

Sent: Sun, 08 Jun 2014 06:25:25 -0400

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Subject: Vice Presidential News Clips for Sunday, June 8, 2014

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TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF

DATE: SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2014 -- 7:00 AM EDT

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

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- + 'USA' Chants Welcome Biden To Ukraine (HILL)
- + Complex Times For VP's Son To Work At Ukraine Firm (AP)
- + Ukraine Energy Firm Hiring Biden's Son Raises Ethical Concerns (FOX)

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- + Detroit's Fight Against Blight (NYT)
- + The Fixer Offense In Soccer (NYT)
- + Pot Rules (NYT)
- + Obama On Obama On Climate (NYT)
- + There Is No Alternative (NYT)
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- + Court Papers Show Matusiewicz 'Hit List' (WILNJ)
- + Coons Visits Closed I-495 Bridge (WILNJ)

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- + Bridge Closure Cause To Rethink Roads (WILNJ)
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

BIDEN PLEDGES \$48M IN AID TO UKRAINE (HILL)

By Ferdous Al-Faruque

The Hill, June 8, 2014

The U.S. is giving an additional \$48 million to the new Ukrainian government to bolster its

economy, the White House announced Saturday.

The additional funds will help fight corruption, bolster energy security and strengthen its State Border Guard Service.

Vice President Biden announced the pledge during a trip to Kiev for the inauguration of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

"Pending consultation with the U.S. Congress, this assistance will follow the \$1 billion loan guarantee signed on April 14, a \$50 million crisis-response package announced by Vice President Biden on April 21, and \$23 million in security assistance announced to date," the administration said in a statement. "When added to previously budgeted funds, the United States is providing over \$184 million in assistance to Ukraine this year in addition to the loan guarantee."

Ukraine is still in a state of civil war as pro-Russian militias in the east are fighting to break away from the country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered increased security along the Ukrainian border Saturday after Porochenko's swearing-in.

Besides Ukraine, the U.S. is also giving similar aid to other pro-Western countries along Russia's borders, including \$8 million to Moldova and \$5 million to Georgia.

The announcement comes a day after President Obama pressed Putin to recognize the new Ukrainian government.

'USA' CHANTS WELCOME BIDEN TO UKRAINE (HILL)

By Rachel Huggins

The Hill, June 8, 2014

Vice President Biden and U.S. officials attending inaugural events honoring Ukraine's new leader were warmly greeted as they walked the streets of Kiev.

After Petro Poroshenko was sworn into office on Saturday, Biden and Sen. McCain (R-Ariz.) ditched the presidential motorcade and opted to walk to the new president's reception when crowds lined the streets cheering, "thank you" and "USA."

Members of the delegation include: Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt, Daniel B. Baer, ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Biden greeted everyone he encountered as he and other presidential delegation members walked the red carpet leading to the ceremony.

"How are you? You're a handsome boy. I'd like to borrow that tie," Biden told a young boy, according to a White House pool report. He also said hello to several officials and introduced McCain, saying, "You know my friend the senator."

Poroshenko and Biden spoke for a few minutes at the reception.

"Mr. President, congratulations," Biden said before posing for photos. McCain embraced the chocolate tycoon-turned president with a hug.

"It's wonderful to stand with you," Murphy told the new president.

COMPLEX TIMES FOR VP'S SON TO WORK AT UKRAINE FIRM (AP)

By Stephen Braun

Associated Press, June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON - Vice President Joe Biden's visit Saturday to support Ukraine's fragile democracy came soon after his youngest son was hired by a private Ukrainian company that promotes energy independence from Moscow.

Yet that company leases natural gas fields in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea and is owned by a former government minister with ties to Ukraine's ousted pro-Russian president.

The hiring of Hunter Biden, 44, by Burisma Holdings Limited in April was approved by the company's owner, a former senior minister and political ally of Viktor Yanukovich, the exiled Ukrainian president. Yanukovich fled to Russia in February after protests erupted over his efforts to establish closer economic ties with Moscow.

Hunter Biden's employment means he will be working as a director and top lawyer for a Ukrainian energy company during the period when his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence the policies of Ukraine's new government, especially on energy issues.

There's no indication that Hunter Biden, his father or Burisma is crossing any legal or ethical lines, although ethics experts appear divided over the implications of Hunter Biden's new job. American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House.

"The primary problem here is the fact that Hunter Biden has set up a financial arrangement with someone who might have business pending before this administration," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert with Public Citizen, a Washington-based government reform organization.

Joe Biden led the U.S. delegation at Saturday's inauguration of Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, and announced \$48 million in additional aid for the Kiev government. Biden met Poroshenko and said "there is a window for peace and you know as well as anyone that it will not stay open indefinitely ... America is with you."

Ukraine is an important natural-gas and petroleum-liquids transit country. Two major pipeline systems carry Russian gas through Ukraine to Western Europe.

Burisma is headed by Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who held senior posts over natural resources, environment and defense in Ukraine. The company has aggressively bought up Ukrainian oil and natural gas leases and companies.

Hunter Biden's new company says it aims to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

As a Burisma director and the company's top lawyer, the younger Biden has yet to take any public actions on behalf of the company.

But the timing of his hiring is politically awkward for the administration's efforts to shore up Ukraine's pro-Western government, and poses potential complications from Burisma's growing energy interests and the background of Hunter Biden's new boss, Zlochevskyi.

At least two oil and natural gas fields leased by subsidiaries of Burisma are in Ukrainian territories where pro-Russian sentiments remain strong, according to government and media releases, independent energy maps and Burisma's website.

One is in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea; the other is in the eastern Ukrainian Kharkiv region. Instability there could force the younger Biden's new company to coordinate with pro-Russian separatists whom the U.S. considers illegitimate.

White House officials declined to comment on Hunter Biden's association with Burisma and the company's holdings in Crimea and east Ukraine.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, previously said that Biden's son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe Biden "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Presidents and vice presidents have long been vexed by relatives rewarded for family ties.

Political loan troubles shadowed Vice President Richard Nixon's brother, Donald, during the 1960 election, and President Jimmy Carter's brother, Billy, who accepted a \$220,000 stipend in 1981 from Libya's Moammar Gadhafi.

In recent years, several Bush and Clinton relatives were caught in a string of murky financial and political dealings.

But "unless there's solid evidence that Hunter Biden got his job to influence American foreign policy, there's no clear line that's been crossed," said Melanie Sloan, executive director of the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

A former Washington lobbyist, the vice president's son is effectively exempt from most rules that would require him to describe publicly the legal work he does on behalf of Burisma.

Hunter Biden will not lobby for the company, said Lawrence Pacheco, an official with FTI Consulting, a Washington government affairs company recently hired by Burisma.

Pacheco did not say whether Biden might oversee or advise on any future Burisma lobbying strategy in the U.S. Pacheco said the company "does not take positions on political matters."

But Biden's company may have to deal with Ukrainian enclaves that the U.S. does not recognize diplomatically or are threatened by instability.

One Burisma subsidiary, KrymTopEnergoServis, operates natural gas fields and has headquarters in the Crimea, which seceded from Ukraine this year and now aligns with Russia.

A second subsidiary, Esco-Pivnich, produces oil and natural gas just west of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, which was the site of several protests and borders on separatist-controlled provinces. The company's website confirms that Burisma operates oil and natural gas sites in

Crimea and east Ukraine, as well as elsewhere in Ukraine.

"While he's just at the beginning of his involvement with this company, Ukraine is volatile right now and there are all sorts of problems that might crop up down the line," said Bill Allison, the editorial director of the Sunlight Foundation, a nonpartisan watchdog group.

Pacheco said the company's western and eastern operations have been unaffected by Ukraine's unrest but that its Crimea subsidiary is not operating currently. He did not explain further, but confirmed KrymTopEnergoServis is based and leases gas deposits in Crimea.

Hunter Biden, Zlochevskyi and other company officials would not comment publicly, Pacheco said. Hunter Biden is a managing director with Rosemont Seneca Partners, a private equity firm, and worked as a Washington lobbyist for seven years until his father was elected vice president. He lobbied primarily for colleges, hospitals and tech firms.

Pacheco said Biden's son came to Burisma's attention after he was introduced by Devon Archer, another new Burisma board member, to Alan Apter, Burisma's board chairman. Archer works with Hunter Biden at Rosemont and was a top fundraiser for now-Secretary of State John Kerry when Kerry ran for president in 2004. Zlochevskyi approved Biden's hiring, Pacheco said.

Zlochevskyi, 48, worked as minister of natural resources and environment under Yanukovych and most recently was deputy secretary of Ukraine's national security and defense council, which advised Yanukovych on defense matters.

Zlochevskyi also served in the Ukrainian parliament from 2007 to 2011 as a member of the Party of Regions, the political party affiliated with Yanukovych and traditionally aligned with pro-Russian interests.

Zlochevskyi's name is missing from Burisma's web site, but financial documents in Cyprus as well as U.S. Securities and Exchange records show that he owns the bulk of Burisma's shares.

Zlochevskyi's Cyprus-based Brociti Investments Limited controls Burisma.

Hunter Biden joined Burisma in April, the same month his father visited Kiev to show support for the new interim government.

