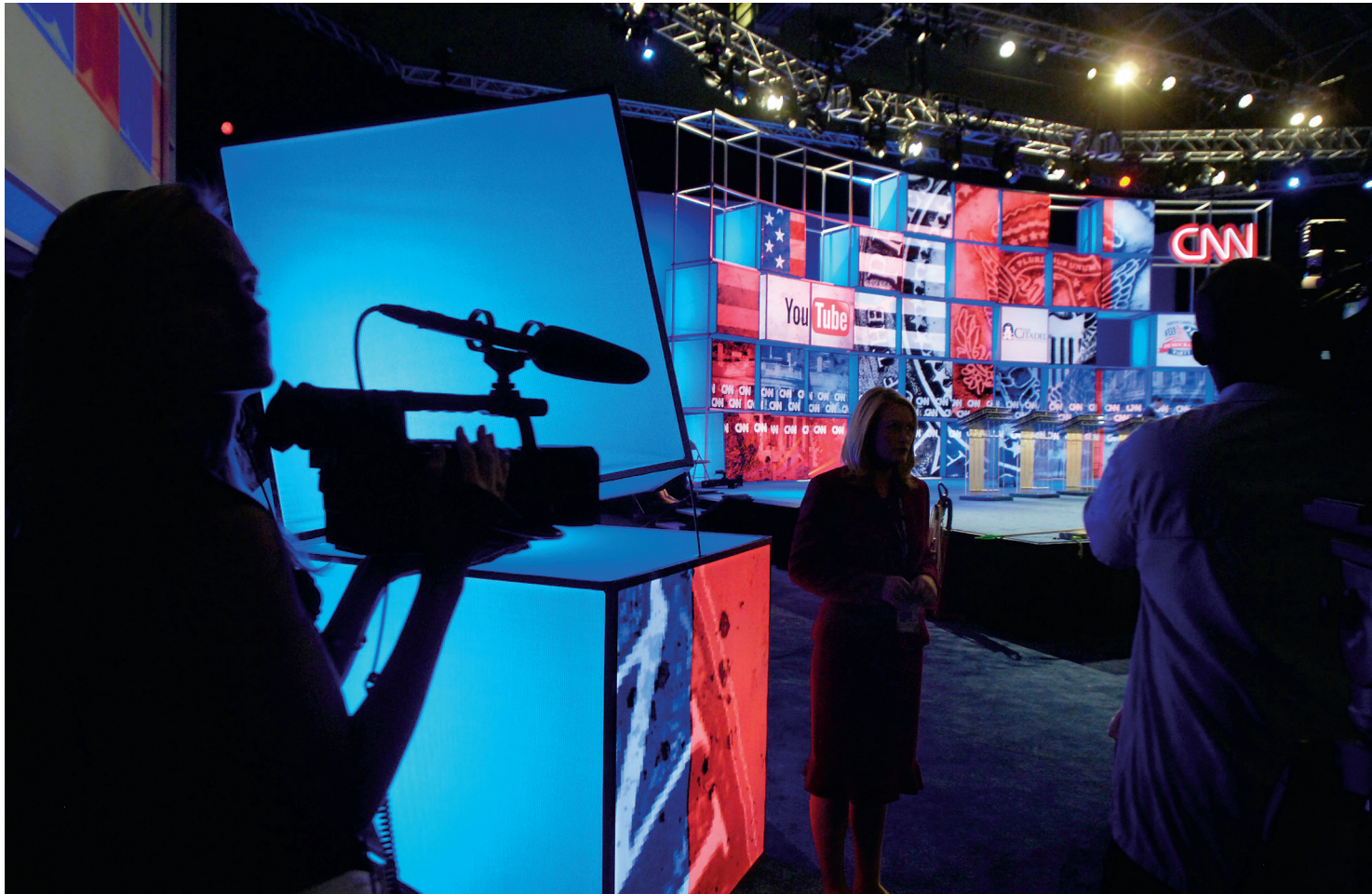
“A lot of the average voters are not tuned into this ‘media morass,’” she said. “They just don’t want to hear a thing about any of it.”

**Sophistication Needed**

The hurdles that candidates face now are even higher than they were in 2020, Ms. MacManus said.

“The proliferation of media has made it much more difficult to reach very small slices of the electorate,” she said. “It requires a great deal of money to be spent and time spent on microtargeting; you cannot reach the same people with the same message or means of communication anymore.”

Another complication is that while older voters may use platforms such as Facebook, younger ones are more likely to be found on platforms such as Snapchat or Instagram. So to be effective, campaigns must calibrate their messages to connect with those different audiences on the



various platforms, Ms. MacManus said.

Thus, their communication needs to become more sophisticated, she said.

“You’ve got to split your appeal into various little slices,” she said.

Those can include messages tailored to certain demographics, ideologies, gender, family situation, economic situation, or political affiliation, for example.

Trying to figure out how to best target those slivers of the audience is constantly shifting, Ms. MacManus said.

“The biggest emphasis right now has to be on people who can understand this microtargeting and the communication of a decent message to the right people,” she said. “There’s just really a lot of stress on campaigns right now to figure out who’s watching, listening, and reading.”

**Hyper-Specialized Channels Coming**

Mr. Bannon said a void has been created in conservative media in particular. ♦

**31%**

**FOX NEWS’**  
primetime viewership is down by 31 percent from a year ago, data show.

**3**

**MILLION**  
**THERE ARE**  
now more than 3 million active podcasts.



*(Top)* Former President Donald Trump appeared on CNN on May 10, drawing more than 3 million views. *(Above)* After firing host Tucker Carlson, Fox has seen its primetime audience shrink by one-third, data show.



Fox News “collapsed” after it fired Mr. Carlson, and Newsmax is “not going all-in” for the Trump “Make America Great Again” (MAGA) movement, he said.

Fox and Newsmax have shied away from exploring controversies over the COVID-19 vaccines and allegations over “the stealing of the 2020 election, which are both issues that are central to the MAGA movement,” he said.

The vacuum has “allowed a basic explosion of alternative media,” he said, “and you’re seeing these new sites and new groups set up every day.”

“You’re going to start seeing tons of alternative media, I think, come up from the right, the MAGA right,” Mr. Bannon said. “There’s a huge appetite for it. And I just think it’s going to expand. I think it’s going to give people tons of alternatives.”

He foresees an increasing array of hyper-specialized media sources catering to “the MAGA right.” They each may focus on a single topic or a cluster of related ones, he said, such as economics and finance, national security, foreign affairs, “woke” corporate culture, and the “invasion of the southern border.”

“You’ll see more specialties than just ‘generalists,’ and I think you’ll see a lot less whining,” Mr. Bannon said. “Conservative ink is way too whiny about the mainstream media not covering things properly. I think people understand the media is a big part—if not the single biggest part—of the problem, and I think you’ll see alternative media that really deals in issues, facts, investigative reporting.”

**Comfortable With Being Uncomfortable**

One thing is sure as the landscape evolves, Ms. MacManus said: “Anymore, the same old, same old doesn’t work; you’ve got to go to some of the unconventional media that you’re less familiar with.”

When candidates take a somewhat unexpected approach, “that, in and of itself, generates coverage,” she said.

Clearly, the candidates have been experimenting—Mr. Trump, by making temporary amends with his sworn enemy, CNN, and his GOP challenger, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, by using Twitter as a campaign launchpad.

While some people equated Mr. Trump’s CNN appearance with his walk-



ing into a lion’s den, Mr. Evans saw it as an intelligent move.

“No matter what happened,” Trump supporters were “going to see him as being in the right,” Mr. Evans said, and Trump’s critics were going to remain critical of him, as they bashed the network for giving him a platform from which he could spew what they call “lies.”

“So, he got two weeks’ worth of free media coverage like that,” Mr. Evans said. “Everyone was talking about Trump, and that’s what Trump wants.”

While the town hall story was dominating news cycles, Mr. Trump enjoyed “a better chance of reaching more people, or of more people actually hearing about him” rather than about his competitors, Mr. Evans said.

The less people hear about Mr. Trump’s opponents, “the more likely he is to win,” Mr. Evans said, “because people are more likely to vote for someone they recognize than for someone they don’t recognize.”

**Minds Made Up**

Still, there could be drawbacks to extra publicity. The more a candidate says publicly, the greater the chance that he

or she will slip up. Yet for someone such as Mr. Trump, who has been in the spotlight constantly since he announced his first presidential run in 2015, that may not matter much, Mr. Evans said.

“We’re here seven years later, and who hasn’t made up their mind about Trump? ... I don’t think there are many people who are going to change their mind about Trump,” Mr. Evans said. “And Trump has said all sorts of stupid things which would hurt other candidates, but for various different reasons, it doesn’t affect him.”

However, a message conveying negative information could prove more damaging to a lesser-known candidate, he said, “because you haven’t heard something positive about him first.”

That’s why Mr. Trump has repeatedly aimed at Mr. DeSantis.

“He’s trying to define DeSantis in a negative way, before DeSantis can define himself,” Mr. Evans said.

**Playing Nice Doesn’t Work**

In response to some people expressing dismay over Mr. Trump’s “attacks” on Mr. DeSantis, Mr. Evans said he doubts there’s a way to succeed in politics with

FROM LEFT: SCOTT EISEN/GETTY IMAGES; CHRIS DELMAS/AP/GETTY IMAGES



**Shortly after former President Donald Trump’s appearance on CNN for the first time since his 2015–16 presidential run, the network’s CEO was fired.**

a solely “positive” message.

And, he said, “I would say there’s a difference between a negative ad and an attack ad.”

A negative ad is “a distortion of someone’s character, background, or something like that,” Mr. Evans said, while an attack ad is “something that is based on fact, an attempt to draw distinctions between you and somebody else.”

Attack ads or attack messages via social media or press releases are the most effective ones that exist, Mr. Evans said. People are more likely to remember such messages, which also give voters information that can help them decide which candidate to choose.

**The ‘Twitterverse’**

After months of anticipating that he would indeed seek the presidency, Mr. DeSantis used Twitter to announce that he was officially entering the fray a month ago.

Using that medium attracted a lot of buzz for Mr. DeSantis; according to his campaign, the launch drew 30 million views in 15 hours.

For another reason, Mr. Evans said, Twitter was an interesting launch choice

for Mr. DeSantis. It may have implied to Mr. Trump, “Look, I’m on the web platform that launched you, and you’re not on this platform,” Mr. Evans said.

However, people have been speculating that Mr. Trump might return to Twitter, where he became infamous for his “mean tweets.” But the former president has been absent from the platform since Jan. 6, 2021. That’s when Twitter officials banned him, alleging that his message on that date fomented a violent uprising among some election-outcome protesters at the U.S. Capitol.

However, late last year, the internal “Twitter Files” released by new Twitter owner Elon Musk revealed that the social network broke its own policy to justify banishing Mr. Trump. Since being booted from Twitter, the former president has relied on a platform he founded, Truth Social, to spread his messages to about 5.5 million followers.

Mr. Musk has invited Mr. Trump to return to Twitter; the former president has so far declined. Some people speculate that Mr. Trump may soon find it irresistible to tap into the nearly 88 million followers who await on his dormant Twitter account.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis used Twitter as a campaign launchpad for the 2024 presidential election. Although Elon Musk has lifted the ban on former President Donald Trump’s Twitter account, Trump has yet to return. Instead, Trump has relied on a platform he founded, Truth Social, to spread his messages.

Mr. DeSantis has about 2 million followers on his Twitter account, but various additional Twitter accounts support his presidential run. DeSantis War Room has about 112,000 followers, for example.

The Florida governor’s campaign launch proved to be glitchy. He posted a video on Twitter and spoke during a “Twitter Spaces” chatroom-type conversation. But the site crashed because so many people were trying to access it. Mr. DeSantis’s campaign later touted, “Our Campaign Launch Broke the Internet!”

**Setting the ‘Narrative’**

Even though Mr. DeSantis’s campaign rollout wasn’t ideal, people have moved on to talking about other aspects of the presidential campaign.

“What’s important is not individual things,” Mr. Evans said. Instead, “the overall narrative” about a candidate is what usually sticks with voters.

Campaigns tend to sell—a “storyline” about each political hopeful, according to Mr. Evans. Examples could be “Joe Biden is too old” or “Donald Trump is authoritarian,” he said. Whatever the theme is, candidates’ campaigns try to “get the press to carry that out, so people hear it over and over again.”

At the same time, media outlets “want a race.” They “have an incentive to make it competitive on some level,” he said, because no one wants to follow the coverage of a political campaign that’s a blowout. That’s why media outlets may be tempted to boost lower-ranking candidates.

Thus, if a media outlet appears to be leaning toward Mr. DeSantis, for example, that might not mean that the organization genuinely favors him.

“Does this mean that they’re ‘pro-DeSantis?’” Mr. Evans asked rhetorically. “Or does it mean they’re ‘pro’ views and clicks?” ■





Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley delivers a major policy speech against abortion in Arlington, Va., on April 25.

PHOTO BY ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

EXCLUSIVE

Q&A

With

# Presidential Candidate Nikki Haley

*Haley talks health care, foreign policy, and government weaponization*

BY JACKSON RICHMAN





Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley speaks at a town hall event in Bedford, N.H., on April 26.

“There’s got to be accountability. We can’t just let this go.”

Nikki Haley, GOP presidential candidate

REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL candidate Nikki Haley was in New Hampshire on June 28, taking part in a foreign policy discussion and New Hampshire GOP cookout featuring Gov. Chris Sununu. The former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and South Carolina governor was scheduled to conduct a town hall on June 27, but it was postponed until July 6.

The Epoch Times sat down with Ms. Haley for a wide-ranging interview at the cookout, which was at a private residence.

**What would your Day One agenda look like?**  
First thing is, you control what you can control first, and that’s your agencies. You go and relieve and replace every head of every agency because you want to make sure you’re putting people that understand their consumer. They understand who they’re serving, the challenges that they have, and the opportunities [that] could be there.

The second thing is you go and you make sure that—I did this as governor—you send people into every agency to clean it up, pull down old regs, pull down old programs, get rid of any problem

children so that you can get it used to working again. And then you give each agency goals that, in the first 90 days, they have to accomplish so that they can start showing that they’re working for the people and not the other way around.

Only then do you start thinking of legislation. The first thing I would do is focus on our agencies.

**The FBI and Department of Justice have come under fire for being weaponized. How would you fix this? Would you fire FBI Director Chris Wray?**  
I think that, first of all, you have to understand that they’ve lost all trust with the American people. And we have to go build that trust back. We can’t build that trust back if Christopher Wray is the head of the FBI. But it’s not just Chris Wray. You’ve got to get rid of all

SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

that senior management out there, too. We’ve got to go and make an example of people. We’ve got to go and show that we’re truly cleaning it up if we’re going to take care of it.

**Do you support impeaching President Joe Biden, Attorney General Merrick Garland, and Wray?**  
First of all, Biden, I think that he’s got a lot to answer for. The fact that he hasn’t done a press conference to acknowledge all the Hunter Biden stuff is irresponsible at best, and he needs to answer that, but it smells bad.

And so, yes, I think that—I think Congress should be investigating. If the DOJ won’t do it, I think Congress should, and I think Congress should open up an investigation on Biden and find out exactly what was taken; what was done in return, if anything; and how much Biden knew.

In terms of Merrick Garland, I mean, look—it got weaponized under his watch, so he’s got some serious questions to answer as well, and I think they need to do an investigation on him.

Christopher Wray needs to answer the same questions, all of these people. The American people don’t trust what they’ve done. They all owe it to answer as many questions as possible to let us know how we got to this point, and there’s got to be accountability. We can’t just let this go.

**How would you fix the health care and health insurance issues in the country? Would you repeal and replace Obamacare?**  
When it comes to health care, I think we have to look at the fact that we have to literally break our health care system. And when I say that, we have to make it all transparent. Open it all up, from the hospitals to the doctors to the pharmaceutical companies to the insurance companies, and make them all show what they do. If we just dealt with the insurance companies alone, we would cut health care in half.

But if we make that transparent and if we start getting out the middlemen—

whether it’s the [pharmacy benefit managers] or whether it’s the insurance companies—and we start letting the patient actually work with their service provider, that’s the first step.

The second thing is service providers need to focus on value-based health care, where they’re focused on outcomes, on prevention and outcomes. So we need to do those things.

And I think that we need to have insurance companies and medical care where you have options, where every patient can decide the type of care they want, what they want, and do it based on their—based on what their options are.

In terms of Obamacare, I mean, it’s hard to see that it has fixed anything. All that it has done is run the cost of health care up. But I do think we want to make sure that every person in America has access to health care, without question. So we’ve got to go look at that, but the way you go and read the price of health care and increase the quality of health care is to make it transparent, so we can open the whole thing up so that patients are suddenly in charge and not, you know, hospitals and insurance companies.

**Just to clarify, you would repeal and replace Obamacare?**  
I think we have to have a solution before we do that. But I do think, yes, we need to see that it didn’t work the way we wanted it to.

**You’ve called for entitlement reform for younger generations. What would the new retirement age be?**  
We have to go back and do the math. I’m an accountant. You’ve got to go do the math. You’ve got to go look and see. But if we started with those in their 20s and younger coming in, raise the retirement age to life expectancy, and go see what those calculations are, they know they’re not going to get it anyway.

So we have to start doing that, and I think it should reflect life expectancy. If you’re looking at what retirement age [is], it can’t be where it is now. It needs to

be more reflective of what we see with life expectancy.

**The individual tax cuts enacted by President Trump are set to expire next year. Would you try to make them permanent as president or would you cut taxes further and make those permanent and eliminate more or all loopholes?**  
There’s too much spending, there’s too much borrowing.

First of all, yes, on the tax cuts. I think that when we saw the Trump tax cuts go into play, we saw a lot of people have more money in their wallets. They started spending it and helped the economy. We need to look to simplify the tax code in any way that we can. There’s not any person in America that thinks the tax code is fair right now. So if we’re going to do it, it’s not just about cuts. It’s about how can we make sure that we’re handling the way we tax smarter so that more people have money to invest.

**Unless you have 60 Republicans in the Senate, you’ll have to compromise with Democrats. How do you plan to do so while keeping your promises? For example, cutting spending and not adding to the national debt?**  
When you have a national purpose and you tell the country where you want to go, that’s going to be key. The key isn’t to start with something that’s incredibly divisive. Let’s show what it’s like when they win together. Let’s show when we win together on transparency in education, let’s show when we win together on cutting spending. Let’s show when we win together on getting rid of earmarks or reducing crime or doing something with the border, I think, or taking on China.

There are things we can work on that I think we can show them what it’s like to win. But we shouldn’t go into it with a sense of fighting. We should go into it with the fact that we owe the American people some results, and they need to know that the government’s working for them.



**You recently unveiled your energy plan. Would you resume the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline and withdraw the United States again from the Paris Climate Agreement?**

Yes and yes.

**How do you plan to combat “wokeism” in America’s public schools? Nationwide school choice?**

We have to go back to the basics. I mean, you look at the fact that—what, last week or this week—it came out 13-year-olds had the lowest grades in reading and math in decades. Before COVID, 67 percent of eighth graders weren’t proficient in reading or math. We don’t have time to deal with all of

these distractions. We’ve got to go back to reading, writing, and math and get some vocational classes back at our high schools.

**How do you plan to tackle student debt?**

First of all, you don’t give a loan without telling the student what’s required with that loan.

Right now, it’s too easy to get a loan. If you’re going to have to sit there and fill out all this paperwork to close on a house, you should have to spend 15 minutes with that student to tell them exactly what’s involved in that loan, what they’re going to have to pay back and what the smart way is to do it. We need to start telling the students, on

the front end and on the back end, why they’re going to do it.

The second thing is we need to start going back to tech schools and not so much on four-year universities. We’ve got to show kids that there are great jobs that they can do from a tech perspective, as opposed to just going to that four-year education and being further in debt.

**You’ve decried Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis for giving Disney special favors and have lamented government favors. And you’ve said no to earmarks. Speaking of government favoritism, Boeing, which has a strong presence in your home state, has been a recipient of the Export-Import Bank, an institution derided by critics for cronyism. As president, what would you do about the Export-Import Bank?**

I think you have to look at the Export-Import Bank. The way that it’s handled now is to make sure that it’s competitive with other countries. That’s always been the case. What we do want to do is make sure, how do we go and get those companies on

strong footing without having to pick favorites and pick winners and losers? Right now, the winners are the other countries. The losers are us.

So we’ve got to look at, we’ve got to figure out how we can do things that allow our companies to be competitive without making sure that we’re taking on too many subsidies and bailouts.

**Would you formally recognize Taiwan’s independence from China?**

Taiwan hasn’t recognized its independence from China. It hasn’t said it wants to be an independent country. So I’m for self-determination. They have to first decide what they want to do. And then we follow suit. We shouldn’t get in front of them on that.

**Would you recognize Iraqi Kurdistan independence?**

I think we have to be careful again there. You’ve got to first see what the situation is on the ground and decide what’s in our best interest for our national security and also for freedom.

**From reportedly resuming nuclear talks with Iran to announcing that it’ll no longer fund research in Israeli neighborhoods in Judea and Samaria—the West Bank—what’s your reaction been to the Biden administration as it pertains to Israel?**

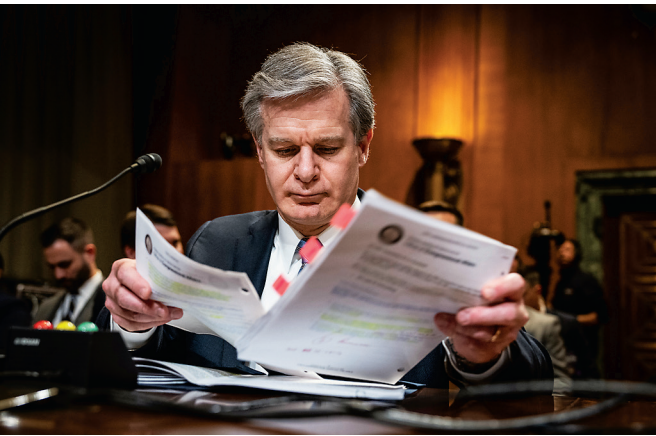
Total slap in the face to Israel to have done that. Biden has forgotten who his friends are. And he seems to be placating his enemies. That’s the problem, and that’s why he needs to go.

**As governor, you signed the first legislation to combat the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel. Would you do the same on the federal level?**

Absolutely.

**Additionally, what steps would you take to combat anti-Semitism?**

First of all, in universities, you cut their funding if we don’t have every university actually dealing with racism and anti-Semitism. There should



*The FBI has lost the trust of the American people, so the head of the agency, Christopher Wray, should be replaced, the GOP presidential candidate says.*

**“We owe the American people some results, and they need to know that government’s working for them.”**

Nikki Haley, GOP presidential candidate

be no place for hate in our universities. There should be no place for hate in our way of life in America. And so we’ve got to start calling it out everywhere we see it and treat it like racism because it’s no different.

**You’ve lamented that the GOP has lost seven of the eight past popular votes in the presidential election. However, isn’t it the electoral college that ultimately matters?**

It is, but Republicans should want to win the majority of Americans. That’s something in our moral compass we should want to do. It’s not something to be proud about, that we don’t win the majority of Americans.

And so I think we have to make sure that we talk about the fact that our solutions lift up everybody, but it’s also the fact that we need to be a party of addition. We’ve got to bring in people that haven’t currently been in our party. And I think the only way you do that is to have a new generational leader that understands that it’s about addition and making sure we do more to earn the

support of the majority of the country.

**Throughout your career, you’ve pulled off upsets and proven your critics wrong when it comes to running for office, from state legislator to governor. How do you plan to continue this streak with your former boss staying resilient in the polls despite his indictments?**

It’s early, and no one will outwork me. No one will outsmart me in this race.

We’re going to touch every hand. We’re going to answer every question. We’re going to do everything we need to in order to earn the support of the people. And at the end of the day, I know we’ll be successful.

**You have two dogs, Bentley and Rio. What would the White House rules be for them? No sitting or lying down on the Oval Office furniture?**

No on the furniture. But yes, I would let them run around. ■

*This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.*

**“It’s hard to see that [Obamacare] has fixed anything. All that it’s done is run the cost of health care up.”**

Nikki Haley, GOP presidential candidate



*“We need to see that [Obamacare] didn’t work the way we wanted it to,” Nikki Haley says.*

FROM L: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES; DREW LANGER/GETTY IMAGES



*Gender dysphoria should be treated as a mental health issue and not by using surgery to “permanently dismantle” and “disfigure” individuals, a doctor says.*

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY IMAGES

TRANSGENDERISM

# EUROPE BACKS OFF TRANSGENDER PROCEDURES, WHILE US RAMPS UP

*Medical interventions for minors in US is political and profitable, doctor says*

By Brad Jones

**M**UCH OF AMERICA HAS turned a blind eye to how medical institutions in European nations have shifted away from transgender procedures, according to doctors who are critical of the U.S. model.

Dr. Julia Mason, a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), told The Epoch Times that the push in the United States for transgender medical interventions on minors is “primarily political” and linked to profit-making.

“The United States is becoming more of an outlier every day,” Dr. Mason said. “Every country that has taken a serious look at the evidence has concluded that medical transition of children is experimental, and the evidence doesn’t support doing it.”

In recent years, leaders in the U.S. health care industry such as the AAP have ramped up the promotion and use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones and have even recommended gender transition surgeries for children.

But as President Joe Biden and blue states harden their political resolve to support what they call “gender-affirming” procedures as the only approach to treatment for the recent surge in gender dysphoria, red states are pushing back with legislation to protect minors from what many Americans see as child abuse.

The Wall Street Journal reported in May that 16 states have restricted transgender medical interventions for minors this year, while 16 others introduced similar legislation.

In his remarks at the White House on June 8, Mr. Biden condemned attempts to ban sex-change surgeries and transgender medical interventions on children, calling such proposed legislation “cruel and callous.”

In contrast, European medical institutions in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and France are growing increasingly skeptical of what supporters call the “gender-affirmation model,” citing a dearth of evidence that the benefits of such medical interventions for minors are worth the risks.

Britain’s National Health Service announced on June 9 that it would ban the use of puberty blockers on children, except in clinical trials. Meanwhile, an independent and systematic Cass Re-

view in 2022 led to the closure of the Tavistock Clinic in London.

## The Political Divide

In the United States, pushback from detransitioners and conservative, religious, and parental rights groups against gender ideology has triggered protests organized by trans activists, including far-left Antifa militants.

Transgenderism, Dr. Mason said, has become “a political tribal marker” and a “wedge issue.”



**“The United States is becoming more of an outlier every day.”**

*Dr. Julia Mason, member, American Academy of Pediatrics*

“I’m a Democrat,” she said. “California is one of the most Democratic states, and being pro-transition, pro-transgender, pro-pediatric transition is a Democratic tribal marker, and so California is just leading the way on that topic for that reason.”

Many people are treating the “gender-affirming” model as though it were settled medical science, she said.

“We’re far from settled science, and it’s just getting more unsettled,” Dr. Mason said, noting that a paper she wrote, “Far from Settled Science: a Call for Caution in the Care of Gender Dysphoric Youth,” was rejected by the Journal of Pediatrics about three years ago.

Dr. Mason, who practices medicine in Oregon, has also drafted a resolution calling on the AAP to align its treatment recommendations for gender dysphoria with findings from systematic reviews of evidence. It states that as of February, “there is no evidence that the AAP plans to conduct a systematic review of evidence related to gender dysphoria treatments, pursuant to the AAP’s Statements, Technological Supports and

Manuals in Progress on its Section on LGBT Health and Wellness.”

Although nearly two dozen AAP fellows signed the resolution, Dr. Mason couldn’t find anyone in the organization’s leadership to co-sponsor it so that it could be put to a vote.

Dr. Mason is also an adviser to Gen-spect, an international alliance of professionals, transgender people, detransitioners, parent groups, and others that offers an alternative to the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) standards of care, and a board member of the Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine, which promotes “ethical and evidence-informed healthcare” for children and young adults with gender dysphoria and opposes all transgender medical interventions on anyone under the age of 25.

She said that while mature adults can make their own decisions, she worries about vulnerable adults, especially those with undiagnosed autism, making life-altering decisions to transition.

“I don’t want to block all transition. I just think people should be made aware of what’s going on,” she said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas) proposed legislation to block funding for children’s hospitals that offer “gender-affirming care”—such as surgeries, hormone therapy, and puberty blockers—medical interventions that he said aren’t backed by scientific data and “can cause serious irreversible damage” to children.

Mr. Crenshaw called the interventions on minors a “human rights atrocity ... within the very institutions that should know better,” in a June 9 statement.

“In a place where ‘do no harm’ is the ultimate guiding principle, there is no excuse to ever perform these treatments that permanently alter a child’s physiology,” he said. “From now on, we will not allow a dime of this taxpayer-funded program to go toward children’s hospitals that cater to the harmful pseudoscience that is ‘gender-affirming care.’”

At a recent congressional hearing, Mr. Crenshaw questioned Dr. Meredith McNamara, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Yale School of Medicine and a Democrat witness, about criticisms of his proposal to bar funding.

“We keep hearing this is a polit- ❖

BRAD JONES/THE EPOCH TIMES



icized issue, this is manufacturing a culture war,” Mr. Crenshaw said. “I’ve got to say, we aren’t the ones who did that. We aren’t the ones that came up with this radical new movement that is performing permanent physiological changes to children with no evidence of any benefits. We didn’t start that. We’re just trying to stop it, because it’s crazy.”

He asked Dr. McNamara why there haven’t been systematic reviews of “gender-affirming care,” considering that the British Journal of Medicine looked at 61 systematic reviews and concluded “there is great uncertainty about the effects of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgeries in young people.”

When Mr. Crenshaw asked Dr. McNamara to name a study that can show strong evidence of the benefits of “gender-affirming” therapies, she didn’t identify one, instead deferring to “standards of care” and the “quality evidence grading system.”

Mr. Crenshaw said taxpayer money shouldn’t be used to pay for “gender-affirming care” for minors when nearly 70 percent of Americans oppose it.

“This is the hill we’re going to die on,” he said.

AMA Position

Earlier this month, the American Medical Association (AMA) passed an Endocrine Society resolution reaffirming its commitment “to protect access to evidence-based ‘gender-affirming care’ for transgender and gender-diverse individuals.”

The resolution was co-sponsored by the AAP among other organizations and suggested that policies and legislation that contradict the “gender-affirming” model “do not reflect the research landscape.”

“Due to widespread misinformation about medical care for transgender and gender-diverse teens, 18 states have passed laws or instituted policies banning ‘gender-affirming care,’” the society said in a statement. “These policies do not reflect the research landscape. More than 2,000 scientific studies have examined aspects of ‘gender-affirming care’ since 1975.”

“As political attacks on ‘gender-affirming care’ escalate, it is the responsibility of the medical community to speak out



Activists for transgender rights gather in front of the Supreme Court in Washington on April 1. Pushback against gender ideology has triggered protests organized by trans activists in the United States.

in support of evidence-based care. Medical decisions should be made by patients, their relatives, and health care providers, not politicians,” the statement reads.

The AMA stated that it’s opposed to any criminal and legal penalties against patients seeking “gender-affirming care,” family members or guardians who support them in seeking such care, and health care facilities and clinicians who provide such care. Additionally, it will work with federal and state legislators to oppose such policies and collaborate with other organizations “to educate the Federation of State Medical Boards about the importance of ‘gender-affirming care.’”

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, the American College of Physicians, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinology, GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality, and AMA’s Medical Student Section co-sponsored the resolution.

The AMA pointed out that the Endocrine Society stated that because of “widespread misinformation” about medical care for transgender and “gender-diverse” teens, 18 states have passed laws or instituted policies banning “gen-

der-affirming care,” and that, according to the Human Rights Campaign, more than 30 percent of transgender youth live in states with such bans.

There are about 1.6 million people aged 13 and older in the United States who identify as transgender, according to the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law.

WPATH Influence

Dr. Michael Laidlaw, a California-based endocrinologist who works with adults, said medical organizations in the United States, including the Endocrine Society and AMA, are “completely under the influence of the advocacy organization WPATH.”

Dr. Laidlaw said in an email to The Epoch Times that these organizations “show no ability for independent thought” with respect to the treatment of child and adolescent gender dysphoria.

“In contrast, institutions like [National Health Service] England in their recent guidance do not appear to reference WPATH at all and instead recommend psychosocial and psychological support and interventions,” he said.

Similarly, other European nations don’t seem beholden to WPATH’s approach, according to Dr. Laidlaw, who is featured in the docudrama “Gender

FROM L. ANDREW CAVALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

16 STATES

HAVE RESTRICTED TRANSGENDER medical interventions for minors in 2023, while 16 others have introduced similar legislation.

61 REVIEWS

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF MEDICINE concluded that there was “great uncertainty” about the effects of gender-alteration treatments on children, after looking at 61 reviews.

1.6 MILLION

PEOPLE AGED 13 AND OLDER in the United States identify as transgender, data show.

Transformation: The Untold Realities,” which exposes transgenderism and the gender ideology behind it.

“WPATH pushes kids down the path of harmful social transition, puberty blockers, hormones, and surgeries even though the majority would have desisted by adulthood if not put on that pathway,” he said. “Unfortunately, our American medical organizations care more about being politically correct than looking out for what’s best for kids.”

‘Should Be Illegal’

Dr. Jeff Barke, a primary care physician in California’s Orange County and member of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, told The Epoch Times that the recent surge in support for the transgender movement is political and contrived.

“It’s not science. It is politics,” he said. “Europe is moving toward freedom ... while we are headed toward more socialism and totalitarianism.”

Dr. Barke said that performing gender transition surgery on minors is a “grotesque” form of child abuse that “should be illegal.”

He suggested that euphemisms such as “top surgery” and “bottom surgery” were created to normalize these surgeries to make them seem benign and less harmful and invasive.

Just as no surgeon would remove a healthy arm because a patient requested it, neither should they remove healthy breasts or genitals, he said.

He scoffed at the notion that “gender-affirming care” is settled science.

“‘Gender-affirming care’ and the move towards that is new. This is not settled science. If it was settled science, where was it 100 years ago?” he said. “There is no such thing as settled science.”

Science, by definition, is experimentation, argument, debate, and discovery, Dr. Barke said.

He said that given the high rates of

depression, anxiety, and suicide among transgender people, gender dysphoria should be treated as a mental health issue—and “not just simply affirming” patients and using hormones and surgery to “permanently dismantle” and “disfigure” them.

Puberty blockers also shouldn’t be used like a Band-Aid that can be put on or taken off, because they can have life-long consequences for children, such as affecting their ability to go through puberty and to reproduce, he said.

AAP ‘Doubling Down’

Another physician and AAP member, who goes by the pseudonym Dr. Grace Clark for fear of retaliation, told The Epoch Times she is deeply concerned about the “shocking and abysmal lack of interest” among the United States’ medical societies to review “gender-affirming” policies.

Dr. Clark said the AAP seems to be “doubling down” on “gender-affirming care” and that people who dissent from such policies have no recourse but legislation or the courts.

“That’s not where these kinds of



“[‘Gender-affirming care’ in minors is a] human rights atrocity ... within the very institutions that should know better.”

Rep. Dan Crenshaw

things should be decided,” she said. “That’s a really heavy-handed way of figuring out the best medical way forward, but the American Academy of Pediatrics has been so unwilling to entertain a broader point of view.”

From a medical standpoint, Dr. Clark said she agrees with Republican views against the use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for gender dysphoric children but recommends focusing on the children instead of political goals.

“It’s become really political rather than medical,” she said. “Now, it seems like people on both sides are trying to score points. So, they’re trying to use this topic for their benefit without actually thinking about what’s good for kids.”

Both Dr. Mason and Dr. Clark said that because many European countries have nationalized health care, they have a fiduciary responsibility to spend the public’s dollars wisely on medical programs that are evidence-based and subject to systematic reviews.

But in the United States, where health care is more profit-driven, it’s different, Dr. Mason said.

Government-run medicine, however, also has its downsides, she said.

“People are interpreting Obamacare to mean ... that you have to cover ‘gender-affirming care,’” Dr. Mason said. “I don’t know if that’s true, but that’s what everyone’s running with.”

A study comparing the United States with 11 European countries on legal requirements to change gender, provisions for medical transition, the minimum age for puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones, and the number of youth gender clinics, found the United States to be “the most permissive” for legal medical gender transitioning of children.

The report, released on Jan. 16, was conducted by Do No Harm, a group that seeks to remove “radical, diverse, and discriminatory ideology,” from the health care profession. ■



A beach in Jaco, Costa Rica, on March 30, 2022. Costa Rica, famous for rainforests and beaches, is experiencing a surge of illegal immigrants.

PHOTO BY LUIS ACOSTA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

# Tourist Paradise Struggling

Costa Rica beleaguered by floods of illegal immigrants

By Autumn Spredemann

**A**TIDAL WAVE OF HUMANITY is sweeping over the idyllic rainforests and famous surf beaches of Costa Rica, one that has no apparent end in sight.

The Central American nation of barely 5 million people has reached a tipping point amid groups of migrants heading north from Panama and the Darien Gap toward the United States.

The country is also experiencing a surge of Nicaraguans entering illegally along its northern frontier, many of whom seek to escape the increasingly authoritarian regime of President Daniel Ortega.

It's a migration tsunami that has left Costa Rican locals and officials desperate for solutions.