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UKRAINE ENERGY FIRM HIRING BIDEN'S SON RAISES ETHICAL CONCERNS (FOX)

FOX News, June 8, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden's visit Saturday to Ukraine in support of the country's new democratic government is renewing concerns about his youngest son being hired by a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

Hunter Biden will be working for the company while his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence energy policies and other issues of the new government, which is gripped in a struggle with Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the country.

The company, Burisma Holdings Limited, says it wants to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

The other major issues are Hunter Biden's new employer leases natural gas fields in Crimea, an eastern Ukraine peninsula being controlled by Russia in the country's months-long political upheaval. And the company is owned by a former Ukraine government minister, Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who has ties to the country's ousted pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovych.

The 44-year-old Biden was hired in April and will be a director and lawyer for the company.

American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House, and there's no indication that the situation crosses legal or ethical lines.

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The Office of the Vice President said some of the money will help Ukraine "enhance its energy

security."

Ukraine is an important natural-gas and petroleum-liquids transit country. Two major pipeline systems carry Russian gas through Ukraine to Western Europe.

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Political loan troubles shadowed Vice President Richard Nixon's brother, Donald, during the 1960 election, and President Jimmy Carter's brother, Billy, who accepted a \$220,000 stipend in 1981 from Libya's Moammar Gadhafi.

In recent years, several Bush and Clinton relatives were caught in a string of murky financial and political dealings.

But "unless there's solid evidence that Hunter Biden got his job to influence American foreign policy, there's no clear line that's been crossed," said Melanie Sloan, executive director of the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

A former Washington lobbyist, the vice president's son is effectively exempt from most rules that would require him to describe publicly the legal work he does on behalf of Burisma.

Zlochevskiy's name is missing from Burisma's web site, but financial documents in Cyprus as well as U.S. Securities and Exchange records show that he owns the bulk of Burisma's shares.

Zlochevskiy's Cyprus-based Brociti Investments Limited controls Burisma.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

STARTING OUT BEHIND (NYT)

New York Times, June 8, 2014

Today's young people, ages 18 to 24, should have been the lucky ones. They were preteens or teenagers when the recession hit in late 2007, with high school and college still ahead. Unlike those who had to enter the work force in the depths of the downturn, they had time, or so it seemed, to wait out the weak economy.

But that's not how things have worked out. While the worst is over, economic conditions are still subpar, damaging the immediate job prospects and long-term living standards of young adults starting out now.

In recent years, the economy has grown annually at 2 percent or so. That's too slow to make up the current shortfall of nearly seven million jobs, let alone to absorb new graduates or push up wages in jobs that do exist.

To make matters worse, the economy contracted at an annual rate of 1 percent in the first quarter of 2014. A rebound is expected, but there is little in the economic data or current policy to suggest that an upsurge will be sustained; over all, economic growth is likely to settle at 2 percent to 2.5 percent.

For young people, these conditions will only deepen a long trend of increasing economic hardship. Census data that compares today's 18-to-24-year-olds with the same age group in 1970 and in 1990 show more poverty among young adults over time, as well as lower income and less independence. But young people today are appreciably worse off than those in previous generations.

In 1970, for example, 13.9 percent of people ages 18 to 24 were in poverty. In 1990, 15.9 percent were poor; in 2012, the last year of available data, 20.4 percent were poor, or 6.1 million people.

That data excludes students living in dorms, as well as most students who live with their parents or receive cash support from them. For young people who are on their own, either living alone or with housemates or spouses, median household income, recently \$30,604, is nearly \$4,600 less than in 1970 and virtually unchanged since 1990, adjusted for inflation.

Lack of opportunity and lack of resources mean a smaller share of young high school and college graduates are relocating, traditionally a way up a career ladder. In 1970, nearly 40 percent of young people had moved in the prior year; in 1990, it was nearly 32 percent; in 2013, it was only 21.6 percent. Not surprisingly, the share of young adults living with their parents is 55.3 percent, compared with 47.3 percent in 1970 and 52.8 percent in 1990.

Young people are clearly banking on a college education to improve their prospects - 41 percent of 18-to-24-year-olds were recently enrolled in college, a higher share than in previous generations. But the unemployment rate of college graduates ages 21 to 24 remains high at an average of 8.5 percent over the past year. Underemployment - which includes those who are officially unemployed, those who want to work but haven't looked recently for a job and those stuck in part-time jobs - is 16.8 percent.

Equally worrisome, 44 percent of young college graduates in 2012 were working in jobs that didn't require a college degree (versus 38 percent before the recession in 2007), according to data from researchers at the Federal Reserve. In 2000, half of college-educated workers in jobs that didn't require a degree were in generally well-paid professions, working as electricians, for example, or dental hygienists. Now they are more likely to be waiters, bartenders or cashiers.

College-educated workers still earn much more than less-educated ones, but landing a good job at rising pay is made even more difficult as each new group of graduates joins a backlog of unemployed and underemployed college and high school graduates, dating back to the class of 2008.

Over the last six years, one of the economy's biggest problems has been faulty fiscal policy, with the federal government underestimating the need for economic aid or withholding and reducing help prematurely. Another drag has been lack of business investment, even as financial markets have prospered with the help of loose monetary policy.

The result has been an economy where young people starting out are at risk of prolonged underachievement. It is possible to defuse that risk, but not without responsive policy and robust investment.

DETROIT'S FIGHT AGAINST BLIGHT (NYT)

New York Times, June 8, 2014

At one level, a new report about blight in Detroit can be seen as a cartographic inventory of the abandoned homes, vacant lots and rundown industrial sites that have spread through the once-thriving Motor City like a metastasized cancer. But there is another way to look at this important document: as the starting point for fresh conversation about what needs to be done to stabilize and revive Detroit and other declining cities around the country.

The report, which is based on an ambitious building-by-building census conducted by paid surveyors and volunteers, shows that 78,506 buildings, or 30 percent of the city's structures, are dilapidated or at risk of becoming so. An additional 114,000 parcels of land are empty. The Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, which the Obama administration commissioned to produce this report, estimates that it would cost \$850 million to demolish blighted homes and commercial buildings in neighborhoods and up to \$1 billion more to deal with large industrial sites.

At its peak in 1950, Detroit was home to 1.85 million people; it now has 700,000 residents. The city shrank as global economic forces undermined its industrial base; corrupt and inept local government officials squandered its wealth; and many residents and businesses fled to the suburbs. It also suffered because a succession of state and federal officials neglected the problems of urban areas.

Given the depths of the decline, reviving Detroit will take many years. City officials have already budgeted about \$456 million for removing blight, with much of that money coming from Detroit's bankruptcy plan, which has to be approved by a federal judge. That money should allow the city to do a lot, but the state of Michigan, the federal government, foundations and others will need to chip in. The report makes a good case that the city should first address blight in neighborhoods that are on the cusp of losing many or most of their residents and where public intervention has

the best chance of raising property values and attracting more investment. It also rightly calls on the city to reform its property tax, which is so high that more than half of property owners don't pay the tax. Since the 2008 financial crisis, more than 60,000 properties have been foreclosed for delinquent tax payments; the report notes that 118,000 more are subject to foreclosure or on the way to being foreclosed because their owners haven't paid taxes. Given those bleak numbers, the city might actually collect more revenue by lowering its property tax rate.

But the report provides few recommendations for what the city should do after it demolishes dilapidated homes and cleans vacant lots. It suggests that some lots could be sold to the owners of adjacent properties, while others could be turned into green open spaces. These are fine ideas but seem small-bore compared with the scope of the devastation. The city is very spread out, and must deal with the fact that there is vastly more land than there is demand for housing or commercial properties.

Any comprehensive plan to address that will need the help of the state and the federal government. Some solutions could include shrinking the size of the city - by, for example, turning some lightly populated areas into parks or farms, or ceding management of some areas to the county or state government. In downtown and midtown areas that are already attracting new businesses and residents, greater investment in public services like police, schools and parks could have a significant economic multiplier effect. Detroit Future City, a nonprofit project, has a plan that would focus resources on residential and commercial clusters to demonstrate that change is possible.

Dilapidated buildings and vacant lots are symptoms of larger economic and social problems. Reviving urban neighborhoods will take more than wrecking balls and dump trucks.

THE FIXER OFFENSE IN SOCCER (NYT)

New York Times, June 8, 2014

The passionate rivalries of World Cup soccer will soon be enthralling sports fans across the globe, along with throngs of fanatic gamblers placing untold millions in bets.

As the opening matches in Brazil on June 12 draw near, there are rising doubts that FIFA, soccer's world governing body, has enough security and personnel to protect the quadrennial competition from the threat of match fixing that has been bedeviling the sport.

The results of an estimated 680 global matches from 2008 to 2011 - including some World Cup qualifying matches - were found to be suspicious, according to Europol, the European Union's police agency, which counted more than 400 officials, players and criminals involved in match fixing.

The agency increasingly has its eye on gambling syndicates that exploit the vast and largely unregulated Asian gambling markets, where an estimated hundreds of billions of dollars in bets are wagered each year.

According to an investigative report by Declan Hill and Jeré Longman of The Times, fixers have found teams and referees from impoverished countries to be particularly vulnerable to bribery. FIFA promises that the Brazil matches will have tighter security and more rigorous screening of referees and players. But gambling on global soccer is booming, and the syndicates are experienced at beating the game with protection muscle, locker-room infiltrators and businessmen capitalizing on fixes.

FIFA already has a backlog of 90 cases of suspected fixing it deems worthy of investigation, but it has had only six investigators responsible for assorted security needs. The investigators have no subpoena or criminal law authority in an area that needs a considerably larger staff devoted full time to investigations.

"There are no checks and balances and no oversight," Terry Steans, a former FIFA investigator, warned after a notorious exhibition match four years ago in South Africa in which a syndicate fixer later bragged he paid \$60,000 to a referee to influence the score.

Global gambling is so frenzied and lucrative that fixers have even staged a tournament in a largely empty stadium devoid of television coverage, all the easier to guide bribed referees and players to the desired result - with no shortage of electronic bettors ready to be fleeced.

No games are watched as intently as World Cup games. FIFA owes it to the world to strengthen its watch so soccer fans can cheer without any doubts.

POT RULES (NYT)

By Maureen Dowd

New York Times, June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON - IN the last chapter, I covered how not to get high. In this one, I will cover how to get high.

After my admission that I did a foolish thing in Denver - failing to realize that consuming a single square, about a quarter, of a pot candy bar was dicey for an edibles virgin - many in the pot industry upbraided me for doing a foolish thing.

But some in Mary Jane world have contacted me to say that my dysphoria (i.e., bummer) is happening more and more in Colorado.

Justin Hartfield is the California founder of Marijuana.com and Weedmaps.com (a sort of Yelp for pot), and an entrepreneur involved in some of the nation's top marijuana-technology companies. As The Wall Street Journal noted in a profile last March, the 30-year-old former high school pot dealer wants to be "the Philip Morris of pot."

"Your experience points out a significant need for standardized dosing, testing and labeling," he told me, recalling a similar vertiginous paranoia spiral when he and his wife split a pot brownie in Amsterdam in 2008.

On Friday, Marijuana.com launched an ongoing guide to "the best practices towards both consumption and sale of edibles." It urged every dispensary in Colorado and throughout America to follow Amsterdam's lead and put up signs warning about the dangers of oversampling psychotropic treats. (Other websites, from Vice to Vox, also weighed in with helpful safety tips on edibles.)

Hartfield said Weedmaps is providing pamphlets, posters and video to dispensaries and users, including an "Edibles Education" pamphlet with headings like "Start Small," "Wait" because edibles take two hours or longer to take effect, "Don't Mix" with alcohol or other substances, and keep "Out of Reach" of children.

"Edibles are not the best delivery device in general for marijuana because it's notoriously hard to control the titration in your stomach," Hartfield said. "When you smoke it's so easy. You have a hit, it affects you immediately. Then you can decide to take another if you want to get higher. With edibles, it hits your stomach all at once, and holy Nelly!"

Some Colorado pols are nervous about stories like that of the Longmont mother who found her 2-year-old daughter eating a pot cookie in front of their apartment building and the two 10-year-olds in Greeley who were caught selling and swapping pot purloined from relatives. (Not to mention the new British study suggesting there may be a correlation between smoking cannabis and a temporary change in the size and shape of sperm.)

"It's kind of shocking in a way that the states that approved it have not had more oversight and consumer information," said Dr. Jerome Groopman of Harvard Medical School, who favors legalization. "The horse is out of the barn, so to speak, and there's a responsibility to consumers and particularly young people. THC is a serious substance. It has increased by 5 to 15 times in today's plants compared to the 1960s. It's a long time since Upton Sinclair. Now consumers have to know: Is it pure? What is the concentration? What are the hazards?"

On Wednesday, the state task force met to forge a rule denoting 10 milligrams as a serving, so that the dosage is clearly demarcated. And on Friday, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed legislation proposing a banking solution for the mainly cash pot business, but the Federal Reserve will need to sign off on it.

Because the Colorado law was approved by referendum, it's like a Wild West statute, where things are getting filled in underneath, with a haphazard application of the regulatory process.

"One major reason I got involved in the movement was so that consumers could have basic access to information about the products they're consuming, which was totally impossible under the prohibition that created the black market," said Tom Angell, the founder and chairman of Marijuana Majority. "So it's particularly disappointing to see that some companies in the legal marijuana industry - which our years of advocacy allowed to exist - are falling short of those principles. It seems basic labeling and consumer information hasn't been a chief priority, but hopefully now it's starting to change."

He wants budtenders behind the counter to be trained so they can give customized guidance to customers of varying tolerance levels.

As the black market comes into the light, the hang-loose community can be uptight about any moves to regulate or put contours around the sale of pot to better protect neophytes, teenagers and children. Perhaps because they have spent so much time fighting to move past the old "Reefer Madness" caricature, the reefer crowd gets mad at the suggestion of any regulation, no matter how small or helpful. The clubby community that long existed in the shadows can have a countercultural reaction to rules.

Also, as one Colorado political aide pointed out: "There's so much money involved. This is a group of people who probably never thought about money, and now a lot of people just have dollar signs in their eyes."

Laughing, he noted, "The weirdest thing in the world is to hear from an angry pothead who finishes a tirade about rules with 'dude.' "

OBAMA ON OBAMA ON CLIMATE (NYT)

By Thomas L. Friedman

New York Times, June 8, 2014

WHEN it comes to dealing with the world's climate and energy challenges I have a simple rule: change America, change the world.

If America raises its clean energy standards, not only will others follow - others who have hid behind our inaction - we'll also stimulate our industry to invent more of the clean air, clean power and energy efficiency systems, and move them down the cost curve faster, so U.S. companies will be leaders in this next great global industry and American consumers will be the first to benefit. That is why the new Environmental Protection Agency rules President Obama proposed last week to curb carbon emissions from power plants are so pivotal. You can't make power systems greener without making them smarter - smarter materials, software or design. One new ruling will not change the world - and we have to be careful that this one doesn't replace our addiction to coal with an addiction to natural gas alone. But coming at a time when clean energy technologies are becoming more competitive, and when awareness of climate change is becoming more pervasive, this E.P.A. ruling should give a real boost to clean power and efficiency innovation and make our country more resilient, healthy, secure - and respected.

Several weeks ago, as he was drawing up these new emission rules, I interviewed President Obama in the White House library about climate and energy. Following are highlights. (The interview is also featured in the final episode of Showtime's climate series, "Years of Living Dangerously" airing on Monday.)

For starters, Obama is aware that we can't just keep burning oil, coal and gas until they run out. As the International Energy Agency warned, "no more than one-third of proven reserves of fossil fuels can be consumed prior to 2050" - unless carbon capture and storage technology is widely deployed - otherwise we'll bust through the limit of a 2 degree Celsius rise in average temperature that climate scientists believe will unleash truly disruptive ice melt, sea level rise and weather extremes. The rest has to stay in the ground, and we need to steadily find cleaner alternatives and more energy efficiency. I asked Obama if he agreed with that analysis.

"Science is science," he said. "And there is no doubt that if we burned all the fossil fuel that's in the ground right now that the planet's going to get too hot and the consequences could be dire."

So we can't burn it all?

"We're not going to be able to burn it all. Over the course of the next several decades, we're going to have to build a ramp from how we currently use energy to where we need to use energy. And we're not going to suddenly turn off a switch and suddenly we're no longer using fossil fuels, but we have to use this time wisely, so that you have a tapering off of fossil fuels replaced by clean energy sources that are not releasing carbon. ... But I very much believe in keeping that 2 [degree] Celsius target as a goal."

If that is so, your environmental supporters wonder why you keep touting how much we're still exploring for oil, coal and natural gas?

"We have got to meet folks where they are," said Obama. "We've gone through, obviously, in the last five years, a tough economic crisis. ... I don't always lead with the climate change issue because if you right now are worried about whether you've got a job or if you can pay the bills, the first thing you want to hear is how do I meet the immediate problem? One of the hardest things in politics is getting a democracy to deal with something now where the payoff is long term or the

price of inaction is decades away. What we've tried to do is continually find ways in which we can make progress, recognizing that we're not immediately going to get people to abandon the old gas-guzzler" [because] "they can't afford an electric car."

Every morning you get a security briefing from the intelligence community on global threats; do you now also get the same on environmental threats?

"I do," said Obama. Science adviser "John Holdren typically makes presentations when there are new findings," and his reports show that environmental stresses are now impacting both foreign and domestic policy. For instance, wildfires are now "consuming a larger and larger portion of the Department of Interior budget. And if we continue to fund fighting fires the same way we've done in the past, all the money for everything else - for conservation, for maintenance of forests - all that money gets used up."

But the area he's just as worried about, said Obama, "is how climate change could end up having profound national security implications in poorer countries. We're obviously concerned about drought in California or hurricanes and floods along our coastlines and the possibility of more powerful storms or more severe droughts. All of those things are bread-and-butter issues that touch on American families. But when you start seeing how these shifts can displace people - entire countries can be finding themselves unable to feed themselves and the potential incidence of conflict that arises out of that - that gets your attention. There's a reason why the quadrennial defense review - [which] the secretary of defense and the Joints Chiefs of Staff work on - identified climate change as one of our most significant national security problems. It's not just the actual disasters that might arise, it is the accumulating stresses that are placed on a lot of different countries and the possibility of war, conflict, refugees, displacement that arise from a changing climate."