In May, during an official visit to Vienna, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Arnoldo Andre Tinoco told reporters, "We could well process 250 to 400 migrants a day from south to north, but not—as happened last September and October—4,000 a day."

Almost 1 million migrants and asylum-seekers currently reside in Costa Rica, most from Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, and Haiti.

In response, U.S. State Department officials announced on June 12 the opening of expedited legal pathways for asylum-seeking illegals stuck in Costa Rica who are Nicaraguan or Venezuelan nationals.

"This initiative will facilitate access to lawful pathways to the United States and other countries, including expedited refugee processing and other humanitarian and labor pathways," according to an official State Department statement.

"During the exploratory phase, Movilidad Segura services will be limited to Nicaraguan and Venezuelan nationals who can prove that they were physically present in Costa Rica on the date of this announcement and who are currently registered as asylum seekers."

While this may serve as a temporary pressure-release valve, some Costa Ricans fear the problem will get worse before it gets better.

Complicating this, locals have said that many illegal immigrants simply refuse to work despite abundant job op-

portunities and a relaxed government attitude toward "off the books" workers.

## Jobs for Everyone

North of Costa Rica's capital, San Jose, lie the verdant hills of the Alajuela province. It's one of the country's signature coffee-growing regions and home to a crown jewel of tourism: the Arenal volcano.

At the base of this dormant giant is every kind of adventure or nature activity imaginable. Ziplining, hiking, white water rafting, hot springs, and wildlife photo safaris are all within easy reach.

The Arenal volcano is a cornerstone of the country's thriving tourist industry that brings in \$1.7 billion a year.

Coffee farms are another major revenue and jobs generator, contributing more than \$370 million to the yearly GDP.

But for all its prosperity, Costa Rica has a unique problem in Latin America: It has more jobs than workers, especially in the coffee sector.

Luis Rodriguez grew up in the coffee-farming town of Naranjo, not far from the Arenal volcano. He now works as a driver for several tourist resorts in the area, but some of his family members are "cafeteros"—regional slang for coffee farmers—in Naranjo.

"There's a lot of demand for the people

who will harvest coffee. Costa Ricans don't want to do that work because they make more money with tourism," Mr. Rodriguez told The Epoch Times.

Costa Ricans, known locally as "Ticos," are among the most educated populations in Latin America. The country boasts a 96 percent literacy rate, which is higher than Brazil's. Many locals also speak English, which opens doors to the lucrative tourism sector.

Well-educated Ticos prefer to work better-paid, less physically demanding jobs than coffee farming, even though it pays better than other farm work.

Historically, families in the Alajuela province such as Rodriguez's have leaned heavily on the influx of illegal immigrants, particularly from Nicaragua, to help bring in the coffee harvest.

A local report from 2020 stated that the average coffee cherry "picker" earns around \$2 per basket, based on weight.

A worker can easily clear \$60 per day; at five days a week, that's \$300, a high salary for farm workers in Latin America.

But Mr. Rodriguez said farms near his hometown are struggling to find workers this year and are paying up to 5,000 colones—almost \$10—per basket.

This is perplexing locals because nearly 200,000 Nicaraguans reside in Costa Rica as refugees, according to a United Nations report.

Some coffee farmers are ready to hand out triple the standard rate this year and there are clearly enough immigrants who need the money. So what happened?

Part of the problem may be that Costa Rica is just a stopping point for many who are simply en route to the United States, according to locals.

## Beg and Rob

José Vargas frowns while stirring sugar into a cup of coffee. It's pouring rain outside the corner café in downtown San José, driving people off of the streets near the famous Plaza de la Cultura.

The adjacent city square is a popular draw for tourists and locals alike, hosting two of San José's star attractions: the National Theater and the Pre-Colombian Gold Museum.

In sunnier weather, the square is crowded with local families, tourists taking pictures, and illegal immigrants.

It's a common landing spot for il- ❖

**\$300**

A FARM WORKER CAN EASILY  
earn \$300 a week.

**1**

MILLION

ALMOST 1 MILLION MIGRANTS  
and asylum seekers currently  
reside in Costa Rica.

**5**

MILLION

COSTA RICA IS A NATION OF  
barely 5 million people.



legals, especially Venezuelans, who’ve just completed the arduous journey through the Darien Gap.

Once they emerge from the dangerous jungle in Panama, a migrant can catch a bus to Costa Rica from San Vicente for about \$40 dollars.

And, like many Costa Ricans, Mr. Vargas is pretty unhappy about it.

“They only come here to beg and rob,” he told The Epoch Times.

He’s particularly frustrated with Venezuelans, a common echo heard from hard-working locals in multiple countries throughout the region.

Latin Americans from Chile to Mexico decry the growing number of Venezuelan refugees living in their countries who refuse to work.

They’re easy to spot. Many of those begging hold signs saying they’re Venezuelan. Some will sit on street corners holding cardboard signs or approach cars at busy intersections, tapping on windows without outstretched hands.

The 65-year-old Vargas has worked hard at multiple jobs his entire life to support his family.

In that time, as a San José native, he’s seen tides of migration ebb and flow. He noted that most of the illegal immigrants pass through because of the high cost of living in Costa Rica compared with neighboring countries.

But for those with two hands and a desire to make money, there are plenty of jobs.

“In Costa Rica, there is work for everybody, but some just won’t work,” Mr. Vargas said.

The humanitarian crisis in Venezuela that has lasted more than a decade stems from a collapsed currency and a long-suffering economy under the contested President Nicolás Maduro and his predecessor, Hugo Chávez.

Both have faced multiple accusations of human rights violations from international agencies.

Though many Colombians, Brazilians, Cubans, Haitians, and others have joined the surge of migrants coming up from the Darien Gap, more than 7 million Venezuelans alone have fled their country since 2015.

“Costa Rica doesn’t have extreme poverty. Here you aren’t going to die of starvation,” Mr. Rodriguez said. “You



*(Left)* Illegal immigrants from Nicaragua await authorization to enter Costa Rica in Peñas Blancas, Costa Rica, on July 25, 2020.

*(Above)* A worker cuts and collects coffee fruits in Heredia, Costa Rica, on Feb. 3. Costa Rica has more jobs than workers, especially in the coffee sector.



**“We could well process 250 to 400 migrants a day from south to north, but not—as happened last September and October—4,000 a day.”**

**Arnoldo André Tinoco,**  
*Costa Rican foreign minister*

may not be rich, but you’ll have the basic necessities to live.”

Yet the dearth of farm workers in Costa Rica’s coffee fields speaks volumes. Some say the refusal of an honest day’s wages is directly tied to the fact that few illegals plan to stay.

**By Any Means**

“I can’t think of when I’ve ever heard of Venezuelans dreaming of going to Costa Rica,” Evan Ellis, a Latin America research professor for the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, told The Epoch Times.

Mr. Ellis said he believes that the majority of the migrants passing through Costa Rica are heading to the United States.

Further, Costa Rica’s economy is in “pretty good shape,” which is part of what drives the “move it along” mentality locals and officials have toward

immigrants.

“There’s an attempt to keep everyone moving through, like there is in Panama,” he said.

Further, Mr. Ellis noted that the organization of migration routes through the Darien Gap has become more formal and streamlined over the past couple of years.

What used to be barely discernable, muddy goat paths known only to a handful of cartel-affiliated “guides” have become well-marked trails where cartels operating in the jungle charge a tax for northbound migrants to pass.

Moreover, it’s becoming more common for desperate migrants to turn to human traffickers for aid in their passage to the United States. In response, Panama announced a joint security task force with Colombia to help crack down on human traffickers.

“Operation Choco aims to stop transnational organized crime in the Darien

by mobilizing aerial support and confronting crime groups head-on,” Panama’s security minister, Juan Pino, told reporters during a June 2 press conference.

The day manager of a popular downtown San Jose hotel, who asked to be referred to as Maria out of concern for her job, said illegal immigrants aren’t shy about sharing their plans to head to the United States by any means necessary.

Maria recalled a pregnant Venezuelan immigrant who stayed in the hotel with a man carrying a U.S. passport.

After making photocopies of their identification at check-in, Maria asked the woman how long she planned to stay in Costa Rica.

The woman said the man she was traveling with helped her through the Darien Gap in Panama and planned to assist her entry into the United States after departing Costa Rica.

Maria wasn’t the least bit surprised. She also said many of the people who arrive from the Darien Gap are just there to beg.

“There are only a few who arrive to work, but most of them are begging and

then leave,” she said.

Like Luis and José, Maria has a distaste for those who arrive in her beautiful country and refuse to work.

However, she said the price tag of everything in Costa Rica, from grocery items to utility bills, is a “natural deterrent” to anyone looking to linger for longer than a short spell.

“So they try to spend as little time here as possible,” she said.

Ellis noted that there’s a bit of everything and everyone flowing northward from the Darien Gap these days.

Combined with the surge of Nicaraguans entering Costa Rica from the north, it’s a substantial infrastructure shock for the small nation.

Some studies estimate that 15 percent of Costa Rica’s population is now migrants.

Meanwhile, U.S. southern border officials continue treading water amid the surge of migrants trying to cross in the wake of the end of Title 42.

A June analysis put the current number of illegal immigrants in the United States at 16.8 million. ■



SPACE RACE

# AMERICA'S PRIVATE SPACE BOOM

Rival billionaires turn to space in new high-ticket tourism ventures

By T.J. Muscaro

Virgin Galactic employees sit in the cabin of a prototype Virgin Galactic SpaceShipTwo spacecraft at the Science Museum in London, in this file photo. According to the company's website, its passengers and pilots will reach a peak altitude of more than 59 miles.

PHOTO BY DANIEL BEREHULAK/GETTY IMAGES

**T**ICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW for a ride to space aboard Sir Richard Branson's "spaceline," Virgin Galactic. The starting price? \$450,000.

Nearly two years after the historic flight that earned its founder his astronaut wings, the company revealed plans to launch its first two commercial spaceflights. The company also opened ticket sales for seats aboard the Virgin Space Ship (VSS) Unity, which will blast off from its base in New Mexico.

"Now open: The Spaceline for Earth," the company announced on Twitter on June 15. "We're opening space travel to anyone who has ever wondered what is above and beyond."

Anyone, that is, who has nearly half a million bucks to spend. Or at least the \$150,000 needed for the initial deposit.

After becoming "the first commercial space company to receive full FAA license approval to fly paying customers to space," Mr. Branson's star-bound endeavors fell behind those of his competitors Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos. The rival billionaires have run multiple manned missions for smiling customers.

But Virgin Galactic's return to the spotlight stands as the latest example of how space tourism is becoming a reality in New Mexico, Texas, and Florida.

The company provides a taste of space by offering sub-orbital flights from the world's largest runway at a complex built at Spaceport America within the White Sands Missile Range.

Six passengers and two pilots will climb aboard the Unity, which will be carried to an altitude of 50,000 feet by an aircraft called VMS (Virgin Mother Ship) Eve.

Once the vehicle is released from Eve, it will ignite its rocket engine and carry passengers to the edge of space.

Everyone on board will have a chance to experience weightlessness for several minutes, the company says. They'll conduct scientific research and other mission objectives, and look back on the Earth before reentering the atmosphere and gliding back to base like the Space Shuttle.

Amazon founder Mr. Bezos's Blue Origin also takes paying customers on a suborbital adventure onboard the New Shepard rocket, named after America's first man in space, Alan Shepard. ♦

**50,000**  
FEET

**PASSENGERS WITH VIRGIN** Galactic will first be carried to an altitude of 50,000 feet by an aircraft, and then the unit they're in will be released into space.

**\$450,000**  
PER PERSON

**A VIRGIN GALACTIC TICKET** costs \$450,000 per person.

**\$200,000—\$300,000**

**A FLIGHT ON BLUE ORIGIN** is reported to cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

**\$5.3**  
BILLION

**THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE SPACE INDUSTRY** is expected to be more than \$5.3 billion over the next five years, an expert says.

**100,000**  
SATELLITES

**MORE THAN 100,000 SATELLITES** are expected to be launched into space over the next 10 years.



# SpaceX’s Haven-1 will be offering stays in space for as long as 30 days for four people at a time.

Opting for a capsule over a spaceplane, Blue Origin’s missions lift off and touch down at the Figure 2 Ranch outside Van Horn, Texas.

The ranch also hosts an astronaut village, which provides a retreat-style experience for each crew.

Both companies say that they’re determined to create a first-class experience, providing each crew member with proper training, a custom mission patch, a spacesuit, and recognition as a commercial astronaut by the Association of Space Explorers.

A brochure describes the \$450,000-per-person experience on a trip to space with Virgin Galactic.

A flight on Blue Origin is reported to cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000. The company didn’t respond to The Epoch Times’ request for further comment on pricing details.

## Outer Space Starts ... Where?

One significant difference between Blue Origin and Virgin Galactic is where their operators believe space begins.

NASA published an explanation in 2021 that said: “For purposes of spaceflight, some would say at the Karman line, currently defined as an altitude of 100 kilometers [60 miles].



**Virgin Galactic’s space tourism rocket plane**  
*SpaceShipTwo returns after a test flight from Mojave Air and Space Port in Mojave, Calif., on Dec. 13, 2018.*

“Others might place a line 80 kilometers [50 miles] above Earth’s mean sea level. But there is no sharp physical boundary that marks the end of atmosphere and the beginning of space.”

According to Virgin Galactic’s website, its passengers and pilots will reach a peak altitude of just over 315,000 feet (59.659 miles). That company stands by the notion that space begins at the 50-mile mark.

Blue Origin proudly boasts that its space tourism experience flies beyond the Karman Line, surpassing 62 miles, suggesting that it’s the one that will get its passengers to space.

But this debate appears to stay west of the Mississippi. Other spacefaring companies launching from Florida, such as Axiom Space and SpaceX, already transport private citizens to and from low-Earth orbit and the International Space Station (ISS).

The crew of the Axiom-2 mission returned to Earth in the final hour of May 30, streaking through the skies like a comet. It had ridden into space on top of a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Pad 39A at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center, then completed a 10-day stay at the ISS, before returning home.

Commander Peggy Whitson, Pilot John Shoffner, and mission specialists from the Saudi Space Agency Ali Alqarni and Rayyanah Barnawi carried out Axiom Space’s mission. It was the second all-private human mission to visit and stay aboard the space station and was the 10th all-private mission for SpaceX.

Axiom Space already has a third mission planned to visit the space station and is taking inquiries for future missions.

Meanwhile, SpaceX is looking for private citizens who are interested in upcoming missions aboard the Crew Dragon capsule to low-Earth orbit and the ISS. Would-be space travelers to the moon and Mars now can apply for slots



on those voyages.

SpaceX also confirmed in May that it will deliver the first all-private space station, called Haven-1, into orbit “no earlier than August 2025.”

Created by space habitation technologies pioneer Vast, Haven-1 will be a single module offering stays as long as 30 days for four people at a time.

Each crewed mission will ride to and from Haven-1 onboard SpaceX’s Dragon crew capsules. Vast said that this is “the first time in history” that a company has a “launch contract” for both its space station and crewed missions.

The Vast-2 mission is slated for no earlier than 2026.

Tom Ochiner, senior vice president of commercial business at SpaceX, said in a statement that the use of commercial rockets, spacecraft, and a space station by commercial astronauts is “the future of low-Earth orbit.

“The SpaceX team couldn’t be more excited to launch Vast’s Haven-1 and support their ... human spaceflight missions to the orbiting commercial space

station,” he said.

The Epoch Times requested details from SpaceX and Vast but didn’t receive a response.

## Spaceflights Departing From Florida

While the current price tag puts space travel out of reach for most people, there are burgeoning opportunities for those who can afford it.

“The diversity of currently available commercial orbital human spaceflight opportunities is truly astounding,” Phil McAlister, director of commercial space at NASA Headquarters in Washington, wrote in a recent statement.

“We are starting to see the incorporation of space into our economic sphere, and it is going to revolutionize the way people see, use, and experience space.”

Options for human spaceflight continue to expand. NASA has announced that Boeing’s CST-100 Starliner capsule could see its first crewed test flight after July 21 from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. If successful, it will

become the state’s third active option for astronauts after SpaceX’s Crew Dragon and NASA’s Orion capsules.

Launches of Blue Origin’s New Glenn rocket in Florida also are expected to begin soon, although no set launch date appears to be confirmed.

But amid this diversity, Florida remains the hub of significant human space transportation in the United States. And the state is primed to take advantage of the economic benefit.

Space Florida is a company dedicated to building Florida’s space industry through government lobbying and partnering with private companies.

It advocated for the passage of the latest space-related bill, which was recently signed into law by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis. The company also was involved with efforts to secure the U.S. Space Force STARCOM headquarters in the state.

The “total economic impact is expected to be more than \$5.3 billion” over the next five years, said Anna Alexopoulos Farrar, vice president of corporate communications for Space Florida.

And over the next 10 years, the number of humans traveling to space is projected to double, with more than 100,000 satellites launched into space. Many are expected to blast off from Florida launch pads.

But this private space boom is built on a long legacy.

Since Alan Shepard’s 15-minute flight, NASA has launched every manned space mission from the pads at Kennedy Space Center and the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

Now, private citizens lift off from the same hallowed ground as those military-backed pioneers who went to the moon.

Mr. Branson and Mr. Bezos may argue that New Mexico and Texas are top launch locations. But an established and tested foundation that’s more than 80 years in the making makes Florida the pinnacle, others insist.

“Florida,” Ms. Farrar said, “has the history, the infrastructure, and the vision to keep and grow our dominance in the space industry.” ■



**(Left)** Jeff Bezos, Wally Funk, Oliver Daemen, and Mark Bezos walk toward Blue Origin’s sub-orbital vehicle New Shepard, in Van Horn, Texas, on July 20, 2021.  
**(Above)** The interior of a Blue Origin capsule, on display in Van Horn, Texas, on Dec. 11, 2021.





A Miami-Dade Mosquito Control inspector uses a tube to inspect for mosquito larvae around a house in Miami on June 29. The department inspects for malaria-carrying mosquitos.

PUBLIC HEALTH

# Malaria Reemerges After 20 Years

7 cases of the disease have been detected in Florida and Texas

By George Citroner

MALARIA, AN INFECTIOUS disease once a leading cause of death in the United States, was eradicated in the 1950s. However, a recent health warning issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has raised concerns about a potential resurgence of this deadly mosquito-borne disease.

So far, seven cases of malaria infection that occurred on U.S. soil have been identified—six in Florida and one in Texas, Reuters reported. This is the first local spread of the disease in 20 years.

The first case in Florida was diagnosed on May 26 in Sarasota County, while Texas officials announced on June 23 that a state resident who worked outdoors in Cameron County had been infected. Florida officials determined that the cause of malaria in these cases was the Plasmodium vivax species, and the first four patients received treatment and successfully recovered. Another two cases were announced on July 7.