Syria couldn't manage a four-year drought when it had a government, and that drought helped fuel the uprising there, because the government did nothing for the people. Imagine what will happen if they have another prolonged drought and they've destroyed half their country?

"Which gives you a sense of what happens in a lot of these countries that are just barely hanging on," said Obama. "They don't have a lot of margin for error, and that has national security implications. When people are hungry, when people are displaced, when there are a lot of young people, particularly young men, who are drifting without prospects for the future, the fertility of the soil for terrorism ends up being significant. And it can have an impact on us."

What is the one thing you would still like to see us do to address climate change? Said Obama: put a price on carbon.

The way we've solved previous problems, like acid rain, he noted, "was that we said: 'We're going to charge you if you're releasing this stuff into the atmosphere, but we're going to let you figure out - with the marketplace and with the technology' " how best to mitigate it. But "you can't keep dumping it out in the atmosphere and making everybody else pay for it. So if there's one thing I would like to see, it'd be for us to be able to price the cost of carbon emissions. ... We've obviously seen resistance from the Republican side of the aisle on that. And out of fairness, there's some Democrats who've been concerned about it as well, because regionally they're very reliant on heavy industry and old-power plants. ... I still believe, though, that the more we can show the price of inaction - that billions and potentially trillions of dollars are going to be lost because we do not do something about it - ultimately leads us to be able to say, 'Let's go ahead and help the marketplace discourage this kind of activity.' "

Where does natural gas fit in?

After all, it can be a blessing and a curse. Natural gas emits only half the carbon dioxide of coal when burned, but if methane leaks when oil companies extract it from the ground in a sloppy manner - methane is far more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide - it can wipe out all the advantages of natural gas over coal.

Natural gas, the president said, "is a useful bridge" to span "where we are right now and where we hope to be - where we've got entirely clean energy economies based around the world."

Environmentalists, he added, "are right, though, to be concerned if it's done badly, then you end up having methane gas emitted. And we know how to do it properly. But right now what we've got to do is make sure that there are industry standards that everybody is observing." That doesn't "necessarily mean that it has to be a national law," he said. "You could have a series of states working together - and, hopefully, industry working together - to make sure that the extraction of

natural gas is done safely."

Do you ever want to just go off on the climate deniers in Congress?

"Yeah, absolutely," the president said with a laugh. "Look, it's frustrating when the science is in front of us. ... We can argue about how. But let's not argue about what's going on. The science is compelling. ... The baseline fact of climate change is not something we can afford to deny. And if you profess leadership in this country at this moment in our history, then you've got to recognize this is going to be one of the most significant long-term challenges, if not the most significant long-term challenge, that this country faces and that the planet faces. The good news is that the public may get out ahead of some of their politicians" - as people start to see the cost of cleaning up for hurricanes like Sandy or the drought in California - and when "those start multiplying, then people start thinking, 'You know what? We're going to reward politicians who talk to us honestly and seriously about this problem.' "

The president added: "The person who I consider to be the greatest president of all time, Abraham Lincoln, was pretty consistent in saying, 'With public opinion there's nothing I cannot do, and without public opinion there's nothing I can get done,' and so part of my job over these next two and a half years and beyond is trying to shift public opinion. And the way to shift public opinion is to really focus in on the fact that if we do nothing our kids are going to be worse off."

The trick, I argued, is to find that fine line between making people feel the problem is urgent, but not insoluble so they just say: If the end is nigh, let's party.

"The most important thing is to guard against cynicism," responded the president. "I want to make sure that everybody who's been watching this program or listening to this interview doesn't start concluding that, well, we're all doomed, there's nothing we can do about it. There's a lot we can do about it. It's not going to happen as fast or as smoothly or as elegantly as we like, but, if we are persistent, we will make progress."

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE (NYT)

By Ross Douthat

New York Times, June 8, 2014

IF the excerpts currently circulating in the press are any indication, Hillary Clinton's latest memoir will resemble pretty much every recent political memoir from a potential presidential candidate:

That is, it will be chloroform in print.

Which no doubt troubles its "author" not at all. Clinton has every incentive to bore us, sedate us, lull us to sleep - to hit the snooze button, in effect, for as long as our politics makes possible. She is the rare presidential hopeful who has nothing whatsoever to gain from making news. Leading the Democratic presidential field by a Secretariat-esque margin; leading every potential Republican candidate by around 10 points; running far ahead of President Obama's job approval numbers ... if she had her way, all the months from here till 2016 would be consumed by devouring time without anything altering her current image.

And her desire converges almost perfectly with the interests of her party, even if not every liberal quite realizes it yet. That's because Clinton's iconic status is, increasingly, the only clear advantage the Democratic Party has. If her position is weakened, diminished or challenged, the entire coalition risks collapse.

Liberals don't see this clearly yet because they tend to regard the Obama coalition as a left-of-center mirror-image of Nixon's and Reagan's conservative majority - a natural, settled and, thanks to demographic trends, growing presidential majority (if not a congressional one) that should deliver the White House to their party reliably for cycles to come.

Because of this confidence, many Democratic partisans assume that 2016 will inevitably be better for their party than the looming midterms, and many analysts assume that the Republican Party is a long, long way from mounting a substantive challenge to liberalism. My friends on the left have an extensive list of things that the right simply "must" do before the G.O.P. can be relevant at the presidential level again (crush the Tea Party, then move left on immigration, then move left on everything else ...), and they express a certain condescension toward the recent stirrings of conservative policy innovation: Nice effort, but you'll have to move a lot further in our direction if you expect to win the White House back.

But there's a big flaw in their historical analogy. Political skill builds majorities, but popular policy successes cement them - and that is what has consistently eluded Obama. He resembles Reagan

when it comes to electoral-majority building, but he's a Reagan without the economic boom, without the foreign policy achievements and without the high approval ratings.

As Ramesh Ponnuru writes in the latest issue of National Review, while "the Democrats of the 1980s had to respond to a country that was largely happy with Republican governance and to specific conservative policy successes," today's electorate "is persistently unhappy" with the direction of the country, and "liberal policy successes are too hard to detect to be the basis for concessions" by the right. And liberalism's current forward-looking agenda, such as it is - immigration reform, climate-change regulations, some jaw-jaw about inequality - doesn't really align with those unhappy voters' immediate priorities.

Which means that Obama's coalition, while real enough, may not be durable - and that a Republican comeback at the presidential level might be more likely than many Democrats currently assume.

Especially since the liberal coalition's extraordinary diversity also offers many potential lines of fracture. To invoke an example from this year's grim centennial, the post-Obama Democratic Party could well be the Austro-Hungarian empire of presidential majorities: a sprawling, ramshackle and heterogeneous arrangement, one major crisis away from dissolution.

But this is where Hillary Clinton comes in. If her party is Austria-Hungary, she might be its Franz Josef - the beloved emperor whose imperial persona ("coffered up," the novelist Joseph Roth wrote, "in an icy and everlasting old age, like armour made of an awe-inspiring crystal"), as much as any specific political strategy, helped keep dissolution from the empire's door.

I really have no idea what proposals Clinton will run on, what arguments she'll make. But as with Franz Josef, it's not her policies that make her formidable; it's the multitudes that "Hillary" the brand and icon now contains. Academic liberalism and waitress-mom populism and Davos/Wall Street/Bloomberg centrism. Female empowerment and stand-by-your-man martyrdom. The old Clintonian bond with minority voters and her own 2008 primary-trail identification with Scots-Irish whites. And then the great trifecta: continuity with the Obama present, a restoration of the more prosperous Clintonian past and (as the first ... female ... president) a new "yes we can" progressive future.

Like the penultimate Hapsburg emperor with his motley empire, then, she has the potential to embody a political coalition - its identities and self-conceptions, its nostalgias and aspirations - in ways that might just keep the whole thing hanging together.

But without her, the deluge.

DEAR MILLENNIALS, WE'RE SORRY (NYT)

By Frank Bruni

New York Times, June 8, 2014

AMONG Americans age 40 and older, there's a pastime more popular than football, Candy Crush or HBO.

It's bashing millennials.

Oh, the hours of fun we have, marveling at their self-fascination and gaping at their sense of entitlement! It's been an especially spirited romp lately, as a new batch of them graduate from college and gambol toward our cubicles, prompting us to wonder afresh about the havoc they'll wreak on our world.

We have a hell of a lot of nerve, considering the havoc we've wrought on theirs.

For decades they'll be saddled with our effluvium: a monstrous debt, an epidemic of obesity, Adam Sandler movies. In their lifetimes the Atlantic will possibly swallow Miami Beach (I foresee a "Golden Girls" sequel with dinghies and life preservers) and the footwear for Anchorage in February may be flip-flops. At least everyone will be saving on heating bills.

The Obama administration did unveil a bold climate-change measure last week. Or, rather, it signaled its intent to act: We'll have to wait and see whether Congress figures out a way to foil the president or the courts gum things up. The plan as it stands would cut carbon pollution from American power plants 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030.

But that may be too little, too late, according to an assessment last year by John Podesta, now a counselor to President Obama, in an interview with Harper's Magazine before he joined the White House staff in late 2013.

In the interview, excerpts from which were released only last week, Podesta apparently reviewed

what had been proposed and actually done in terms of carbon emissions and the like.

"But 50 years from now, is that going to seem like enough?" he said. "I think the answer to that is going to be no." And that's chilling, given the stakes. As the title of a book by Al Gore observed, the earth itself is in the balance.

The country's slowness to deal with swelling seas and melting glaciers is just one manifestation of our myopia, just one metaphor for our failure to reckon with the future that we're visiting upon today's children, who get more lip service than legislation from us.

"If you're going along with the status quo, it should be a crime to say that you care about our children and grandchildren, because you're not putting your money where your mouth is," Bob Kerrey, a Democrat who governed Nebraska for four years and represented that state in the Senate for another 12, told me recently.

This subject haunts him more and more. "If we're trying to figure out how to advance the next generation's future, we need to be spending more on the next generation, and we're spending it on yesterday's generation," said Kerrey, 70. "I am not the future. My 12-year-old son is. But if you look at the spending, you'd think I'm the future."

Kerrey is referring mostly to Social Security and Medicare, which, along with Medicaid, are the so-called entitlements that claim a larger and larger share of the federal budget.

He's fixated on those sorts of numbers: According to the Congressional Budget Office, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid totaled 6.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 1990. By 2010, they were 10 percent. And by 2038, such spending may represent 14.3 percent. It's hard to see how that leaves much money for discretionary spending on infrastructure, on education, on research, on a range of investments that safeguard or improve the America that today's young people will inherit.

And there's too little money for that even now. Talk to physicians and other scientists who have long depended on research grants from the National Institutes of Health to keep the United States at the forefront of invention and innovation and they'll tell you how thoroughly that spigot has closed over the last 10 years. They're defeated, despondent.

The Urban Institute released a report in 2012 that looked at figures from 2008 for the combined local, state and federal spending that directly benefited Americans 65 and older versus spending that went to Americans under 19; the per capita discrepancy was \$26,355 versus \$11,822. Julia Isaacs, a senior fellow at the institute, told me that while data for subsequent years hadn't been analyzed yet, it wouldn't show a significant change in that gap.

Isaacs also drew attention to a follow-up report released by the institute last year. It projected federal spending in 2023 and envisioned that entitlement payments to older Americans would rise to 46 percent of the budget from 40 percent now. Interest payments on the debt would be another 14 percent. That would leave well under 50 percent for everything else, including the military. She noted that the population was aging. Meanwhile, there's a resistance to tax increases. "That makes me very worried that children will be squeezed out," Isaacs said.

"I'm glad that my parents are living longer," she added. "But it's creating this budgetary math problem that we're unwilling to look at."

That unwillingness includes the predictable pushback from many members of Congress, from voters and from various advocacy groups when proposals are made to limit the growth of Social Security by, say, fiddling with cost-of-living adjustments. Older Americans, who would be instantly affected by such a change, turn out more reliably on Election Day than any other age group. Lawmakers are loath to cross them.

Younger voters need to assert themselves. Perhaps they're poised to do just that. A recent poll by ABC News and The Washington Post showed a significant rise - to 66 percent now from 53 percent two months ago - of voters between the ages of 18 and 39 who said they definitely planned to vote in November.

In Washington last week, hundreds of concerned young leaders gathered for an inaugural Millennial Week conference, devoted to youth-oriented policy discussions. And I've noticed more bulletins and agitating from organizations like Generation Opportunity, which crunched May's employment figures to confirm a much higher rate of joblessness among Americans ages 18 to 29 than among the whole population.

We millennial bashers of course have our stock responses to that. We quibble with the college majors that millennials choose. We question their willingness to hunt for work outside their comfort

zones.

We conveniently overlook how much more they've had to pay for college than we did, the loans they've racked up and the fact that nothing explains their employment difficulties better than a generally crummy economy, which certainly isn't their fault.

They get our derision when they deserve our compassion and a political selflessness we've been unable to muster. While we're at it, we might even want to murmur an apology.

MADAM SECRETARY MADE A DIFFERENCE (NYT)

By Nicholas Kristof

New York Times, June 8, 2014

WHEN politicians have trouble spinning their own glories, that's a problem.

So it was bizarre that Hillary Rodham Clinton, asked at a forum in April about her legacy at the State Department, had trouble articulating it. That feeds into a narrative - awaiting her memoir on Tuesday - that she may have been glamorous as secretary of state but didn't actually accomplish much.

In fact, that's dead wrong, for Clinton achieved a great deal and left a hefty legacy - just not the traditional kind. She didn't craft a coalition of allies, like James Baker, one of the most admired secretaries of state. She didn't seal a landmark peace agreement, nor is there a recognizable "Hillary Clinton doctrine."

No, her legacy is different.

For starters, Clinton recognized that our future will be more about Asia than Europe, and she pushed hard to rebalance our relations. She didn't fully deliver on this "pivot" - generally she was more successful at shaping agendas than delivering on them - but the basic instinct to turn our ship of state to face our Pacific future was sound and overdue.

More fundamentally, Clinton vastly expanded the diplomatic agenda. Diplomats historically focused on "hard" issues, like trade or blowing up stuff, and so it may seem weird and "soft" to fret about women's rights or economic development.

Yet Clinton understood that impact and leverage in 21st-century diplomacy often come by addressing poverty, the environment, education and family planning.

It's not that Clinton was a softie. She was often more hawkish than the White House, favoring the surge in Afghanistan (a mistake, I believe) and the arming of moderate Syrian rebel groups (a good call, but one vetoed by President Obama).

Yet she grew truly animated when discussing the new diplomatic agenda. A couple of times I moderated panels during the United Nations General Assembly in which she talked passionately - and bewilderingly, for some of the audience - about civil society, women leaders and agricultural investments.

Pinstriped foreign and prime ministers looked on, happy to be considered important enough to be invited. They listened with increasingly furrowed brows, as if absorbing an alien language, as Clinton brightly spoke about topics such as "the business case for focusing on gender in agricultural development."

Clinton was relentless about using the spotlight that accompanied her to highlight those who needed it more. At one global forum, she went out of her way to praise Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning entrepreneur of microfinance, who was being persecuted by the Bangladesh prime minister. On trips, she found time to visit shelters for victims of human trafficking or aid groups doing groundbreaking work.

She may hide it, but Clinton is a policy nerd. Ask about microfinance, and she'll talk your ear off.

Mention early childhood interventions, and she will gush about obscure details of a home visitation experiment in Elmira, N.Y., that dramatically improved child outcomes.

The kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls in April was the kind of issue Clinton was out front of. She understood that educating girls isn't a frilly "soft" issue, but a way to transform a country to make it less hospitable to extremists. No one argued more presciently that women's rights are security issues.

"Those who argue that her championing of outreach to women and girls and her elevation of development was not serious miss a central reality of international politics in this century," notes Nicholas Burns, who was undersecretary of state in the George W. Bush presidency. "These issues are now mainstream globally."

"I disagree very strongly with those who charge that Hillary Clinton was not successful," adds Burns, who is now at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "A fair-minded view is that she was, in fact, highly effective."

Clinton was pioneering not only in the way she expanded the diplomatic agenda, but also in the tools she forged to promote it. She pushed government-to-people relations and people-to-people ties.

Some of this was pioneered in the George W. Bush administration, but Clinton greatly escalated public diplomacy with a rush into social media.

"She was very clear about it: This is the 21st century, and we're fools if we don't use it," recalls Michael McFaul, who became ambassador to Russia in this time. McFaul then had no idea what a tweet was, and there was strong resistance from senior diplomats. "I said the boss wants to do this," McFaul recalls, and he ultimately became a champion tweeter.

Today it's routine to use social media in multiple languages to communicate American diplomatic messages to the world.

So, sure, critics are right that Hillary Rodham Clinton never achieved the kind of landmark peace agreement that would make the first sentence of her obituary. But give her credit: She expanded the diplomatic agenda and adopted new tools to promote it - a truly important legacy.

And, anyway, she may have grander dreams about how her obituary should begin.

THE GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE (NYT)

By Timothy H. Evans

New York Times, June 8, 2014

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. - A SURPRISING number of knife attacks on and by teenagers have appeared in the national news in recent weeks, but in terms of sheer tragic weirdness, nothing can match the case of two 12-year-old Wisconsin girls who stabbed a classmate 19 times, nearly killing her - and then said they did it to appease someone called "Slenderman."

Slenderman is not, in fact, a man, but an Internet meme, an urban legend for the digital age, a fictitious figure - tall, thin, faceless and dressed in a black suit - who appears in homemade "found" videos on YouTube, in Photoshopped pictures and on blogs describing alleged sightings around the country.

Although Slenderman has been around since 2009, the stabbing case has brought the phenomenon, most popular among teenagers, into the harsh glare of the media spotlight, with worried parents and pundits wringing their hands about the dangers of modern technology.