Texas officials are investigating whether there have been any additional infections in the state, noting that the last locally acquired case in Texas was in 1994.

The CDC’s health warning indicates a growing risk for the U.S. population, Dr. Eric Cioè-Peña, emergency medicine

physician at Staten Island University Hospital and vice president of Global Health, told The Epoch Times.

“Malaria is a serious disease that can be fatal, and its presence within the U.S. is a cause for concern,” he said.

## What Is Causing the Comeback?

Dr. Cioè-Peña noted that the emergence of new malaria cases in the United States could be attributed to various factors.

“One possibility is the importation of the disease by travelers returning from regions where malaria is prevalent,” he said.

A 2013 study found evidence suggesting that malaria is no longer restricted to forested regions and is influenced mainly by population movements, particular-

## “One possibility is the importation of the disease by travelers returning from regions where malaria is prevalent.”

Dr. Eric Cioè-Peña, vice president, Global Health

ly those moving to agricultural regions, as stagnant waters in such areas provide suitable breeding sites for mosquitoes.

The United States is currently experiencing an illegal immigration crisis, with an “unprecedented” number of people crossing the southwest border illegally, according to Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

“Nationwide, CBP’s apprehensions for [fiscal year] 2019 totaled 1,148,000, more than 970,000 along the Southwest border alone,” CBP Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan said in a statement. “This is a staggering 88 percent higher than the fiscal year 2018. These are numbers that no immigration system in the world can handle, not even this country.”

This influx of illegal immigrants is likely a significant factor contributing to the reemergence of diseases previously thought to be virtually eliminated in the country.

An article in the Journal of Travel Medicine highlighted that migrants are “disproportionately affected by preventable travel-related diseases, including malaria, typhoid, and hepatitis.” This is attributed to their “poor uptake of pre-travel prophylaxis and vaccination measures.”

Dr. Cioè-Peña also claimed that global warming had triggered the expansion of mosquito habitats, likely contributing to the problem.

He also expressed concern about lapses in mosquito control measures, warning that they could potentially lead to a resurgence of the disease.

## Could Malaria Become Endemic in the US?

In 1999, the first case of West Nile virus, another mosquito-borne illness, was identified in New York, and it rapidly

spread to become an endemic disease across the United States.

Within three years, the virus expanded from a six-county area surrounding metropolitan New York to the West Coast. It established itself in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and five Canadian provinces.

“While it’s possible for malaria to become endemic again, it’s too early to make definitive predictions,” Dr. Cioè-Peña said, noting that several factors will influence the outcome, such as the effectiveness of public health responses, climate conditions, and human behaviors. “Nevertheless, the situation serves as a reminder of the need for continuous vigilance against infectious diseases, even those considered eradicated, and for ongoing investments in public health infrastructure.”

## Symptoms, Treatment, and Vaccination

The CDC warns about malaria’s seriousness and potential fatality. The disease is caused by parasites commonly transmitted through a specific type of mosquito. Five types of malaria parasites can infect humans:

- Plasmodium (P.) falciparum
- P. vivax
- P. ovale
- P. malariae
- P. knowlesi

The first five cases reported recently in the United States were caused by P. vivax, which is less likely to result in severe

infections than P. falciparum. Prompt treatment is crucial, as severe infections of P. falciparum can lead to death.

Symptoms of malaria infection include fever, flu-like illness, shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. Most individuals will experience symptoms 10 days to four weeks after infection, although in some cases, symptoms appear earlier or up to a year later.

Treatment for malaria usually involves the use of antimalarial drugs such as chloroquine phosphate and artemisinin-based combination therapies.

No malaria vaccine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, but ongoing research offers promising possibilities.

The results of a randomized controlled trial published in December 2022 demonstrated the safety and efficacy of a three-dose regimen of a whole-parasite vaccine called Plasmodium falciparum sporozoite vaccine.

The trial was conducted among adults living in Burkina Faso in West Africa, where malaria is endemic.

“Our study shows that the vaccine can be given to malaria-experienced adults in a highly endemic area and still provide protection,” Dr. Matthew B. Laurens, director of the International Clinical Trials Unit in the Malaria Research Group at the Center for Vaccine Development and the study’s corresponding author, said in a statement. ■



Malaria is caused by a parasite commonly transmitted through a specific type of mosquito.



The “unprecedented” number of people crossing the U.S.–Mexico border illegally could be a possible reason for the return of malaria in the country.



**O**UT OF THE 36 MILLION Americans who contracted COVID-19 in 2021, an estimated 800,000 didn't regain their sense of smell, and 540,000 didn't regain their sense of taste after recovering from the infection, according to a recent study published in *The Laryngoscope*.

The study's data further suggest that many more people experienced only partial recovery in their taste or smell post-infection—5.2 million and 4.2 million, respectively.

"Losing your sense of smell or taste isn't as benign as you may think," Dr. Neil Bhattacharya, a professor of otolaryngology at Mass Eye and Ear and the senior author of the study, said in a statement. "It can lead to decreased eating for pleasure and, in more extreme cases, it can lead to depression and weight loss."

Sense of smell is intricately connected to emotions and memories, providing individuals with a sense of security that is often taken for granted. It enables the detection of spoiled food, smoke, and other environmental chemicals. Furthermore, the senses of smell and taste play a crucial role in the enjoyment of food.

Although most people regain their sense of smell upon recovery from COVID-19, some may experience persistent symptoms. Notably, even vaccinated people have reported persistent symptoms following COVID-19 vaccination.

**Loss of Smell and Taste: Long COVID Versus Vaccine Injury**

Reports have indicated anosmia (loss of smell) and ageusia (loss of taste) following COVID-19 vaccination. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System has received more than 5,000 cases of anosmia and more than 6,000 cases of ageusia.

There have also been numerous reports of parosmia (distorted sense of smell) and taste disorders after vaccination.

Although the symptoms may appear similar, the underlying mechanisms might differ, according to Dr. Jeffrey Nordella, a family physician.

In long-COVID patients, smell and taste impairment is frequently associated with damage to the cells responsible for detecting smells that occurs ❖

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

# Millions Lose Taste, Smell After COVID

*Clinicians share potential treatment options to regain senses*

**BY MARINA ZHANG**

*Sense of smell is intricately connected to emotions and memories, and plays a crucial role in the enjoyment of food.*

PHOTO BY SDI PRODUCTIONS/GETTY IMAGES



during the acute stage of COVID-19. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines deliver lipid nanoparticles into the arm muscle and bloodstream. These lipid-coated nanoparticles can enter cells more efficiently than the COVID-19 virus. Once inside cells, mRNA molecules instruct the cells to produce spike proteins. The released spike proteins can trigger inflammatory and oxidative stresses in nearby cells and tissues, potentially contributing to long-COVID symptoms and vaccine-related effects.

**Why Do Some Patients Lose Their Senses of Smell and Taste?**  
Loss of smell and taste due to COVID-19 is usually not complete but manifests as a muted or distorted sensory experience.

Patients may also develop parosmia, which can cause appealing flavors to turn foul, and hyposmia, a muted sense of smell.

**Damaged Sensory Cells and Nerves**

The primary cause of loss of smell and taste in COVID-19 patients is the direct effect of the virus on the cells and tissues responsible for these senses. The SARS-CoV-2 virus can invade and damage the olfactory epithelium, which contains the specialized cells responsible for detecting smells. This damage can disrupt the signaling process and lead to a loss or alteration of smell and taste perception.

The connection between smell and taste is strong, as they are processed together in the brain. The impairment of these senses is predominantly associated with issues in the olfactory system because smell is responsible for about 80 percent of taste experience.

“I’ve had patients come in [who] can’t smell, but they can taste, and vice versa,” Dr. Nordella said. “It’s not an all-or-none [situation]. Nerves can be recruited ... so they might have a diminished taste, but they can taste things.”

**Chronic Inflammation**  
Inflammation of the nasal and oral cavities has been associated with potential impairments in smell and taste perception, and it’s known that both the



A study shows that 60 percent and 58 percent of Americans who contracted COVID-19 in 2021 didn’t regain their sense of smell or taste, respectively.

COVID-19 virus and its spike proteins can induce inflammatory responses. During acute viral infection, there is a risk of excessive cytokine release, known as cytokine storms, which can have severe consequences. Additionally, studies have indicated that spike proteins can activate oxidative pathways and induce cellular stress.

**Blood Clot Formation**  
Some research suggests a potential association between spike proteins—whether from the COVID-19 virus or the vaccine—and blood clot formation, resulting in impaired or blocked smell and taste pathways.

ACE-2 receptors, which spike proteins use to infect and damage cells, are common to endothelial cells that line the inner blood vessels. Studies have shown that spike proteins alone

can damage and impair endothelial function, causing inflammation in the inner lining, also known as endotheliitis. Other studies have suggested that endotheliitis promotes blood clot formation.

While microclotting is also observed in other chronic conditions, such as diabetes and Parkinson’s disease, the clots generated by these spike proteins tend to be larger and more resistant to breakdown, according to Etheresia Pretorius, a scientist and professor in physiological sciences at Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

Microclots may block blood flow to the nerves responsible for detecting smell and taste, which could result in damage or dysfunction. If these clots develop near the olfactory and gustatory systems, they may adversely affect the senses.

DANIEL LEAL/AFVAGETTY IMAGES

**Treatment Options to Regain Senses of Smell and Taste**

**Anti-Parasitic Drug Ivermectin**  
Ivermectin has emerged as a prominent first-line treatment for both long-COVID- and vaccine-related symptoms, demonstrating its effectiveness in clinical practice.

Dr. Pierre Kory, a critical care pulmonary specialist, has observed notable improvements in approximately 70 to 80 percent of his patients upon administering ivermectin. Some patients experience a restoration of their senses of smell and taste despite that the drug isn’t prescribed explicitly for those symptoms.

Ivermectin suppresses proinflammatory pathways, impeding the production of inflammatory substances, and modulates the immune system to restore a balanced ratio between inflammatory and anti-inflammatory agents.

A 2022 comprehensive analysis demonstrated that ivermectin fulfills at least 20 roles in preventing COVID-19 infection and mitigating viral damage. Ivermectin exhibits the potential to bind to spike proteins and COVID-19 viruses, aiding in their clearance. It also contributes to cellular well-being by facilitating energy production, even in challenging circumstances.

**Low-Dose Naltrexone**  
Naltrexone is commonly prescribed as a medication to address alcohol and opioid abuse. However, when administered in lower doses, usually ranging from 1 to 5 milligrams per pill, naltrexone exhibits anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory properties.

It has been theorized that low-dose naltrexone modulates the balance between inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cells and processes. The drug elevates anti-inflammatory processes in highly inflammatory states while suppressing inflammatory pathways.

Before low-dose naltrexone’s application in long-COVID and vaccine injury, clinicians used it off-label to treat fibromyalgia, Crohn’s disease, and multiple sclerosis.

In the context of managing long-COVID- and vaccine-related injuries, doctors such as board-certified internist Dr. Keith Berkowitz and neurologist Dr. Diane Counce have found that naltrexone shows promise in treating neuroinflammation and neuropathies, which may be associated with problems related to smell and taste.

Naltrexone has been found to decrease the release of inflammatory substances commonly seen in severe and prolonged cases of COVID-19, thereby helping to alleviate these particular symptoms.

**Omega-3 Fatty Acids**  
Alabama-based Dr. Counce and nurse practitioner Scott Marsland have reported successful outcomes in restoring

patients’ senses of smell and taste by using omega-3 fatty acids.

Mr. Marsland, who shares a private practice with Dr. Kory at the Leading Edge Clinic, follows a gradual approach, initially starting patients on a weekly dosage of 1 gram of omega-3 fatty acids and gradually increasing it over the weeks to 4 grams per day. According to his observations, this protocol has contributed to improvements in smell and taste.

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential components of cell membranes and possess anti-inflammatory properties, facilitating the body’s engagement with anti-inflammatory pathways. Notably, they exhibit a protective effect on neurons and help prevent damage to blood vessels.

Early studies on acute COVID-19 cases have indicated that patients who experienced more severe symptoms tended to exhibit lower levels of omega-3 fatty acids, suggesting that adequate intake of these acids might offer protection against exacerbated symptoms.

Despite its benefits, Mr. Marsland cautions that high omega-3 fatty acid supplementation doses may lead to cardiac symptoms. Studies have linked omega-3 supplementation with atrial fibrillation.

**Anti-Clotting Therapies**  
Many of Dr. Counce’s patients have reported improvements in their senses of smell and taste after starting triple therapy to reduce blood clotting.

This therapy usually includes the anticoagulant apixaban, which helps prevent the formation of blood clots, along with anti-platelet medications such as clopidogrel and aspirin. Clopidogrel and aspirin work by inhibiting platelet aggregation, thereby reducing the risk of clot formation.

In some cases, Dr. Counce may also consider prescribing dietary supplements such as nattokinase, derived

80%

THE CONNECTION  
between smell and taste is strong, as the two are processed together in the brain, with smell responsible for about 80 percent of taste experience.

24%

OF AMERICANS  
who contracted COVID-19 in 2021 experienced partial smell recovery post-infection, according to a study.





The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System reported 5,000 cases of anosmia, or loss of smell, and 6,000 cases of ageusia, or loss of taste, following COVID-19 vaccination as of June 16.

from fermented soybeans, and serra-peptase, derived from silkworms.

Apart from its anticoagulant properties, nattokinase has been investigated in a Japanese study for its potential to degrade spike proteins. Since spike proteins are implicated in the development of abnormal blood clots associated with long-COVID- and vaccine-related injuries, the additional effect of nattokinase may explain why it's sometimes perceived as beneficial in addressing clotting issues.

Mr. Marsland intentionally prescribes a higher dosage of nattokinase twice daily to patients experiencing loss of smell and taste. This supplement can effectively aid in the breakdown of blood clots that obstruct the nerves from receiving adequate oxygen and nutrients.

However, patients with underlying mast cell problems, soy allergies, and other hypersensitivities may report intolerance to nattokinase, Mr. Marsland said.

Other Therapies to Consider

Smell retraining is a commonly employed therapy for patients with smell and taste disorders. Dr. Counce shared one example involving a patient who successfully regained her sense of smell through the use of essential oil kits for nasal training.

In cases in which smell and taste symptoms are milder, supplements

may offer some benefits. Dr. Counce suggests considering vitamin D and B12 supplements because deficiencies in these vitamins are relatively common and correcting such deficiencies may resolve sensory problems.

Dr. Nordella and Dr. Counce both also recommended zinc as a basic supplement for treatment.

During an infection, the body's zinc storages become depleted, and this deficiency is often linked with a loss of smell and taste. The exact mechanism behind zinc deficiency's effect on the sense of smell and taste remains unknown.

Dr. Berkowitz said he believes that loss of smell and taste could be linked to excessive levels of histamines resulting from mast cell activation. Histamines have the potential to cause neuroinflammation and neuronal damage.

Studies have shown that histamine can activate microglial cells, which act as inflammatory immune cells and may harm neurons.

Considering the possibility of underlying histamine issues in many of his patients, Dr. Berkowitz often starts them on a combination of antihistamines and other drugs. While some patients report improvements in their senses of smell and taste, it remains uncertain whether the effect can be primarily attributed to antihistamines or other medications, such as low-dose naltrexone.

Research suggests that antihistamines improve anosmia and ageusia. Patients with congested sinuses and sinusitis might experience symptom relief from antihistamine usage.

Injection of Local Anesthetic

A stellate ganglion block is a more invasive treatment option for long-COVID and vaccine injuries.

This involves injecting a fast-acting anesthetic into the stellate ganglia, clusters of nerves located on each side of the neck. This procedure temporarily calms the overactive sympathetic nervous system associated with dysautonomia, characterized by chronic hyperactivation.

"We're blocking the nerves in the neck that control that fight-or-flight response," Joshua Dunlap, board-certified in nonsurgical pain management at Republic Pain Specialists, a clinic that has treated more than 1,700 patients suffering from post-COVID symptoms, told The Epoch Times. "A lot of these symptoms get better, and some just completely go away," he said.

While many patients have reported immediate improvements in symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, and loss of taste and smell, the evidence supporting the effectiveness of stellate ganglion block is mainly anecdotal. Different clinics use varying types of anesthetics, which could affect the success rate.

A study published in May examined the effect of stellate ganglion block on 195 long-COVID patients at Mr. Dunlap's clinic. The authors found that 87.4 percent of the participants reported an enhanced sense of smell after receiving the injection.

Mr. Dunlap observed that some patients show immediate response to treatment, while others experience a gradual recovery.

Some patients have symptom flare-ups, often associated with high levels of stress and trauma. Building resilience to stress helps prevent reactivation.

For example, cold showers and practicing Wim Hof breathing have been clinically proven to reduce stress.

Not all individuals are suitable candidates for this therapy. Allergies to the anesthetics or pregnancy, among other things, may affect its efficacy or be contraindicated. ■

MICHAEL QUAGLI/GETTY IMAGES

Perspectives



An American Airlines plane prepares to land at LaGuardia Airport in New York on March 11, 2019. The solution to flight delays is to replace the Federal Aviation Administration with an entity that actually has customers, columnist Thomas McArdle says.

PHOTO BY DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES



FLYING DUMB

Politicians, not airlines, are causing flight delays. 56



TIKTOK LAWFARE AGAINST AMERICA

The hypocrisy of TikTok secretly using U.S. courts against free speech. 57



NEW CRISIS?

Commercial real estate could cause more bank collapses. 59



# Thomas McArdle



## Flying Dumb

*Politicians, not airlines, are causing flight delays*

AT THE BEGINNING OF the year, the Biden administration waged a war of words against Southwest Airlines after obsolete technology for tracking and scheduling flight crews led to the carrier canceling thousands of departures in the face of bad weather. Southwest “failed its customers, point blank,” the administration’s media mouthpiece claimed, promising that “the Department of Transportation will hold them accountable to their commitments to make their customers whole.”

About a week later, one fine day in mid-January, the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA’s) Notice to Air Mission (NOTAM) system, which reports key flight information to pilots, became inoperative due to corrupt data, causing a thousand domestic flights to be canceled and many thousands more to be delayed. No one expected that the Department of Transportation (DOT) might hold itself responsible for failing its “customers.”

That word is key. In truth, the DOT and its FAA have no “customers” any more than congressmen, senators, or the president do. You can’t take your business elsewhere; your taxes are nonnegotiable. Your vote may translate into some leverage, but only if the politician’s reelection is in jeopardy and the issue you care about is in play with enough voters that he or she is vulnerable during the next election.

The July Fourth weekend broke records for travel this year. But any flight delays and safety issues stemming from outdated technology that drive passengers to exasperation are unlikely to set in motion much modernization or increased efficiency. Because the victims aren’t customers of those causing the problems.

An FAA task force will be established by a new law, enacted in June, to recommend improvements to NO-

TAM, and there will be updates to NOTAM’s computer system. The law’s target date for revamping NOTAM is more than a year away.

The actual solution is to make the FAA truly accountable. And that means replacing the FAA with an entity that really will have customers.

### An expert recommends privatizing airports because big cities shouldn’t offer just one choice of where people can take off.

Lest you think this a fringe notion, consider the analysis of Cliff Winston, a senior fellow at the liberal Brookings Institution, whose book “Revitalizing a Nation: Competition and Innovation in the US Transportation System” is set to be published by Brookings in December. Mr. Winston pointed out that, thanks to deregulation, “inflation-adjusted airfares were 60 percent lower in 2020 than in 1980. Indeed, flying is no longer a luxury. It’s cheap enough to allow most Americans to fly—by 2020, 87 percent of the U.S. population had taken a commercial airline trip. And low fares have cost us nothing in terms of safety: No major airline has been involved in an accident in the United States since 2009.”

Mr. Winston recommends going further by privatizing airports because big, spread-out cities such as Atlanta, Denver, and Las Vegas shouldn’t offer just one choice of where people can take off; a single airport often also means that there will be one or few airlines available for whatever a passenger’s destination might be.

His book, with Washington State University transportation economist Jia Yan as co-author, will, according to prepublication materials, be making

the broad argument that the culprit in America’s entire flawed transportation system is big government spending “without considering efficient policies to optimize the system’s performance that could reduce public spending and investment.”

Their alternative is deregulating all forms of travel, from giving private taxi services such as Uber full freedoms to experimenting with privatized highways in a world of “open skies airline pricing” and American and foreign airlines unchained to serve each other’s routes, “which could spur global deregulation that would facilitate seamless international air travel.”

The Brookings Institution sees the writing on the wall, as does even the air traffic controllers’ union, which long opposed the privatization of the FAA.

Amazingly, it’s our friends north of the border, so often opponents of liberty, who are showing us the way. The National Air Traffic Controllers Association union years ago softened its anti-privatization position, its president in 2017 conceding that “moving operations out of federal control would ensure more stable funding” and “could deliver results similar to those we have seen in Canada, where Nav Canada has proved itself to be a safe and innovative air navigation service provider over the past two decades.”

The nonprofit Nav Canada, separate from the Canadian government, is self-supporting by charging its patrons fees and isn’t state-subsidized. It’s the product of Canada’s 1996 air traffic privatization, which replaced a ticket tax to the government with direct charges to aircraft operators for services.

If the door is opened to privatize the fastest travel available to consumers, there’s no telling in what other realms the customer-friendly efficiency of business could replace the state’s corruption and waste.

# Anders Corr



## TikTok Lawfare Against America

*Hypocrisy as TikTok secretly uses US courts against free speech*

AS IS WELL KNOWN, TIKTOK is a national security threat because communist China has laws that give the regime access to the data of its almost 1.7 billion global users. Yet naive teenagers around the world download the app on their smartphones, thirsty for the latest kid craze trend. TikTok’s algorithm then channels these users more deeply into their random and sometimes destructive whims.

The most recent TikTok trend, for example, is playing dead from drinking a McDonald’s “Grimace” purple milkshake. Yet with almost 1.4 billion joint views on TikTok, #grimaceshake and #grimace underline the adage “all publicity is good publicity” (so soon after Bud Light proved it wrong).

McDonald’s is happy with the attention, though. On June 27, it tweeted a pic of puffy Grimace with his milkshake, saying, “meee pretending i don’t see the grimace shake trendd,” with the misspelling apparently integral to the muppet’s 1970s character.

If even a fraction of TikTok viewers buy a \$4 Grimace milkshake, McDonald’s will have made a tidy fortune, which could lift McDonald’s stock price. Since June 12, the milkshake’s release date and Grimace’s “birthday,” the company’s market capitalization is more than \$4 billion.

Sounds fun and profitable for not only McDonald’s but also other U.S. corporations, TikTok, and influencers that manage to ride the TikTok party wave, purple milkshakes flying.

But the owner of TikTok, Beijing-based ByteDance, calls the shots. Above ByteDance stands TikTok’s ultimate controller—the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The CCP isn’t only totalitarian but genocidal. It’s arguably the gravest threat to American democracy, and democracy globally, that the world has known.

This had the Trump administration pioneering a TikTok ban. The state of Montana followed.

But according to The New York Times, TikTok responded against the bans by secretly finding and funding anti-ban TikTokers to launch legal campaigns based on free speech claims.

### By allowing TikTok to shape our future voters, we relegate democracy to be shaped by the CCP.

As a result, former President Donald Trump’s ban was struck down, and Jameel Jaffer, executive director of Columbia University’s Knight First Amendment Institute, predicted that the courts would also strike down Montana’s ban.

Some appear to fall for the free speech argument; national security be damned—the Times article ended by quoting Mr. Jaffer.

“TikTok is an American company and has First Amendment rights, but there has been rhetoric in Montana and the federal government suggesting that TikTok’s connections to China mean it’s not an ordinary First Amendment actor,” Mr. Jaffer told the Times. “[The suit] emphasizes that this isn’t just about the rights of TikTok, let alone the rights of ByteDance. It’s about the rights of TikTok’s users, including its American users, and I think that’s a really important point to make.”

The point not aired by the Times is that we are what we read. By allowing Beijing to control the TikTok algorithm and thus the content it serves to U.S. users, we enable the CCP to influence our thinking to a dangerously great extent. This is most concerning for the young and impressionable—TikTok’s strong suit.

Among 18- to 19-year-old Americans, 67 percent use TikTok; 41 percent of all Americans are users.

ByteDance serves the United States the junk food equivalent of its products. Its algorithm more carefully curates educational content for Chinese citizens on China’s version of TikTok, called Douyin. TikTok is banned in China.

Democracy depends on an educated electorate. By allowing TikTok to shape our future voters, we relegate democracy to be shaped by the CCP. This consigns our history to the dustbin and is a huge mistake for not only American democracy but for democracy globally.

What about free speech? The free speech of ByteDance shouldn’t be protected, as the CCP uses ByteDance to censor and channel the free speech of its users for its own authoritarian benefit. America should never allow our adversaries to use our Constitution against its broader free speech protections. Free speech protections shouldn’t be used against free speech.

The free speech of TikTok users is far more important. But contrary to the lawyers’ arguments, it will not be impeded by a ban on TikTok. Existing TikTok users may use other social media or start their own. A plethora of such platforms now exist that have nothing to do with the CCP.

TikTok influencers who amassed millions of followers naturally don’t want to lose them. But they don’t have to—they can transfer their followers to new platforms. A U.S. law could mandate that TikTok facilitate the transfer of followers to any new platform where a user wishes to go. This should be easier than transferring medical records from an old to a new doctor. Like medical records, social media should belong to the user, not the company.



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# Milton Ezrati

## Fed Pauses: More Hikes to Come

*The central bank halts rate hikes in June but promises more to come*



**F**EDERAL RESERVE Board Chairman Jerome Powell has made himself and Fed guidelines clear.

Although the board voted in June to pause the pattern of raising interest rates, policymakers aren’t finished with their anti-inflation efforts and will likely raise rates again before they’re done.

Mr. Powell explained that the June pause was just that—a “skip” is how he termed it. A continuation of the effort to quell inflationary pressures and bring inflation’s pace back down to the target of 2 percent per year will likely involve more interest rate hikes in the coming months. For those anxious to see an end to this pattern, Mr. Powell did offer this: Interest rates are getting close to their final destination in this anti-inflation effort, he said, although he wisely refused to put a figure on that destination.

Up to this point, the Fed had followed what could only be described as a very aggressive strategy on interest rates. That aggressiveness is easily explained. The Fed wasted valuable time in 2021. Back then, as inflationary pressures gained momentum, Mr. Powell insisted that inflation wasn’t a problem. He stuck with inflationary monetary policies, including the maintenance of ordinally low interest rates.

Things changed in March 2022 after Mr. Powell received a reappointment as Fed chair. He and the Fed seemed suddenly awake to the inflation problem. Monetary policymakers began to raise interest rates and otherwise take steps to tighten credit conditions. Mr. Powell and his colleagues were clearly playing a game of catchup for what they failed to do in 2021. Over the succeeding 13

months to April, they rapidly raised the target federal funds rate by 5 full percentage points, faster than it had in more than 40 years.

Now the Fed has paused. Mr. Powell’s explanation should come as no surprise to readers of this column. Contrary to media speculation, the Fed had no desire to use interest rate policy to protect troubled banks. Neither were policymakers using the pause to signal a turn to rate reductions, as some on Wall Street suggested after allowing their hopes to confuse their expectations.

### The Fed had followed what could only be described as a very aggressive strategy on interest rates.

Instead, policymakers, aware that past aggressive interest rate hikes would likely have an uneven and delayed impact on the economy and inflation, wanted time to assess those effects. In Mr. Powell’s words, the decision to pause and impart a more measured pace to rate increases “gives us [policymakers] more information to ... make better decisions.”

Before the July 25 to July 26 meeting, Fed policymakers will have new figures on jobs and inflation, as well as a look at banks’ quarterly earnings. They’ll use these to make their next move. Unless these new data offer a huge surprise, Mr. Powell has made clear that another rate hike is likely. The minutes that accompanied the Fed’s latest forecast show that 12 of 18 board members favor at least two more interest hikes. Assuming those increases are the same as the 0.25 percentage point increase

of April, that action would bring the target federal funds rate into the range of 5.5 to 5.75 percent.

However, whether such moves would bring rates to the “final destination” to which Mr. Powell alluded remains an open question. Mr. Powell wisely avoided defining that point, mainly because he knew that he couldn’t yet know it. It all depends on the path of inflation—always uneven—and the unfolding state of the economy. If history is any guide—and it’s the only guide readers and the Fed have—a satisfactory inflation-quelling level for the target federal funds rate would be some 2 percentage points above the ongoing inflation rate. Should inflation continue at the relatively moderate 4 percent of recent reports, then two or maybe three more rate hikes might just bring the Fed to the chairman’s destination. But there are no assurances. If inflation gains momentum or the economy lurches, there could be more. Or there could be less if the economy collapses. No one can know, including the Fed.

In recognition of such unavoidable uncertainties, the nation and investors are fortunate to have Mr. Powell as the head of the Fed. At least lucky to have him instead of one of his predecessors, Ben Bernanke. Mr. Bernanke, heedless of ever-present uncertainties, broadcast the Fed’s intentions as if he and his team could really see the future. Because no one can do that, the Fed under Mr. Bernanke would then stick to its forecast even when circumstances demanded a change or whipsaw markets by going back on what the Fed had promised it would do. If Mr. Powell made a grave error in 2021, he now offers more realism about policy than markets have received in a long time.

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# Kevin Stocklin



## New Crisis?

*Commercial real estate could cause more bank collapses*

**T**HE WORK-FROM-home trend has been taking its toll on office landlords and is now making its way through to banks’ commercial loan portfolios, leading some analysts to predict that more trauma could be on the way for regional banks this year.

Banks with large exposures to commercial real estate (CRE) loans are racing to clean up and sell down their loan portfolios in hopes that they won’t fall victim to another round of bank runs.

“There is an estimated \$1.5 trillion of commercial property debt that will be due for repayment in about 18 months,” Peter Earle, an economist at the American Institute for Economic Research, told The Epoch Times. “It’s not improbable that even if interest rates have fallen by that time, some of that real estate debt will nevertheless be impaired and have an adverse impact on regional banks.”

Despite more employees returning to their offices this year, average office occupancy rates across the United States are still below 50 percent.

According to a report by Bank of America, 68 percent of CRE loans are held by regional banks. Approximately \$450 billion in CRE loans will mature in 2023. JPMorgan Chase estimated that CRE loans comprise, on average, 28.7 percent of the assets of small and regional banks and projected that 21 percent of CRE loans will ultimately default, costing banks about \$38 billion in losses.

Commercial mortgages are getting hit on two fronts: first, by the lack of demand for office space, leading to credit concerns regarding landlords, and second, by interest rate hikes that make it significantly more ex-



### According to a report by Bank of America, 68 percent of CRE loans are held by regional banks.

pensive for borrowers to refinance.

According to a June 12 report by Trepp, a CRE analytics firm, CRE loans that were originated a decade ago, when average mortgage rates were 4.58 percent, are now coming due, and in today’s market, fixed-rate CRE loan rates are averaging about 6.5 percent.

Banks that make CRE loans consider factors such as debt service coverage ratios (DSCRs), which measure a property’s income relative to cash payments due on loans. Simulating mortgage interest rates from 5.5 percent to 7.5 percent, Trepp projected that between 28 percent and 44 percent, respectively, of currently outstanding CRE loans would fail to meet the 1.25 DSCR ratio today and thus be ineligible for refinancing.

These calculations were done assuming current cash flows from properties stay the same and that loans are interest-only, but with vacancies rising, many landlords may have substantially less cash flow available. In

addition, whereas interest-only CRE loans were 88 percent of the market in 2021, lenders are now switching to amortizing mortgages to reduce risk, which significantly increases debt service payments.

Fitch, a rating agency, projected that approximately one-third of commercial mortgages coming due between April and December of this year will be unable to refinance, given current interest rates and rental income.

“It’s a very different world now from the one in which the majority of these loans were made,” Mr. Earle said. “In a zero-interest-rate environment, before the COVID lockdowns saw many businesses shift to a remote work basis, many of these loan portfolios full of office properties looked great. Now, a substantial portion of them look quite vulnerable.”

In an effort to rapidly clean up their CRE loan portfolios and avoid the fate of failed banks such as Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank, and First Republic Bank, banks are now attempting to sell off the loans, often taking a loss in the process.

A March academic study titled “Monetary Tightening and U.S. Bank Fragility in 2023” stated that the market value of assets held by U.S. banks is \$2.2 trillion lower than what’s reported in terms of their book value. This represents an average 10 percent decline in the market value of assets across the U.S. banking industry, and much of this decline came from commercial real estate loans.

Consequently, the authors wrote, “even if only half of uninsured depositors decide to withdraw, almost 190 banks with assets of \$300 billion are at a potential risk of impairment, meaning that the mark-to-market value of their remaining assets after these withdrawals will be insufficient to repay all insured deposits.”



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# Daniel Lacalle



## A Recipe for Stagnation

*Bloated government spending is disguising a private-sector recession*

**A**LLOW ME TO EXPLAIN why we haven’t seen a recession yet, despite the collapse in the base money supply.

We are witnessing the stealth nationalization of the economy. What does this mean? The entire burden of the monetary collapse and rate hikes is falling on the shoulders of families and small businesses, while large corporations and governments are virtually unaffected. Thus, when an agency such as the state, which weighs 40–60 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in most economies, continues to consume wealth and spend, GDP doesn’t show a recession even though consumption and private investment in real terms are declining.

Bloated government spending is disguising a private-sector recession and the decline in real disposable income, real wages, and margins of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Furthermore, the accidental and exogenous factor of widespread weaker commodities is boosting the external contribution of gross domestic product.

These are the main reasons that we’re living in the middle of a recession and destruction of private wealth and wages, but the official data don’t reflect it. As government weight in the economy rises faster, technical recessions may not appear in the official data, but citizens suffer it, nevertheless. The reader may think that this is good news because the spending of governments goes straight to the citizens via social spending. However, there’s nothing that the state provides that it doesn’t take away from the private sector now or in the future—deficit spending now means higher taxes and lower real wages afterward.

The rapid decline in global money



**The money-supply slump and rate-hike path so far are destroying the backbone of the economy, families, and small businesses.**

supply is staggering, at minus 3, minus 4 percent at the end of the first quarter, according to Longview. Meanwhile, in the United States, money supply is also contracting at the fastest pace since the Great Recession. Consider that, in the same period, government indebtedness at a global level is up by 3 percent and U.S. borrowing has also risen faster than real GDP, according to the Institute of International Finance. And those deficits are financed even if the cost is higher. Governments don’t care about rising borrowing costs, because you pay for it.

So why does inflation, especially core consumer price index (CPI), not react faster to rate hikes? Because the largest economic agent in the economy doesn’t care and isn’t reducing its imbalances. Bloated governments are consuming even more units of newly created mon-

ey, and that’s why aggregate prices fail to reflect the price contraction of external factors such as freight or energy. Furthermore, as we have seen in the GDP figures of many European nations, the rents components of GDP show a massive increase in the tax rents side, while the gross added value of businesses and the gross wage component remain below pre-pandemic levels. Congratulations—you wanted socialism, this is socialism: lower real wages, lower real disposable income, and lower real savings.

With the current slump in money supply, inflation should be half what it is now, and this is even considering the tweaks in the official calculation of CPI. However, money velocity isn’t declining, because state consumption of newly created currency units is rising despite poor real private consumption and investment. If we think of the quantitative theory of money, this may be the first private-only recession because money-supply declines and money-velocity growth coming from the public sector offsets it.

The problem when government spending ignores any monetary tightening is that the second leg up of inflation comes from even higher state subsidies using new units of currency, and the downward spiral may start and become impossible to stop. As the interest rate and credit access of the backbone of the economy, households, and SMEs becomes worse and dries up, governments step in to solve a problem they caused by creating even more entitlement and subsidy expenditures with constantly depreciated units of currency.

The money-supply slump and rate-hike path so far are destroying the backbone of the economy, families, and small businesses. Normalization of monetary policy without normalization of government spending and deficits is the recipe for stagnation.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

**FAN YU** is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China’s economy since 2015.

# Fan Yu

## Pump the Brakes on the AI Hype?

*Artificial intelligence may be overhyped, like Metaverse and blockchain*

**T**HE HYPE, AS THEY SAY, is real with AI. Everyone is bullish on the potential created by generative artificial intelligence (AI) applications such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT and its slew of competitors and alternative contenders. When ChatGPT was released late last year, more than 100 million users signed up within two months.

Since then, Alphabet Inc. (Google’s parent company) redoubled efforts to develop its own version, called Bard. Shares of chipmaker Nvidia Corp. are up almost 200 percent since Jan. 1 due to the importance of its products to the AI sector.

All of this has created some hyperbolic declarations from experts. Some consider the current AI movement the beginning of the so-called fourth industrial revolution, as important or more impactful than the internet itself. Millions of jobs could be overtaken by AI bots, and many companies investing in this space will be minted while many companies could be wiped out.

AI has singlehandedly led the Nasdaq composite’s significant gain of 32 percent through June 30, during a period of high inflation and high-interest rates—typically anathema to growth-focused tech stocks. Never mind that the U.S. economy is staring at the largest economic contraction since 2008.

Which brings me to my question: Is the hype too much?

To be sure, ChatGPT is very impressive. And the technology behind it holds immense potential. But at the moment, it feels very much like a novelty—certainly not able to replace millions of jobs or become “world-changing.” It may be possible, but certainly not a foregone conclusion as the experts would have you believe.