But they shouldn't worry: Slenderman is a largely harmless fixation of teen pop culture who fits firmly within America's long tradition of horror folklore.

The girls apparently became obsessed with Slenderman from reading about him on the website Creepypasta, a collection of fan-submitted horror microfiction. He's just one of many characters popular on the site, alongside "Jeff the Killer," vampires, zombies and aliens - and Creepypasta is just one of thousands of similar fan fiction sites.

Slenderman is usually shown as a shadowy figure (sometimes sprouting tentacles), momentarily glimpsed in the background of altered photographs or videos, intruding on scenes of everyday life: parties, hikes in the woods or children playing. His mix of specifics (height, dress) and ambiguity is a common notion in American horror folklore.

Indeed, Slenderman's creator, Eric Knudsen (who goes by the web handle "Victor Surge"), says he invented the character as an explicit "attempt to cooperatively create new folklore" by mixing stock horror tropes with the generative power of the Internet.

Mr. Knudsen had a lot to draw on. Legends of the supernatural, paranormal and horrific have existed in oral culture for a very long time. Many urban legends have a horror component. Almost everyone has heard, and probably told, stories about ghosts, haunted places (houses, bridges, cemeteries), the "Vanishing Hitchhiker," the teenage couple making out in a car when the radio flashes a story about an escaped serial killer. That Slenderman has proliferated online is new in terms of the medium, but not the message.

Nor is it new for someone to act on his or her relationship to horror folklore. In 1929 Nancy Bowen, a woman living near Buffalo, became convinced, through a Ouija board, that her dead husband had been killed by another woman. A few days later, Bowen killed her.

More prosaically, consider the "Bloody Mary" ritual carried on (usually) by preteenage girls, who

recite "Bloody Mary" into a darkened bathroom mirror, half-expecting to see a monstrous image, or groups of high school students "legend tripping" to a local haunted house.

That said, we also have to recognize how Slenderman, as an Internet phenomenon, differs from past horror folklore. The web takes oral traditions - jokes, rumors, legends - and transmits them with a speed that far surpasses the word-of-mouth circulation of most pre-Internet folklore. Dead-celebrity jokes and 9/11 conspiracy theories go viral within hours.

In the past, Slenderman might have remained localized, a regional legend about a haunted neighborhood in Northern California or suburban Virginia. Instead, he is everywhere, at the same time.

And it makes sense that Slenderman appears predominantly in photos and film, rather than text. As digital cameras and home-editing programs proliferate, Internet memes are becoming increasingly visual - think LOLcats and "Thanks Obama," among countless others. As a visual meme, Slenderman is at once more accessible and more frightening, in ways that oral memes can't replicate.

Moreover, the Internet has become a melting pot where long-held distinctions among folklore, mass culture and literary or high culture break down. The stories of H. P. Lovecraft, a once obscure early 20th-century horror writer, have gained immense mainstream currency thanks to the web, where people who may never have read the books still revel in breaking apart the complex and immense world of Lovecraft's extraterrestrial monster Cthulhu, for visual fodder for everything from toys, games and fan fiction to YouTube films and even erotica.

In that regard Slenderman, who is both a very specific character and an infinitely pliable meme, is like Cthulhu, without the literary origins.

As a folklorist, I can't comment on what may have motivated those two girls in Wisconsin. I'll leave that to the psychologists. But I can say that we've seen this pattern before, especially when it comes to technology, pop culture and violence: killings said to be inspired by Dungeons & Dragons games or heavy metal in the 1980s, or Ouija boards long before that. Sometimes these are real but isolated incidents; often they are rumors, themselves a part of the folklore.

Internet horror memes are no more likely to motivate violence or insanity than any other aspect of contemporary culture. But like other examples of the folklore of horror and the supernatural, they can lead us to question distinctions between "everyday life" and the unreal or the numinous - distinctions that may be made even more ambiguous by the bewildering variety of alternative realities found online.

Timothy H. Evans is an associate professor of folk studies and anthropology at Western Kentucky University.

THE BIOLOGY OF RISK (NYT)

By John Coates

New York Times, June 8, 2014

SIX years after the financial meltdown there is once again talk about market bubbles. Are stocks succumbing to exuberance? Is real estate? We thought we had exorcised these demons. It is therefore with something close to despair that we ask: What is it about risk taking that so eludes our understanding, and our control?

Part of the problem is that we tend to view financial risk taking as a purely intellectual activity. But this view is incomplete. Risk is more than an intellectual puzzle - it is a profoundly physical experience, and it involves your body. Risk by its very nature threatens to hurt you, so when confronted by it your body and brain, under the influence of the stress response, unite as a single functioning unit. This occurs in athletes and soldiers, and it occurs as well in traders and people investing from home. The state of your body predicts your appetite for financial risk just as it predicts an athlete's performance.

If we understand how a person's body influences risk taking, we can learn how to better manage risk takers. We can also recognize that mistakes governments have made have contributed to excessive risk taking.

Consider the most important risk manager of them all - the Federal Reserve. Over the past 20 years, the Fed has pioneered a new technique of influencing Wall Street. Where before the Fed shrouded its activities in secrecy, it now informs the street in as clear terms as possible of what it intends to do with short-term interest rates, and when. Janet L. Yellen, the chairwoman of the Fed,

declared this new transparency, called forward guidance, a revolution; Ben S. Bernanke, her predecessor, claimed it reduced uncertainty and calmed the markets. But does it really calm the markets? Or has eliminating uncertainty in policy spread complacency among the financial community and actually helped inflate market bubbles?

We get a fascinating answer to these questions if we turn from economics and look into the biology of risk taking.

ONE biological mechanism, the stress response, exerts an especially powerful influence on risk taking. We live with stress daily, especially at work, yet few people truly understand what it is. Most of us tend to believe that stress is largely a psychological phenomenon, a state of being upset because something nasty has happened. But if you want to understand stress you must disabuse yourself of that view. The stress response is largely physical: It is your body priming itself for impending movement.

As such, most stress is not, well, stressful. For example, when you walk to the coffee room at work, your muscles need fuel, so the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol recruit glucose from your liver and muscles; you need oxygen to burn this fuel, so your breathing increases ever so slightly; and you need to deliver this fuel and oxygen to cells throughout your body, so your heart gently speeds up and blood pressure increases. This suite of physical reactions forms the core of the stress response, and, as you can see, there is nothing nasty about it at all.

Far from it. Many forms of stress, like playing sports, trading the markets, even watching an action movie, are highly enjoyable. In moderate amounts, we get a rush from stress, we thrive on risk taking. In fact, the stress response is such a healthy part of our lives that we should stop calling it stress at all and call it, say, the challenge response.

This mechanism hums along, anticipating challenges, keeping us alive, and it usually does so without breaking the surface of consciousness. We take in information nonstop and our brain silently, behind the scenes, figures out what movement might be needed and then prepares our body. Many neuroscientists now believe our brain is designed primarily to plan and execute movement, that every piece of information we take in, every thought we think, comes coupled with some pattern of physical arousal. We do not process information as a computer does, dispassionately; we react to it physically. For humans, there is no pure thought of the kind glorified by Plato, Descartes and classical economics.

Our challenge response, and especially its main hormone cortisol (produced by the adrenal glands) is particularly active when we are exposed to novelty and uncertainty. If a person is subjected to something mildly unpleasant, like bursts of white noise, but these are delivered at regular intervals, they may leave cortisol levels unaffected. But if the timing of the noise changes and it is delivered randomly, meaning it cannot be predicted, then cortisol levels rise significantly. Uncertainty over the timing of something unpleasant often causes a greater challenge response than the unpleasant thing itself. Sometimes it is more stressful not knowing when or if you are going to be fired than actually being fired. Why? Because the challenge response, like any good defense mechanism, anticipates; it is a metabolic preparation for the unknown.

You may now have an inkling of just how central this biology is to the financial world. Traders are immersed in novelty and uncertainty the moment they step onto a trading floor. Here they encounter an information-rich environment like none other. Every event in the world, every piece of news, flows nonstop onto the floor, showing up on news feeds and market prices, blinking and disappearing. News by its very nature is novel, adds volatility to the market and puts us into a state of vigilance and arousal.

I observed this remarkable call and echo between news and body when, after running a trading desk on Wall Street for 13 years, I returned to the University of Cambridge and began researching the neuroscience of trading.

In one of my studies, conducted with 17 traders on a trading floor in London, we found that their cortisol levels rose 68 percent over an eight-day period as volatility increased. Subsequent, as yet unpublished, studies suggest to us that this cortisol response to volatility is common in the financial community. A question then arose: Does this cortisol response affect a person's risk taking? In a follow-up study, my colleagues from the department of medicine pharmacologically raised the cortisol levels of a group of 36 volunteers by a similar 69 percent over eight days. We gauged their risk appetite by means of a computerized gambling task. The results, published recently in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed that the volunteers'

appetite for risk fell 44 percent.

Most models in economics and finance assume that risk preferences are a stable trait, much like your height. But this assumption, as our studies suggest, is misleading. Humans are designed with shifting risk preferences. They are an integral part of our response to stress, or challenge.