I’m reminded of the most recent technology hype before ChatGPT: the metaverse. And then slightly before



**Some consider the current AI movement the beginning of the so-called fourth industrial revolution, as important or more impactful than the internet itself.**

that, the blockchain.

The blockchain was supposed to be revolutionary, changing the way the world conducts business. Everything from banking, payments, and accounting, to real estate would be revolutionized by the distributed ledger technology. Decentralized exchanges would eventually replace centralized stock exchanges and networks.

That was all the rage five years ago. Deloitte’s 2021 Global Blockchain Survey revealed that 80 percent of all companies believe that blockchain would enable new revenue streams. And that if you’re a business leader and you’re not implementing blockchain, then you’re missing out and the world is passing you by.

Today, it’s safe to say that blockchain hasn’t revolutionized much. Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies are still around. But aside from a few proofs of concept, no company’s fortunes have

been materially changed by implementing blockchain technology.

Metaverse was another recent hype. Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg believed so much in the potential of virtual reality that the company changed its corporate name to Meta Platforms.

Proponents believed that we’d all be wearing VR headsets and holding meetings in virtual worlds, buying virtual products such as NFTs and virtual homes, and owning a stable of avatars in game worlds with their own economies. If you believe in that future, then the economic promise of the metaverse is immense. And unlike the reality we live in, there can be an unlimited number of virtual worlds to populate and live in, limited only by computing power and one’s imagination.

But sitting in 2023, the outlook on the metaverse is decidedly different.

Since its name change was announced in October 2021, Meta’s stock price has declined by 13 percent through June 30. And that’s after a tremendous 138 percent increase during year-to-date 2023.

A survey released prior to the Game Developers Conference earlier this year unveiled that 45 percent of game developers—the people and companies behind metaverse’s development—felt that “the metaverse concept will never deliver on its promise.” Ouch.

These examples aren’t to state that AI won’t be as revolutionary as some experts suggest. There are a lot of discussions about this technology across companies and governments. Further investments, development, technological consensus, and, above all, regulatory oversight and moral clarity on necessary guardrails are needed.

At the moment, AI’s risks are as massive as its potential. We won’t know until 10 years later whether AI’s impact is more akin to the internet or Google Glass.





Dr. Paul Marik,  
co-founder of  
Front Line COVID-19  
Critical Care Alliance.

THOUGHT LEADERS

# Ridding the Body of Spike Proteins

*Dr. Paul Marik on vaccines, vitamins, lifestyle changes, and the enormous potential for self-repair*

ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES,  
TORONTO/THEEPOCHTIMES

“WE MAKE UP about 4 percent of the global population in America, yet we consume 55 percent of prescription drugs,” says Dr. Paul Marik. “How is that possible? Eighty percent of prescription opiates are written in this country. This tells you the stranglehold that Big Pharma has.”

In a recent episode of “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek spoke with Dr. Marik to get an update on the spike protein-induced diseases in people who have received the COVID-19 vaccine. They discuss the best treatments for ridding the body of spike protein and the broader ways that vitamins and lifestyle changes might radically improve human health. Dr. Marik is a critical care physician and co-founder of Front Line COVID-19 Critical Care Alliance.

**JAN JEKIELEK:** You have been doing some fascinating research on a range of things, but I want to start with COVID and the current state of spike-related disease. What do we understand about it now?

**DR. PAUL MARIK:** Our understanding continues to evolve. The truth of the matter is that spike protein is probably one of the most toxic compounds that human beings can be exposed to. Its toxicity is through multiple pathways that we’re just beginning to understand.

Spike protein causes profound inflammation. It activates clotting and platelets. It causes auto-antibodies. It causes damage to the endothelium of blood vessels. Then, it has some really bad effects on many of the genes involved in cancer suppression.

Probably the best study is by a brave pathologist in Germany. In the United States, if someone dies unexpectedly, you’re not allowed to look for spike protein.

Dr. Arne Burkhardt in Germany has

“Medicine is controlled by Big Pharma. The food industry is controlled by the big nutrition companies.”

done over 75 autopsies on patients who have died post-vaccination. The findings are unbelievable. The body is packed with spike protein. There’s spike protein in the brain, the heart, and the vasculature.

It actually causes a disease in the blood vessels—medial necrosis—which is, in this case, death of the wall of the blood vessel, and the blood vessel ruptures. It’s a slow, progressive organ dysfunction leading to death. When you get the jab, the amount of spike protein is exponentially higher than with natural infection. That’s why we’re seeing all these vaccine complications.

For example, long COVID—and you don’t want to minimize it—is a self-limiting disease. Because of the amount of spike protein that’s produced with most people who get long COVID, the average is four months, and then they get better. We know the vaccine-injured have such a load of spike protein that two to three years after the jab, they’re still highly symptomatic. It’s related to the load of spike protein.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** Where are we in terms of treatment?

**DR. MARIK:** One problem with the vaccine is the people who invented and developed it didn’t develop an antidote. They made this toxin, but they left it for us to figure out how to deal with it. Most medicines that we know have toxicity, and we have a good idea how to deal with the toxicity.

So we had to start from scratch fig-

uring out how spike protein damages the patient. As we’ve learned about spike, we’ve learned about ways to deal with it. The more spike protein you have, the worse the disease. You can look at how many times they’ve had COVID and how many shots they’ve had, and it gives you an index of how much spike they have.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** So the less spike you have in you, the better.

**DR. MARIK:** Yes. The first thing is to avoid being spiked. If you’ve been vaccinated, don’t get boosters. You want to limit exposure to spike, so no more jabs. Secondly, if you get COVID, you want to be treated early, because the longer it lingers, the more spike protein. Then, you need to help the body get rid of the spike protein.

The body has an evolutionary process called autophagy. When the body detects foreign protein, misfolded protein, or dysfunctional protein, it destroys it, because it figures out this is not good and wants to get rid of it. It goes through this autophagy process. It’s like the garbage collection system of the cell.

So what you want to do is enhance the ability of the cell to break down these proteins. So much of what we’ve learned is that we have this enormous potential of self-repair and self-healing. We want to embrace the ability of the host to heal itself and to activate autophagy.

The most potent method of activating autophagy is called intermittent fasting, or time-related feeding, ♦



“When you get the jab, the amount of spike protein is exponentially higher than with natural infection. That’s why we’re seeing all these vaccine complications.”

because there is this biological switch called the mTOR switch. Whenever you eat, you switch off autophagy through the mTOR pathway. Glucose and insulin and protein switch off this process. However, when you deprive the cell of glucose and protein, it switches on autophagy, and it breaks down protein.

This is the way we were designed. The Neanderthal man, our cousin, didn’t eat all the time. This is a relatively new phenomenon with our processed foods and supermarkets. People eat all the time. They’ll sit in front of the TV after dinner, for example, and snack on processed food and carbohydrates, which is terrible. First of all, it never allows autophagy to switch on. More importantly, autophagy is really important for brain recovery when you sleep.

For brain regeneration, it’s important to clear out all the metabolic products and allow the synapses to regenerate. During sleep, you undergo autophagy. So if you eat before you go to sleep, it does two really bad things. First, it switches off autophagy. Secondly, there’s a remarkable system in the brain called the glymphatic system. This is the lymphatic system of the brain, and it does the same thing. It washes out the metabolic byproducts from metabolism to get rid of them. Impaired glymphatic flow is linked to many neurodegenerative

diseases, as is deficient autophagy. If you eat before you go to sleep, you limit autophagy and you limit glymphatic flow.

The other thing that’s really good for lymphatics and autophagy is exercise.

All of this is important for getting rid of spike protein, but the implications go much further, because we now know that it prevents aging and Alzheimer’s disease. It likely reduces the risk of cancer. It reduces the risk of metabolic syndrome and diabetes.

Getting back to spike, it’s essential that people change their diet. You don’t have to do strict intermittent fasting like I do, where you eat within a six- to eight-hour window, and then the rest of the time you don’t eat.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** It sounds like there’s a simple recipe here. How do you activate the time-restricted eating?

**DR. MARIK:** The first step is to concentrate on eating real food and not processed food. Then, what you want to do is miss one meal, and breakfast is probably the best meal to miss. You have lunch, and you have an early dinner—but it must be early. Then you gradually increase the window of time-restricted eating.

Maybe you start off by eating

within a window of 12 hours, then 10 hours, then eight hours, and then six hours. But it’s important that when you eat, you actually have good food. During the periods when you’re fasting, you can have liquids. You don’t want to get dehydrated. Water is fine—but no juices—and coffee is fine. Coffee actually activates autophagy and has important phytochemicals. Don’t add artificial sweeteners or milk. If you want, you can add thick cream. You want to prevent adding glucose, which will break your ketosis.

With time-restricted eating, you shouldn’t lose lean body mass; you should lose fat mass. You utilize the excess fat stores. You break down the fat, but you prevent breaking down muscle.

If you don’t eat for a number of hours, you’ll use glucose, which is stored in the liver as glycogen. Once that’s depleted, you’ll start breaking down and converting the visceral fat, your belly fat, into ketone bodies, so you will be breaking down fatty tissue.

The bottom line is that you’re linking two things. One is time-restricted eating. The other is to eat nutrient-dense foods and not processed foods. We know that for Americans, 80 percent of what they eat is processed food.

What’s the difference? If it looks like food, it likely is food. If it comes in a box, has a package and a label, it’s probably not food.

We don’t realize the profound toxicity of the processed foods we eat. It’s essentially processed as high glucose and, most importantly, fructose. Fructose is different from glucose, and most of these things have high levels of corn fructose. Fructose is metabolized into fat in the liver. It causes a fatty liver, which causes this process of insulin resistance.

Obviously, there’s a lot of fructose in fruit. One has to be careful about how much fruit one eats. The best fruits are berries—blueberries, strawberries, and blackberries—because they have

the lowest glycemic index. They have fructose, but they also have fiber.

Basically, what I’m saying is that by very simple changes in the way we eat, we can have a profound metabolic effect. This has another implication, because it is estimated that 40 percent of cancers are caused by insulin resistance.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** You’re not sounding like the typical ICU doctor.

**DR. MARIK:** I worked in the ICU and followed conventional medicine. Fortunately, in the ICU, most of our therapies were based on a good understanding of physiology, and then how to deal with physiology, rather than corrupt medications.

You really have to think about getting back to basics. The human body has enormous capacity for self-renewal and self-healing, and there are natural products that can help the body restore itself. With intermittent fasting, you buy less food, so you are saving money. If we actually adopted this across the country, we could reduce our expenditure on health care by at least 50 percent.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** It seems so simple.

**DR. MARIK:** Yes. More recently, I’ve become interested in vitamin D. Human beings used to sleep with no artificial light. That is important because having darkness at night is really important in making melatonin. That’s what the pineal gland does. If your pineal gland isn’t functioning optimally, you don’t make melatonin, which significantly increases your risk of cancer, particularly breast cancer.

During the day, we used to go outdoors more, we got sunshine, and we got blue light. Blue light is important during the day to switch off the pineal gland. We’ve disturbed that natural cycle of life. We need to get back to the



To reduce your risk, “take vitamin D, take melatonin, and get some exercise and sunshine,” Dr. Paul Marik says.

basics: Walk outdoors, get sunshine, eat once or twice a day, and reestablish our circadian rhythm, where you have darkness at night and light during the day.

And vitamin D is so critical. There’s overwhelming data that people who have low vitamin D levels increase their risk of cancer. There was a study recently published in a peer-reviewed journal in which they looked at three simple interventions to reduce cancer. It was a prospective randomized study.

They gave patients 4,000 units of vitamin D, one gram of omega-3, plus a simple home exercise program. They reduced the risk of cancer by 50 percent. Just think of the implications. I would add one or two other compounds. I would probably add melatonin and probably metformin, which improves the way your body handles insulin.

So there are simple common sense things you can do to reduce your risk; Take vitamin D, take melatonin, and get some exercise and sunshine.

Through lifestyle changes that are just common sense, we can improve our health, our well-being, our longevity, and our happiness.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** I want to talk about one ICU intervention you developed, an intravenous vitamin C protocol that was highly effective. You came to adopt an unorthodox view on dealing with COVID and were attacked for it, and even your sepsis protocol came under serious attack. It’s cheap and can be easily adapted in the developing world to save lives. It’s just a wonderful thing on the face of it. A lot of people were thrilled with this protocol at one point, then suddenly, it became toxic, metaphorically.

**DR. MARIK:** What people may not know is that vitamin C is really a hormone rather than a vitamin. All species on this planet—except for humans and guinea pigs—make vitamin C. When your dog or your cat or your goat gets stressed, it actually

ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES; KENA BETANCUR/GETTY IMAGES



makes vitamin C, but humans have lost that ability.

Vitamin C is a potent antioxidant and has anti-inflammatory properties. It's very important for making hormones, but from the adrenal gland. It has anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial properties. But for whatever reasons, humans have a genetic mutation where they can't make it. What's the implication? It's simple. When humans are stressed, give them vitamin C. I stumbled upon this by accident. Because I had this patient in the ICU who was clearly dying of sepsis.

As a clinician, when you have a patient who's dying, and this was pre-COVID, you do whatever you can to save the patient's life—as long as it's not illegal, as long as it's an approved drug. I had read the work of Dr. [Alpha A. (Berry)] Fowler on vitamin C.

I thought, "Why not? Let me give it a try." I was expecting this woman to die. When I came back the next day, she was sitting up in bed, communicating. She was extubated, and her kidney function improved. This woman who was dying walked out of the ICU three days later. I thought, "That's impressive, but maybe it's just a one-off thing. I'll try it again." The same thing happened. I tried again, and the same thing happened again. When observation is scientifically valid, it's reproducible. I kept doing it because it was saving patients' lives. At that point, I said, "No one is going to believe me. I need to do a randomized study." I said to the nurses, "I'm going to do a randomized study." We couldn't withhold a therapy, which saves kidneys and lives, so to give them a placebo would be unethical. If I have something which might help patients, how could I deny it to them? Instead, we collected a series of 48 patients and then compared it retrospectively to a similar match group, and we showed a marked reduction in mortality.

The head of the global sepsis forum, who worked in Australia, tweeted out

that this was snake oil medicine and that I was a snake oil doctor. They didn't like the idea that a vitamin, which is cheap, could save people's lives. It goes against the narrative. It has to be an expensive molecule from pharma. The idea that vitamin C—which is cheap, available, and safe—could have a significant impact in reducing mortality from sepsis was snake oil medicine.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** What did you think of them saying that?

**DR. MARIK:** I was personally offended. I was disturbed because they went on this Twitter campaign to suggest that I had somehow manipulated the data.

Traditional medicine does not like challenges to the status quo. It's very disturbing to them, particularly when it's an off-label drug. That's a theme that I've now recognized. As my direction has changed in terms of metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and cancer, I've realized that there are many repurposed drugs that are highly effective for these conditions.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** This is astounding to most people—that in the established literature, hundreds of deeply researched papers will tell you that these things work. But it's not known in the collective consciousness, even among medical doctors.

**DR. MARIK:** Most doctors don't know because they've been isolated from this. I use vitamin D because of the amount of data supporting the concept that vitamin D deficiency causes cancer and that supplementing with vitamin D reduces your risk of cancer. Yet nobody knows about it.

Medicine is controlled by Big Pharma. The food industry is controlled by the big nutrition companies. We need a reawakening because this current medical system is broken. The Epoch

Times is wonderful in that respect because it does speak the truth. We make up about 4 percent of the global population in America, yet we consume 55 percent of the prescription drugs. How is that possible? Eighty percent of prescription opiates are written in this country. This tells you the stranglehold that Big Pharma has on this country. But the reality is there are cheap repurposed drugs that could have a massive effect on improving the health and welfare of humanity.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** Those are astounding numbers. You understand there's something deeply wrong knowing that.

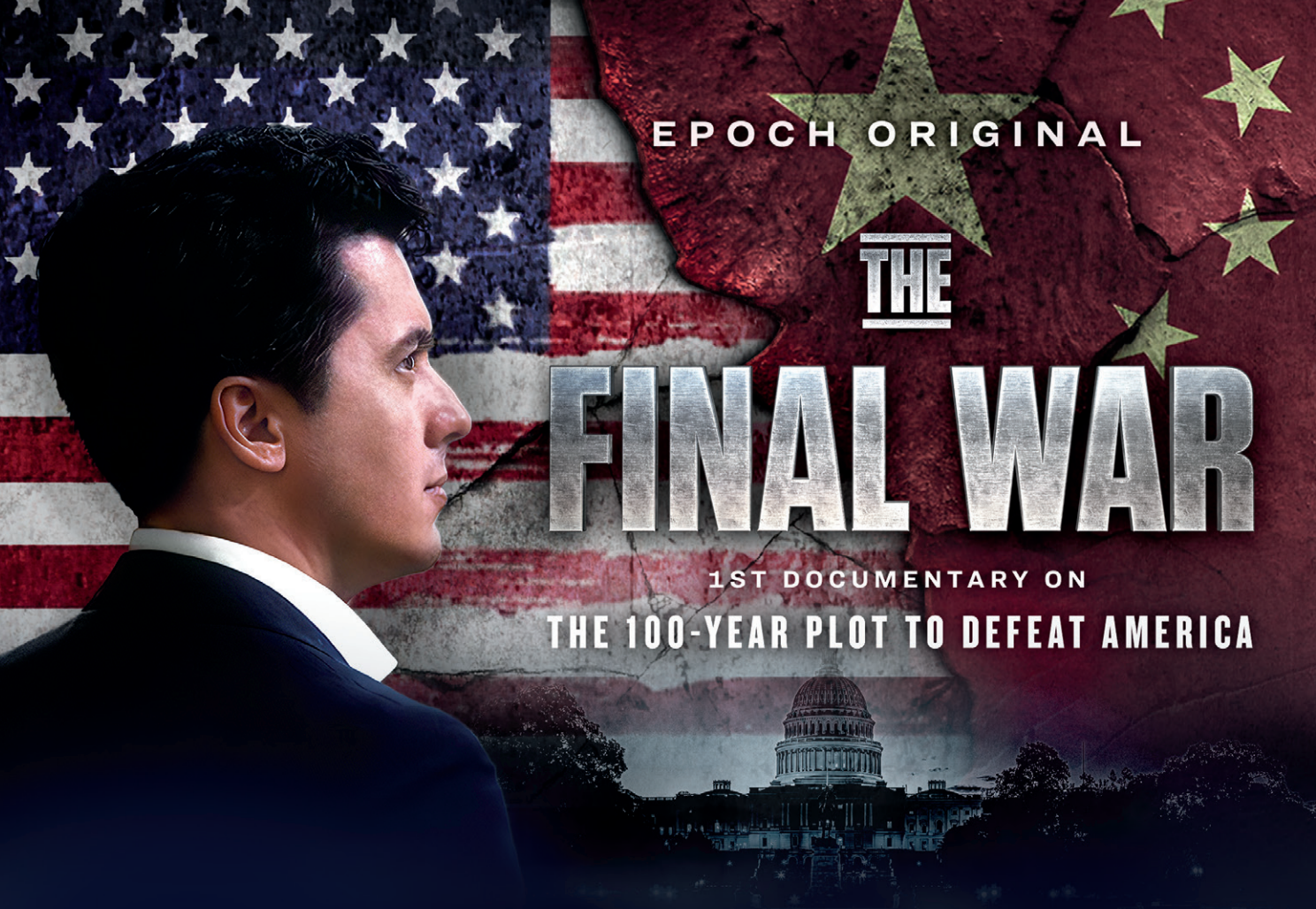
**DR. MARIK:** Once you see the lies, the deceit, and the dishonesty, you can't unsee it. You realize the depth of this corruption. We've been brainwashed. The good thing is that we're exposing this, and there are simple interventions that people can use to empower themselves and improve their health.