When opportunities abound, a potent cocktail of dopamine - a neurotransmitter operating along the pleasure pathways of the brain - and testosterone encourages us to expand our risk taking, a physical transformation I refer to as "the hour between dog and wolf." One such opportunity is a brief spike in market volatility, for this presents a chance to make money. But if volatility rises for a long period, the prolonged uncertainty leads us to subconsciously conclude that we no longer understand what is happening and then cortisol scales back our risk taking. In this way our risk taking calibrates to the amount of uncertainty and threat in the environment.

Under conditions of extreme volatility, such as a crisis, traders, investors and indeed whole companies can freeze up in risk aversion, and this helps push a bear market into a crash.

Unfortunately, this risk aversion occurs at just the wrong time, for these crises are precisely when markets offer the most attractive opportunities, and when the economy most needs people to take risks. The real challenge for Wall Street, I now believe, is not so much fear and greed as it is these silent and large shifts in risk appetite.

I consult regularly with risk managers who must grapple with unstable risk taking throughout their organizations. Most of them are not aware that the source of the problem lurks deep in our bodies. Their attempts to manage risk are therefore comparable to firefighters' spraying water at the tips of flames.

THE Fed, however, through its control of policy uncertainty, has in its hands a powerful tool for influencing risk takers. But by trying to be more transparent, it has relinquished this control.

Forward guidance was introduced in the early 2000s. But the process of making monetary policy more transparent was in fact begun by Alan Greenspan back in the early 1990s. Before that time the Fed, especially under Paul A. Volcker, operated in secrecy. Fed chairmen did not announce rate changes, and they felt no need to explain themselves, leaving Wall Street highly uncertain about what was coming next. Furthermore, changes in interest rates were highly volatile: When Mr. Volcker raised rates, he might first raise them, cut them a few weeks later, and then raise again, so the tightening proceeded in a zigzag. Traders were put on edge, vigilant, never complacent about their positions so long as Mr. Volcker lurked in the shadows. Street wisdom has it that you don't fight the Fed, and no one tangled with that bruiser.

Under Mr. Greenspan, the Fed became less intimidating and more transparent. Beginning in 1994 the Fed committed to changing fed funds only at its scheduled meetings (except in emergencies); it announced these changes at fixed times; and it communicated its easing or tightening bias. Mr. Greenspan notoriously spoke in riddles, but his actions had no such ambiguity. Mr. Bernanke reduced uncertainty even further: Forward guidance detailed the Fed's plans.

Under both chairmen fed funds became far less erratic. Whereas Mr. Volcker changed rates in a volatile fashion, up one week down the next, Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke raised them in regular steps. Between 2004 and 2006, rates rose .25 percent at every Fed meeting, without fail... tick, tick, tick. As a result of this more gradualist Fed, volatility in fed funds fell after 1994 by as much as 60 percent.

In a speech to the Cato Institute in 2007, Mr. Bernanke claimed that minimizing uncertainty in policy ensured that asset prices would respond "in ways that further the central bank's policy objectives." But evidence suggests that quite the opposite has occurred.

Cycles of bubble and crash have always existed, but in the 20 years after 1994, they became more severe and longer lasting than in the previous 20 years. For example, the bear markets following the Nifty Fifty crash in the mid-70s and Black Monday of 1987 had an average loss of about 40 percent and lasted 240 days; while the dot-com and credit crises lost on average about 52 percent and lasted over 430 days. Moreover, if you rank the largest one-day percentage moves in the market over this 40-year period, 76 percent of the largest gains and losses occurred after 1994.

I suspect the trends in fed funds and stocks were related. As uncertainty in fed funds declined, one of the most powerful brakes on excessive risk taking in stocks was released.

During their tenures, in response to surging stock and housing markets, both Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke embarked on campaigns of tightening, but the metronome-like ticking of their rate

increases was so soothing it failed to dampen exuberance.

There are times when the Fed does need to calm the markets. After the credit crisis, it did just that. But when the economy and market are strong, as they were during the dot-com and housing bubbles, what, pray tell, is the point of calming the markets? Of raising rates in a predictable fashion? If you think the markets are complacent, then unnerve them. Over the past 20 years the Fed may have perfected the art of reassuring the markets, but it has lost the power to scare. And that means stock markets more easily overshoot, and then collapse.

The Fed could dampen this cycle. It has, in interest rate policy, not one tool but two: the level of rates and the uncertainty of rates. Given the sensitivity of risk preferences to uncertainty, the Fed could use policy uncertainty and a higher volatility of funds to selectively target risk taking in the financial community. People running factories or coffee shops or drilling wells might not even notice. And that means the Fed could keep the level of rates lower than otherwise to stimulate the economy.

It may seem counterintuitive to use uncertainty to quell volatility. But a small amount of uncertainty surrounding short-term interest rates may act much like a vaccine immunizing the stock market against bubbles. More generally, if we view humans as embodied brains instead of disembodied minds, we can see that the risk-taking pathologies found in traders also lead chief executives, trial lawyers, oil executives and others to swing from excessive and ill-conceived risks to petrified risk aversion. It will also teach us to manage these risk takers, much as sport physiologists manage athletes, to stabilize their risk taking and to lower stress.

And that possibility opens up exciting vistas of human performance.

John Coates is a research fellow at Cambridge who traded derivatives for Goldman Sachs and ran a desk for Deutsche Bank. He is the author of "The Hour Between Dog and Wolf: How Risk Taking Transforms Us, Body and Mind."

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS? NORTHEAST CUT EMISSIONS AND ENJOYED GROWTH (NYT)

By Hannah Fairfield

New York Times, June 8, 2014

Some critics of the Environmental Protection Agency's new requirements for power plants argue that forcing emissions reduction will curtail economic growth. But the recent experience of states that already cap carbon emissions reveals that emissions and economic growth are no longer tightly tied together.

One of the ways that states will be able to meet the new E.P.A. standards is by joining a Northeastern cap-and-trade program known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which first put in a carbon cap in 2009. In a cap-and-trade system, the government places a ceiling on total carbon emissions and issues permits for those emissions, which companies can buy and sell from one another.

The nine states already in the program - Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont - have substantially reduced their carbon emissions in recent years. At the same time, those states have had stronger economic growth than the rest of the country.

Historically, the demand for electricity was closely tied to growth in the economy; only recently have the two decoupled.

These nine states had large emissions drops even before the program began in 2009, in part because the recession and warmer winters lowered the demand for power. The states also began switching to natural gas power, retiring coal units, and adding wind and solar energy generation. As the economy recovered, participation in the program spurred the states to find ways to meet the increasing demand for power without driving up emissions.

Since 2009, the nine states have cut their emissions by 18 percent, while their economies grew by 9.2 percent. By comparison, emissions in the other 41 states fell by 4 percent, while their economies grew by 8.8 percent.

The states in the program "were able to reduce emissions faster and more efficiently than was previously assumed," said Peter Shattuck, director of market initiatives at ENE, a research and advocacy group based in Boston. "It was encouraging to see how quickly they hit the targets." Capping carbon emissions could still slow economic growth, and it is possible that the nine states that joined the cap-and-trade program would have had even better economic growth without the

program. These states have more nuclear and natural-gas energy in their portfolios than do many other states; other states that depend primarily on coal power may not be able to reduce emissions as swiftly.

But the results in the nine states suggest that the effect of the cap-and-trade program on growth was, at most, modest. The sharp cut in emissions in the Northeast did not prevent the economy there from doing just as well as elsewhere.

Joining the Northeast cap-and-trade program, or another similar program in California that began in 2013, is one of many ways states can reach the new goals the E.P.A. has set. Other options include taking a series of individual steps - such as upgrading older power plants and expanding nuclear, wind and solar power generation - without a statewide cap. The states themselves will decide exactly how they will meet the goals set for them.

Economists have long praised cap-and-trade programs, compared with detailed mandates from regulators, because they create a market in which businesses are responsible for finding the cheapest way to comply with the regulation. Businesses that devise less expensive ways to reduce pollution can sell their permits to those that cannot change their habits so easily.

The administration of President George H.W. Bush began the original cap-and-trade program in the United States, for emissions related to acid rain. It is considered a major success, with sharp reductions in acid rain at little economic cost.

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HOW TO BEAT MALARIA, ONCE AND FOR ALL (NYT)

By François H. Nosten

New York Times, June 8, 2014

MAE SOT, Thailand - MALARIA is a seasonal disease; with tropical rains come the fevers. In the news media, malaria is also seasonal. Every spring around World Malaria Day we hear about its devastating effects, including deaths in the hundreds of thousands. This year the reports were encouraging: Infections have been reduced and many lives saved. In May, researchers reported in *Science* that yet another potential malaria vaccine may be around the corner. Malaria seems to be on the retreat.

But is it really?

Malaria is caused by a tiny parasite, transported by a particular type of mosquito from person to person. Preventing mosquito bites by using insect repellents or nets and clothing treated with insecticides can reduce malaria in some areas. And if people are infected, drugs can be used to kill the parasites in their blood.