They need to be educated, and they need to be informed. When you choose a physician, you need to engage in a conversation just to get an idea of where they sit on the spectrum, if they are open to the use of repurposed drugs, and if they're open to vitamin D and vitamin C. There are some good physicians out there who really want to treat patients, follow the Hippocratic principles, and help people. You just need to find them.

**MR. JEKIELEK:** Any final thoughts as we finish up?

**DR. MARIK:** People need to get back to basics and common sense, to think for themselves. Read about these issues, explore them, and go on this new adventure. Hopefully, we'll live happier, healthier, and more fulfilling lives. ■

*This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.*



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's) 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 United States occupied with at least four global adversaries.

See the film. Know the danger. Be prepared. The final war is already underway.



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# Stay Calm in Stressful Situations

Realizing instant gratification isn't always possible is a good start to mitigating stress

By Jeff Minick



RECENTLY, WHILE READING some stories from Leo Tolstoy’s “Walk in the Light and Twenty-Three Tales,” it struck me how many of his characters were prisoners of time and circumstance.

“What Men Live By” features a fallen angel, Michael, who lives as a human being for years while seeking answers to three questions that God has demanded from him for his disobedience. In “God Sees the Truth, But Waits,” a merchant, Aksyonov, spends 26 years in Siberia for a crime that he didn’t commit. Impatient to go home and throwing caution aside, in “The Prisoner in the Caucasus,” Zhilin, a soldier, is captured by the Tartars and held for long months as their prisoner. All three characters require a rucksack of patience to endure their ordeals.

But how about us today? How do we of the digital age compare in patience to those of that bygone time when a letter often reached its recipient a month or more after it was dispatched?

Let’s say you’re happily zipping along the interstate. You top the crest of a hill, and for as far as you can see, the traffic ahead is at a near-standstill. Do you unleash a string of obscenities and blasphemies? Pound the steering wheel while your blood pressure hits the roof? Grab your phone and start looking for alternate routes?

We Americans are an impatient people, and sometimes this trait can be a

## Everyone working together on some task needs to show forbearance to others.

virtue. When a hurricane slams into a city, we don’t tolerate a whole lot of lollygagging in getting help to the victims. When we’re having our kitchen renovated and the new appliances don’t arrive at the promised time, many of us rightly jump on the phone, contact the sales and delivery people, and demand satisfaction.

All too often, however, even the slightest glitches or delays can rile us into a thundering rage or cast us into the pits of despair. Some blame technology for this impatience, and certainly it’s a factor. When you’re accustomed to commanding the world with a few swipes or clicks on a machine, instant gratification becomes the rule rather than the exception.

Yet the practice of patience, especially in regard to others, can often yield amazing results. A father whom I know well was estranged from his son, yet he continued to send him emails and notes, even when no response was forthcoming. After three years, the day arrived when they were reunited, in part because of this dad’s devotion and refusal to give way to frustration or anger. “To wait and not be tired by waiting,” as Rudyard Kipling says in

his poem “If—,” is one mark of being an adult.

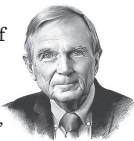
Likewise, a calm and steady patience is a valuable tool in any leader’s kit. Search online for “leaders and patience,” and you’ll find dozens of sites that explain how this overlooked virtue can upgrade performance in the workplace. And it’s not only of benefit to supervisors.

In “Impatiently Patient,” Korn Ferry CEO Gary Burnison reminds us that patience is a two-way street; everyone working together on some task needs to show forbearance to others, especially in our hectic, fast-paced world.

If we need some help with practicing patience, we might look to Abraham Lincoln. His years as a wartime president—with all their ups and downs—tested his forbearance on a daily basis, which probably explains one of his favorite sayings, “This too shall pass.”

The next time that you’re stuck in traffic or you’re in the middle of some chaotic mess at work, try pausing for a moment and repeating that soothing bit of wisdom, “This too shall pass.” Those words got Lincoln through some awful times. They’ve helped untold thousands of others cope with disasters large and small, and they can do the same for us. ■

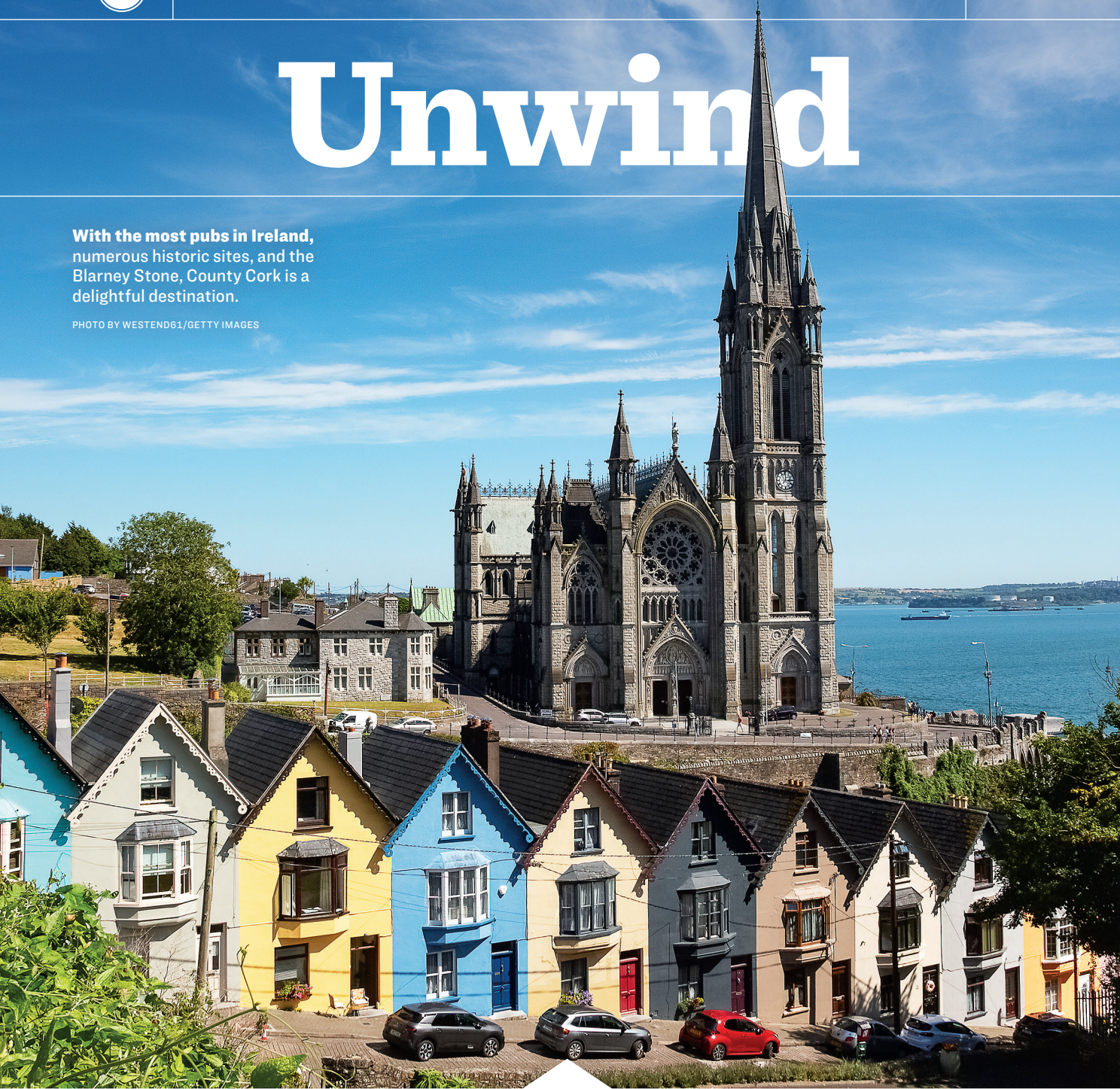
Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



# Unwind

With the most pubs in Ireland, numerous historic sites, and the Blarney Stone, County Cork is a delightful destination.

PHOTO BY WESTEND61/GETTY IMAGES



## A Most Enjoyable County 72

DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS, this ranch is a perfect setting for an active family that rides, raises cattle, and throws really great parties. 70

THE HOT, STEAMY DAYS OF summer are the perfect reason to explore delightfully refreshing iced coffee, taking virtual sips of scrumptious versions from around the globe. 75

REGARDLESS OF WHETHER you travel by air, sea, highway, or rail, we’ve collected pro traveler secrets to increase fun and reduce costs. 76



# An Urban Cowboy's Dream

Those seeking plenty of elbow room will love this Texas-sized home

By Bill Lindsey

**An oversized** infinity pool with a covered area, full kitchen, and covered lounge area is located between the main house and the spacious guest quarters.

LOCATED LESS THAN AN HOUR'S DRIVE from downtown Houston, this sprawling, 1,408-acre ranch property is a great place to raise a large family and entertain. The property features an 11,347-square-foot, four-bedroom, 11-bathroom (five full, six half) main residence with a two-car garage; a three-bedroom, three-bathroom guest house; an eight-acre lake; several outbuildings; 3 1/2 miles of frontage on the Brazos River; pastures for livestock; and horse stables.

The main house features generous use of local stone and wood—resulting in impressive curb appeal—and a covered entryway accented by carefully tended rock gardens. Stepping inside reveals gleaming wood flooring, a sweeping staircase, and a grand chandelier affixed to the soaring ceiling. The living room's focal point is a fireplace that stretches up to the vaulted ceiling and features a massive, hand-carved wood mantle. The open floor plan connects the main-floor living areas, allowing family and guests to relax

and mingle as the owners enjoy the kitchen, which features a breakfast bar, an oversized food prep island, and a restaurant-sized, double-door refrigerator/freezer set behind custom cabinetry.

The cavernous master bedroom features a stone-fronted fireplace in front of a sitting area that's bracketed by glass doors and windows. The Texas-sized master bathroom is accented by a custom chandelier over the soaking tub and is also illuminated via huge windows looking out over the grounds. An entertaining area with kitchen facilities and an oversized infinity pool lies between the main house and the guesthouse. Inside the airy guest quarters, Mexican tile flooring accents exposed ceiling beams throughout, setting a rustic tone.

Other notable features of the property include a barndominium fitted out as a 10-car garage, complete with six bedrooms and a full kitchen; five water wells; mature pecan, oak, and mesquite trees; and abundant game birds, deer, and other wildlife. ■



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(Above) Stepping inside the main residence, residents and guests are greeted by soaring ceilings and gleaming wood flooring. (Top Right) The private office in the main residence has built-in bookshelves, an exposed beam ceiling, and large windows to enjoy the view of the surrounding countryside. (Right) The property's barn-like 10-car garage features six bedrooms for guests or staff, with a kitchen, living room, and dining area.





# County Cork Gems

3 days in this Irish county is enough to make the heart sing



**St. Colman's Cathedral** rises above the seaside town of Cobh in Cork County, Ireland.  
PHOTO BY MIKEMIKE10/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Rachael Dymski

I STOOD AT THE FORK OF THE WALKING path near the Rock Close at Blarney Castle in County Cork, Ireland, and listened to the songbirds while watching the sheep graze contentedly in a far pasture. Turning toward Blarney Lake, I embarked on a peaceful, breathtaking circuit of the 21-acre body of water. Ireland's beauty was more wild and rugged than I had expected. It seemed to be taking me on a journey, slowly unwinding and revealing itself until I, like so many others, was spellbound by its magic.

An opportunity to join my husband on his work trip this spring landed me in Ireland for the first time, and gave me three glorious days to explore County Cork with total independence. Enjoying my newfound, freedom, I wasted no time in trying to soak up the history and stunning scenery around me.

**Day 1: Cork City**

Located in the south of Ireland, Cork is often referred to as Ireland's second capital. I decided to spend my first day in Cork City.

The city of Cork is home to stunning historical churches and yet also evokes a modern vibe. Like any interesting city, its busy roads branch into beautiful alleys, lined with boutique shops and hip restaurants. After a full Irish breakfast at the Montenotte Hotel—complete with eggs, beans, mushrooms, and blood pudding—I spent my morning winding my way along the city's streets and browsing through used bookstores with a flat white from Three Fools Coffee in hand. After a brie and serrano ham sandwich at The English Market, a bustling covered market with 55 stalls, I made my way to St. Fin Barre's Cathedral.

Since its origin as a monastery in the seventh century, the site of the cathedral has been a place of worship. The cathedral itself—complete with its gorgeous stained-glass windows, stone carvings, and ornate organ—was finished in the 19th century.

From there, I headed to St. Anne's Church to ring the Shandon Bells. The church, made of red sandstone and white limestone, is said to have inspired the city's sporting colors. On my way up the tower, I had the opportunity to ring the bells. Stumbling through the printed music for "Frère Jacques," I serenaded a city that I was beginning to love.

**Day 2: Blarney Castle**

A tower house built between the 15th century and 17th century, ♦♦

Cork in Gaelic, Corcaigh, means **"MARSHY PLACE."**



**County Cork** lies about 160 miles from Dublin.

Sir Walter Raleigh planted the first potato in Ireland near his home in Cork in 1589.

**Breakfast at** Panorama Bistro at The Montenotte Hotel.



FROM TOP: ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES; COURTESY OF SMALL LUXURY HOTELS OF THE WORLD





Cobh, the last port of call of the Titanic, in County Cork, Ireland.

Blarney Castle is located about 5 miles northwest of Cork City in Blarney Village. As intriguing as the castle itself was—what with its murder hole and a stone said to give the gift of eloquence to anyone who kissed it—the grounds were breathtaking.

I spent several hours working my way through the lush fern garden, strolling the winding pathways of the woodland walk, and reading about every plant in the poison garden. I could have walked all day and still not have seen the whole thing; this is where the endless, varied beauty of Ireland really began to captivate me. The gardens were filled with hidden doorways and ivy-covered walls, waterfalls, and enormous trees.

The Blarney Stone is reached by a steep, continuous flight of 100 steps to the top of the tower. It is believed that those who kiss the stone will be given “the gift of the gab.” In the past, a would-be kisser had to be dangled by the ankles over the side of the tower in order to kiss the stone. Thankfully, modern protocols have made this much safer and easier. Ronald Regan and Winston Churchill are both said to have kissed it.

Day 3: Cobh

By my last day in Ireland, I was so intrigued by the country’s history that I took the train to the beautiful seaside town of Cobh. I spent the

morning exploring the Cobh Heritage Centre, learning about the devastating effects of the potato famine and the history of Irish emigration. The museum also explores Ireland’s fascinating journey to independence from the UK more than 100 years ago.

Its neighboring museum, the Titanic Experience in Cobh, is all about the ill-fated ship’s last port of call in Cobh. Visitors can take a guided tour and revisit the experiences of passengers who boarded at Queenstown, the former name for Cobh.

Cobh is home to some breathtaking streets, including some colorful row houses that make for an iconic picture with St. Colman’s Cathedral in the background. For lunch, I went to The Mex for take-out quesadillas. Made with quality, fresh ingredients, and eaten alone on the pier, the quesadillas made for an incredible meal.

With its rich, varied history, lush landscape, and beautiful buildings, County Cork is well worth a visit. I know I have yet to experience so many of the county’s gems: the harbor at Kinsale, the Copper Coast Geopark, the sunset at Killary Harbor. But I saw enough to rope me in, and I cannot wait to go back. ■

*Rachael Dymski is a writer, author, and mom to three wonderful kids. She lives on a flower farm with her family in Pennsylvania.*

If You Go

**Fly:** Aer Lingus offers several direct flights from the United States to Dublin. You can then fly, drive, or take the train to Cork. I recommend the train.

**Getting Around:** Cork is a very walkable city, and the train is perfect for exploring nearby towns. However, if you want to hike and explore off the beaten track, a car is ideal for getting around.

**Stay:** The Montenotte Hotel offers spacious rooms, an excellent breakfast, and a lovely view of the city.

**Take Note:** The official currency is euros.

ARTUR BOGAOKI/GETTY IMAGES

A COOL CUP OF JOE: AROUND THE WORLD IN ICED COFFEE

From Italian affogato to Vietnamese ca phe sua da, the world is your coffee cup

By Kevin Revolinski

ICED COFFEE. DO WE REALLY need a recipe? Brew coffee. Add ice. Maybe sugar. Drink. True enough, but there can be so many other ways of putting it together. Here are just a few takes from other parts of the world.

Greek Frappé

My first time in the Greek Isles, I stepped into a dark taverna seeking shelter from the relentless sun, and asked for something cold to drink. Frappé? A sweet, cold coffee sounded pretty good. But when I saw it being made, I was shocked. Spoonfuls of Nescafé powder? That instant stuff I cringe at?

The word frappé derived from French and referred to ice-chilled beverages, and coffee found its way onto the list in the 1800s. But the Greek café frappé was first made with instant coffee in 1957 by a representative from—unsurprisingly—Nescafé. Made with sugar, water, and fresh or evaporated milk, it’s simple, fast, and—surprisingly—delicious.

Affogato

From the Italian word for “drowned,” an affogato is a desert coffee that drowns a scoop of gelato al fior di latte with a double shot of espresso. If you have no gelato, vanilla ice cream is the typical substitution.

Granita

Originally from Sicily, this icy treat comes in a variety of flavors; coffee is a popular one. You can make it at home with 2 cups of strong coffee or espresso with 1/2 cup sugar dissolved into it, plus an ounce of coffee liqueur. Pour that mixture into a 9-by-13-inch cake pan and

The Greek frappé is made with instant coffee, sugar, and fresh or evaporated milk.

Make Sicilian granita at home with strong coffee or espresso, sugar, and coffee liqueur.

The Portuguese took the name “mazagran” and turned the drink into their own (sometimes boozy) brew.

THE ORIGINAL?

The first iced coffee was said to be mazagran, a blend of coffee syrup and water served to French troops in colonized Algeria and named for a fortress or battle there.

It’s not really so common in either France or Algeria now, but the Portuguese took the name and turned the drink into an iced mix of espresso, lemon, mint, and perhaps a bit of rum.

place it in the freezer.

After about half an hour, take it out and flake through it with a fork to stir up any ice crystals attaching to the pan, then return it to the freezer. Repeat this process every 20 minutes or so until you end up with a perfect coffee-flavored slush to be served in a cup and eaten with a spoon.

Vietnamese Iced Coffee

Vietnamese iced coffee (ca phe sua da) is as much a drink as a process, which calls for a phin filter: a little metal cup with a filtered bottom and a loose metal filter inside as well. Condensed milk is spooned into a tall glass, the grounds are added to the filter, and that in turn is set upon the glass for hot water to be slowly poured through. Stir up the result and pour that over a glass of ice.

Brazilian Mocha Cola

Tracking your calories or caffeine intake? You might want to skip this one. This magical mix of coffee, chocolate, and cola isn’t pulling any punches. This recipe makes almost a quart, so bring friends:

Take 1 cup of double-strength coffee—espresso, filtered, instant, as you prefer, but a blend with Robusta is suggested—and mix it with a 12-ounce can of your preferred cola, and 3 cups of chocolate milk (3 cups milk plus 4 ounces chocolate syrup). Serve over ice, adding whipped cream or ice cream on top in case the drink itself isn’t already rich enough. ■

*Kevin Revolinski is an avid traveler, craft beer enthusiast, and home-cooking fan. He’s based in Madison, Wis.*



Classic Italian affogato drowns a scoop of gelato al fior di latte with a double shot of espresso.



# GO FURTHER FOR LESS

*How to save money while enjoying special perks*

By Bill Lindsey

With a bit of planning, it's easy to cut the cost of travel and make it fun, too.

PHOTO BY VERA PETRUNINA/SHUTTERSTOCK



**J**UST ABOUT EVERY ASPECT OF travel, whether for business or personal reasons, is expensive. However, there are several ways to reduce costs without having to compromise on comfort or enjoyment. In fact, many of the following tips can also improve the travel experience.

### Rental Cars

If personal or business travel requires driving, consider renting a car. While it's common for employers to provide reimbursement based on the miles driven, choosing a rental car can eliminate excess mileage and tire wear on personal vehicles, as well as minimize interior and exterior wear and tear, the frequency of oil changes, and other mileage-related maintenance. In the event of an accident, it's a rental car that's damaged. Make sure that the driver and the rental car are fully covered under personal car insurance policies before considering the rental car's coverage, which might be expensive and not as comprehensive as personal car insurance.

Another way to save on driving-related expenses is to enroll in a gas company discount program that offers discounts for each gallon of fuel purchased. While driving, use a mapping app such as Waze to provide the fastest route and alerts of accidents or slowdowns ahead; many can instantly reroute to a path around delays to keep you moving (and possibly save money on gas).

**Train travel is an often-overlooked option, but it's worth considering if the schedule allows it.**

### Train Travel

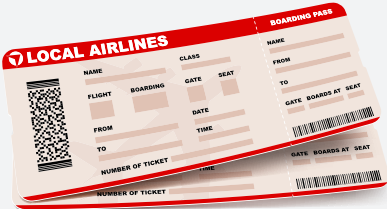
Relaxing in a posh seat while watching the countryside roll past is a great way to get from Point A to Point B. Train travel is an often-overlooked option, but it's worth considering if the schedule allows it. In order to make it both cost-effective and fun, purchase tickets in advance, if possible. Always look for savings opportunities, such as those offered through membership in participating organizations, senior or military discounts, or those offered to members of Amtrak's reward program—such as using Amtrak points to purchase a ticket—as this might be less expensive than simply purchasing the ticket directly.

### Cruises

Most cruise ship travel is purely personal, but if there's a way to use this method of travel for business trips, go for it! To get the best deals, look for end-of-season deals or when ships are returning to the Caribbean from the Mediterranean or vice versa. Similarly, booking a cruise during a "shoulder season," also known as off-peak season, can be an effective way to get a discounted rate.

Other tips include booking an inside cabin, booking the next

**Consider joining** an airline frequent flyer club to gain no-cost access to early boarding, seat upgrades, reward points, and more.



**If travel involves driving,** choosing a rental car helps avoid excess mileage and wear and tear on personal vehicles. Some rental companies offer free VIP member clubs with great perks.



**Hotel loyalty programs** are usually free and allow guests to choose specific rooms, enjoy late check-out, and receive discounts on rooms and services.



**If you're not** in a rush to get to the destination, enjoy the trip by taking a train.



CLOCKWISE FROM L: BUBUKHAUS/SHUTTERSTOCK, PIKEPICTURE/SHUTTERSTOCK, NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK, FOOT100/SHUTTERSTOCK





**Cruises can be a lot less expensive** when you know when to book one, as well as what cabin to request, and take advantage of pre-purchased meals and drinks.

cruise while on a cruise, making a last-minute booking to take advantage of deep discounts, and bidding for an upgraded cabin. You can continue to save money while on the cruise. Use the spa while in port, when it's less busy; consider prepurchasing discounted dining and drinks packages; and be open to special deals for meals, entertainment, and the spa that are often offered mid-cruise. Be careful if booking during college spring break in order to avoid an overly boisterous crowd.

**Airfare**

When traveling by air, consider joining the airline's frequent flyer club or applying for an airline-sponsored credit card, both of which can provide access to discounts and perks. These programs also often allow boarding early and the ability to choose seats in advance and may reward flyers with points that can be used toward flights or special promotions. Frequent flyers may be offered access to the terminal's members-only lounges, where they can enjoy snacks and drinks while relaxing between flights in a comfortable, quiet setting.

When traveling with others, book each ticket separately; if the airline has only one "cheap" seat left on the flight, it's unlikely to be shown as

available while booking multiple seats. Book seats on a Sunday; according to Expedia, this is the best day to find less-expensive seats. Flights departing on Wednesday are rumored to be the best deals, offering savings of up to 15 percent as compared to very busy Mondays, weekends, or holidays. Seasoned travelers suggest booking domestic flights about a month prior to departure; doing so further in advance or much closer to the flight date can result in finding only higher rates. For international flights, booking about six months in advance can result in the best fares. Some travel resources, such as Expedia, will send notifications when seats on a specific flight are at their lowest price.

**Lodgings**

When arranging lodging, book hotel rooms directly, as some so-called discounted room sites may actually tack on extra charges. Join the hotel chain's frequent guest program to have access to early check-in, late check-out, and the possibility of choosing a specific room, subject to availability, on a specific floor or in a particular area of the hotel. Again, it's subject to availability, but travelers can request a room away from the elevator, garbage chute, or exit doors and also may be eligible for room upgrades. ■



LIFESTYLE

# SAVVY TRAVELER SECRETS

*Make the trip as great as the destination*



1

## Be Flexible

It's best to plan ahead when arranging travel, but be open to last-minute deals on flights, hotels, and rental cars.



2

## Use the Calendar

Airline tickets are said to be cheapest when booked on Sundays with a Wednesday departure. Cruises booked at the end of the season can be had at discounted rates, too.



3

## Membership Rewards

Airline, rental car, and hotel "frequent user" programs provide access to discounted rates and great perks. Some credit cards also offer airline miles, discounts on fuel, and points redeemable on other purchases.

THIS PAGE FROM L. VIEW APART/SHUTTERSTOCK. ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES

# Gear to Help Improve Your Game

*Tennis is a lifelong game, making this gear a good long-term investment*

By Bill Lindsey



**Spin Master TOPSPINPRO**  
\$149

One of the essential skills required to transform a good tennis player into a great one is mastering topspin—being able to impart a spinning action to the ball as you volley—which allows you to keep it in bounds, even when you hit it hard. The compact system can be used anywhere to practice forehand and backhand shots in order to develop this critical aspect of the game. When you see the ball spinning, you know you've done it right.



**A Helping Hand POP-IT TENNIS BALL PICK-UP ACCESSORY**  
\$14.99

For those who haven't quite mastered the art of bopping the ball to make it bounce up to be caught, this is a must. Attached to the handle of the racket, it isn't noticeable during play, but it's a back-saver between sets, allowing one to collect the balls without bending over. This is a great accessory for any player who wants a dignified way to retrieve tennis balls.



**A Watchful Eye PLAYSIGHT GO**  
CONTACT FOR PRICING

Having a coach watch as you play is a good way to greatly improve your game. But what if you live in Denver and your coach is in Dallas? That isn't a problem with this system, which allows you to livestream the action so that your coach can offer live feedback. It also offers tips and advice from a roster of top coaches. Additional cameras can be added to capture every angle.



**Roger's Bag WILSON SPORTS FED TEAM BACKPACK**  
\$79

Rather than trying to juggle a tennis racket, several cans of balls, a small towel, and a water bottle, stash them all in this bag—approved and signed by tennis great Roger Federer. It holds two racquets, with an additional separate pocket that's a perfect place to hold balls, sports drinks, car keys, and other items. A top-mounted grab handle and padded backpack straps make it easy to carry to and from the court.



**Practice Makes Perfect GAMMA SPORTS BALLHOPPER HI-RISE GOLD 75**  
\$64.99

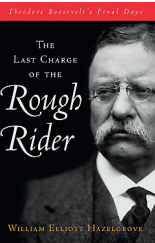
There's no better way to get better at tennis than by practicing serves and groundstrokes over and over again, making this hopper a favorite of coaches and hardcore players. Holding 75 balls, the hopper's handles invert to form a stand, so you can focus more on hitting the ball and less on chasing them. With its clever design, it "picks up" the balls when pressed on them, so there's no need to bend over 75 times.



Are there books you'd recommend?  
We'd love to hear from you. Let us know at [features@epochtimes.com](mailto:features@epochtimes.com)

RECOMMENDED READING

*This week, we feature an in-depth biography covering Theodore Roosevelt's final years and a comprehensive exploration of the human mind.*



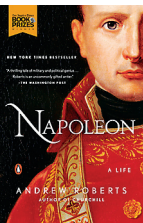
HISTORY

**'The Last Charge of the Rough Rider'**

By William Hazelgrove

In the last two years of his life, Theodore Roosevelt attempted something no ex-president ever did. He wanted to command troops in battle as a division commander. Telling the story of Roosevelt's life from April 1917 through January 1919, the book recounts the political duel between Roosevelt and then-President Woodrow Wilson and offers valuable insights into the United States of 1900 through 1920. This entertaining and well-written work demonstrates Roosevelt's massive impact on this period.

LYONS PRESS, 2023, 360 PAGES



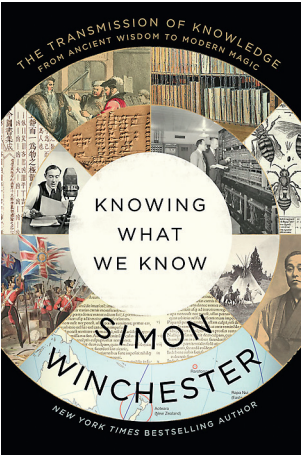
BIOGRAPHY

**'Napoleon: A Life'**

By Andrew Roberts

Napoleon Bonaparte is one of history's most intriguing figures. Roberts places the man and the myth before the reader with clarity. He slices through the mythology and incorrect assumptions, as well as false reporting, such as that of the French general-turned-emperor's multi-volume memoir written by his secretary. This biography, in line with some of the best to appear this century, enables readers to understand the upbringing, military rise, and political dominance of a history maker.

PENGUIN BOOKS, 2015, 976 PAGES



NONFICTION

**'Knowing What We Know'**

By Simon Winchester

Data and information are available at the click of a computer key or swipe on our smartphones. But how does this overwhelming abundance translate into what we actually know? And, where does wisdom come in? Indigenous peoples passed on learning through oral traditions. Today, do we effectively pass on the knowledge we've acquired? Full of fascinating historical details, the book explores the intricacies of the human mind, what we do with knowledge, and whether creative thought is threatened.

HARPER, 2023, 432 PAGES



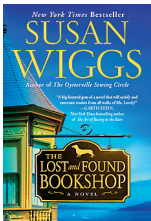
FOR KIDS

**'Sea Glass Summer'**

By Michelle Houts and Bagram Ibatoulline

Young Thomas visits his grandmother's beach house and learns to collect sea glass. His explorations and discoveries lead him to wonder about the origin and journey of his finds. His grandfather used to say, "Each piece of sea glass has a story of its own." He dreams of stories upon the sea. Beautifully illustrated, this is the perfect summer read.

CANDLEWICK, 2019, 32 PAGES




FICTION

**'The Lost and Found Bookshop'**

By Susan Wiggs

When her mother unexpectedly dies, Natalie Harper takes over her debt-ridden San Francisco bookshop along with the care of her beloved grandfather Andrew, who's struggling with early dementia. Readers follow along as the grieving Harper faces one challenge after another in business, caretaking, and romance. Here is a fine novel about the value of family and friends, courtship, and a heart opening to new possibilities, with an abundance of literary references sure to delight booklovers.

WILLIAM MORROW PAPERBACKS, 2021, 432 PAGES



CLASSICS

**'Best Remembered Poems'**

Edited by Martin Gardner

Here are 126 British and American poems from the 19th and 20th centuries that many will recall from childhood or from high school and college literature classes. "O Captain, My Captain," "Casey at the Bat," "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," "Mending Wall," and "Paul Revere's Ride" are representative of this collection. Gardner's choices are ideal for acquainting young people with poetry, swapping verses during family read-alouds, or simply relishing the cadence and sway of meter and rhyme.

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, 1992, 240 PAGES



**Ian Kane**  
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author. He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

ENTERTAINMENT

*This week, we feature a sumptuous epic set in feudal Japan and a rousing, lesser-known World War II drama about the brave Canadian Air Force.*

NEW RELEASE



**'The Flash'** (2023)

▶ In yet another retread of a popular fleet-footed comic book superhero, Ezra Miller stars as The Flash, who accidentally travels back in time after using his speed powers. Things become complicated when he realizes that his time-traveling has unforeseen consequences.

This film features a bizarre, convoluted storyline, corny dialogue, and some underwhelming acting performances (mainly on the part of Mr. Miller). If you need any further proof that the comic book superhero film genre is beginning to wear out its welcome—this is it.

**ACTION | ADVENTURE | FANTASY**

**Release Date:** June 16, 2023

**Director:** Andy Muschietti

**Starring:** Ezra Miller, Michael Keaton, Sasha Calle

**Running Time:** 2 hours, 24 minutes

**MPAA Rating:** PG-13

**Where to Watch:** Theaters

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A ROUSING WARTIME DRAMA



**'Captains of the Clouds'** (1942)

▶ When cocky bush pilot Brian MacLean (James Cagney) joins the Royal Canadian Air Force, he discovers that his superior is the ex-boyfriend of the woman he married.

The first part of this war movie features a believable love triangle between its main characters,

**ACTION | DRAMA | WAR**

**Release Date:** Feb. 21, 1942

**Director:** Michael Curtiz

**Starring:** James Cagney, Dennis Morgan, Brenda Marshal

**Running Time:** 1 hour, 54 minutes

**Not Rated**

**Where to Watch:** DirecTV, Amazon, Vudu

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Epoch Watchlist

FAMILY PICK



**'The Big Green'** (1995)

▶ When Miss Anna Montgomery (Olivia d'Abo) comes to a small Texas town from England on a foreign exchange program, she finds that her new underachieving students lack enthusiasm. Although it's an uphill battle, she tries to improve the kids' lives through soccer.

This film features plenty of laugh-out-loud comedy, and underneath its rather typical underdog-team storyline are some wholesome messages about selflessness, teamwork, and the

**COMEDY | FAMILY | SPORT**

**Release Date:** Sept. 29, 1995

**Director:** Holly Goldberg Sloan

**Starring:** Steve Guttenberg, Olivia d'Abo, Jay O. Sanders

**Running Time:** 1 hour, 40 minutes

**MPAA Rating:** PG

**Where to Watch:** Amazon, Redbox, Vudu

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A DAZZLING JAPANESE EPIC



**'Kagemusha'** (1980)

▶ In feudal Japan, the life of a petty thief (Tatsuya Nakadai) is spared because he resembles the powerful but ailing daimyo Takeda Shingen. To prevent powerful enemy clans from sensing a weakness when Shingen does pass away, his clan hatches a plan to have the thief impersonate the leader.

This is one of famed director Akira Kurosawa's most affecting epics, featuring exquisite cinematography, beautiful costumes

**DRAMA | HISTORY | WAR**

**Release Date:** Oct. 10, 1980

**Director:** Akira Kurosawa

**Starring:** Tatsuya Nakadai, Tsutomu Yamazaki, Kenichi Hagiwara

**Running Time:** 2 hours, 42 minutes

**MPAA Rating:** PG

**Where to Watch:** Amazon, Apple TV, Vudu

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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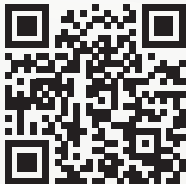
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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH AND TRADITION



## High-Tech Etiquette

*Using electronics responsibly*

As electronics evolve, personal privacy becomes more difficult to protect, and manners become a bit scarcer. Here are a few tips to resolve both issues.

By Bill Lindsey

### 1 Human Interaction

It's too easy to become engrossed in our phones and tablets. Look around any restaurant to see faces aimed at screens, diners oblivious of those seated with them. When sharing time with others, be there with them. This means taking out the earbuds, turning off the phone, and putting the tablet away. Try talking with and actively listening to those around you; you might learn something new or at least have a fun conversation.



### 5 Be Inclusive but Appropriate

Joining in on conversations while dining with others or attending company events can lead to great ideas or just having fun. But there are times when it isn't appropriate to share information. An example is spreading gossip or hitting "send all" when sending an email to a supervisor discussing the actions of a co-worker. Beyond the fact that you might be incorrect in your assumptions, this behavior makes the sender look petty.

### 2 Sky Spies

Drones can be useful for inspecting a roof without a ladder or getting a bird's-eye view of the neighborhood, but be aware of the need to not intrude on the privacy of others. In addition to the annoying whining sound, it's rude, and possibly illegal, to hover over and photograph or record your neighbors without their consent. Operating a drone after dark is another no-no, as is getting so close as to irritate or scare nesting birds or other wildlife.

### 3 Say Cheese

Taking selfies or photos of friends and family is a great way to memorialize get-togethers, but when out in public, such as at a restaurant or a public event, be careful to not take snapshots of those around you without their consent. As you compose the photo or video, take a moment to look beyond your friends to see what or who else may be in the shot.

### 4 Sharing With Respect

Social media is a good way to stay in contact with faraway family and friends and to make new friends. It's natural to want to share fun photos or news, but think twice before sending anything. It's irresponsible to share overly personal news or photos, especially if the subject of the news or photo would prefer it not to be made public. This rule is simple: Respect anything shared in confidence.



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**"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*

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