But the mosquitoes are constantly adapting and becoming resistant to the chemicals, while at the same time the parasites are adapting and becoming resistant to the drugs. So the fight against malaria is really a race against time in which we try to develop new treatments before they become ineffective, causing millions to die.

I have been working on the Thai-Myanmar border for 30 years. Once, in the early '90s, we faced the prospect of untreatable malaria. The number of people infected with the parasite (*Plasmodium falciparum* in this case) had been in decline, but the drug we were using - mefloquine, brand name Lariam - was becoming less effective and more patients were dying.

I remember a young Buddhist monk who was carried to our bamboo clinic two weeks after taking Lariam. His blood was still full of parasites. Lying in his saffron robe, he was unconscious, burning up and agitated by frequent convulsions. We tried in vain to save his life.

Then we heard about artesunate, a drug that comes from the *Artemisia annua* plant in China and was just becoming available. Preliminary studies indicated that it was very safe and was killing the malaria parasite extremely rapidly. But it was also quickly eliminated from the body, requiring too many days of treatment to be practical. We reasoned that combining this new drug with the more long-lasting mefloquine could be the answer.

Indeed it was. In 1994, after large studies confirmed the safety and the efficacy of this new treatment, this first artemisinin-based combination therapy, or ACT, was deployed in all the refugee camps. The number of new cases, and lives lost, declined sharply.

By the end of the 1990s, there was strong evidence that ACTs worked, but the World Health Organization was slow to recommend the treatments in other parts of the world, particularly in

Africa, where malaria was on the rampage. Thousands of people died in the 2000-01 malaria epidemic in Burundi largely because they received ineffective drugs. Despite this, in 2002 an adviser for U.S.A.I.D. declared that ACTs were "not ready for prime time." Only after The Lancet published a virulent attack in 2004 accusing the W.H.O. of medical malpractice did it effectively make ACTs the standard worldwide.

But history repeats itself. While malaria rates went down again as a result of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and widespread deployment of ACTs, the parasite adapted its genetic machinery to resist these powerful medicines and is now preparing for a devastating return.

Today, the artemisinins in ACTs are taking longer to kill parasites in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar. Recently, a young patient in our clinic tested positive for malaria for more than seven days after starting treatment (instead of the usual two), and when we sampled her blood after six days of treatment, the parasite was still healthy. If *P. falciparum* becomes totally resistant, then the ACTs would become ineffective and all investments in their development and distribution would be lost, with dire consequences.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been spent on fighting malaria. Late last year, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria allocated \$100 million to tackle artemisinin resistance in the Mekong region where I work. But all this well-intentioned money keeps us only a step ahead of the parasites. We have to keep coming up with new combinations of drugs before our patients taking the old ones start dying. And bed nets, on which at least \$20 million will be spent, aren't always effective here in Southeast Asia, where many mosquitoes that carry the parasite bite outside and early in the evening. Of course, an effective vaccine could save us but, despite the frequent announcements that we're close to developing one, it has never materialized because we do not fully understand the underlying biology.

We have to accept that these strategies of control are failing and instead start figuring out how to eliminate the parasite altogether, as we have in Europe, Russia and North America.

In pilot studies in Cambodia, Vietnam and here on the Thai-Myanmar border, we have begun testing one approach to rapid elimination. Doing surveys of the population, we discovered that in some communities, many villagers - sometimes more than half - carry malaria parasites in their blood but are not ill and therefore are not treated. Because these "healthy" carriers have only a small number of parasites in their blood, they are difficult to detect with conventional tests. So eliminating the parasites may require treating everybody in the village, an approach that is used for other parasitic diseases, like river blindness and filariasis. Because *P. falciparum* infects only humans, if we can treat entire populations, we should be able to eliminate this parasite from certain regions.

Giving medicines to large numbers of villagers in remote areas who are not ill is not an easy task. It cannot work without the trust and participation of the local population. And we would need to hit whole regions at once. Even then we don't know that it would work; the effectiveness, feasibility and economics of mass treatment are still being studied. But what else can we do to stop the seemingly inevitable spread of drug-resistant malaria across Asia to Africa, and the enormous consequent death toll?

Some funding bodies - like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Wellcome Trust and Britain's Department for International Development, which also support our research unit - are moving in this direction already. But for now, governments and medical organizations need more evidence, and they need leadership from the W.H.O.

For years, the fight against malaria in tropical countries has been compromised by politics. Here on the front line, our work is more difficult because of the bureaucracy, the inertia and sometimes the incompetence of the people in control. Money and its corruptive power are flying around. And the more money we throw at malaria, the bigger the problems get. We have the science to defeat malaria. We just have to act, before it defeats us.

François H. Nosten is a professor of tropical medicine at the University of Oxford and the director of the Shoklo Malaria Research Unit.

A VIEW FROM GITMO (NYT)

By Ramzi Kassem

New York Times, June 8, 2014

GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba - THE week's national debate around the exchange of Sgt. Bowe

Bergdahl for five Afghans imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay found me at the American base in Cuba for meetings with my clients. Here, too, the swap is the talk of the town - among prisoners, among guards and between the two groups.

Some Guantánamo prison guards voiced anger at the news of how their fellow soldier, Sergeant Bergdahl, had been liberated. In their view, he was a deserter, unworthy of the sustained media interest his release had garnered, especially compared to the dearth of attention paid to the sacrifice of those killed and wounded in the Afghan conflict.

But to the emaciated man sitting across a rickety table from me in an orange jumpsuit, chained to the floor inside a dilapidated shack, that furious reaction was baffling. My client, Moath al-Alwi, wondered aloud "why those people are not simply happy that this American soldier will soon be reunited with his family." He reflected that the critics have probably "never tasted this sort of ordeal themselves."

In contrast to the guards, Mr. Alwi and many of his fellow prisoners empathized with Sergeant Bergdahl and his family. After all, they only wanted the same for themselves: to see their loved ones after long years in captivity.

My students and I have been representing Guantánamo inmates for most of the last decade. Mr. Alwi was on one of the first planes to shuttle so-called enemy combatants to the prison in early 2002.

A Yemeni citizen raised in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Alwi traveled to Afghanistan in early 2001 to teach the Quran and live in a society that appeared from afar to honor Islamic ideals. He was 24 when he fled the conflict there, was seized by the authorities in Pakistan and likely sold into American captivity for a bounty.

At a 2008 hearing, having given Mr. Alwi only three weeks to review a lengthy dossier compiled by the United States government over seven years and consisting largely of uncorroborated and self-incriminating statements that we argued were extracted under coercive circumstances, a federal judge ruled his detention justified. A court of appeals found that the judge's "haste" was "hard to understand," but upheld the decision.

To protest the injustice of his open-ended imprisonment without fair process, Mr. Alwi has been on hunger strike since February 2013. Every day, Guantánamo personnel strap him in a chair with restraints and force-feed him, in an effort to break his will.

Mr. Alwi never fought against the United States and has not been found guilty of any crime.

The political controversy over whether the prisoner exchange was conducted legally is even less comprehensible to the inmates at Guantánamo than the guards' anger. To their mind, before debating the finer point of whether the transfer of the five Afghans adhered to the law, the American public should ask if the detention and abuse at Guantánamo Bay of hundreds - without charge, fair process or the protections of the Geneva Conventions - were lawful in the first place. From where Mr. Alwi sits, the talking point of legality is almost amusingly quaint. Guantánamo remains at its core a lawless place, and this release in seeming contravention of a solitary statute appears par for the course. In the absurd history of the detention camp, it is not uncommon for inmates among the handful who have been convicted by the military commissions to be the ones who are released. Questionable though their legitimacy and fairness may be, the military commissions can at least determine a finite term for internment at Guantánamo, one that the American government has chosen to honor so far.

So the release of the five Afghans, including, by some accounts, known figures in the Taliban, fits a larger pattern in which the many dozens of inmates not accused of any crime and, in fact, cleared for release by successive American administrations languish for years on end. For many, the difference between liberation and limbo has nothing to do with justice or legality, but just the luck of what nationality a prisoner happens to hold. Because no Guantánamo inmate has been repatriated to Yemen in years, Mr. Alwi said that some inmates are considering relinquishing their Yemeni citizenship in the hope that it might facilitate their resettlement elsewhere.

The furor over the Sergeant Bergdahl affair has simply reinforced a commonly held view among the inmates that the prospects for release from Guantánamo are tied far less to court decisions, threat assessments and the determinations of the military review board, and far more to the politics of the moment. "It is all political," Mr. Alwi said. "It is all theater, it is all a game."

Guantánamo has indeed become a sideshow of the American political spectacle, a drama in which the vast majority of the camp's inmates are held hostage to our partisan politics. If the current

upheaval around Sergeant Bergdahl's release proves anything, it is that President Obama is capable of pushing past the congressional histrionics that, until recently, he has pointed to as cover for his failure to shutter the infamous prison.

Ending indefinite detention at Guantánamo Bay, in the face of opposition from his political adversaries and reluctance from some officials within his administration, requires fortitude of Mr. Obama. What is needed now is decisive action to resettle and repatriate as many inmates as possible and give fair trials to any that remain. Only by doing so can America end this grim farce. Ramzi Kassem is an associate professor of law at the City University of New York who directs the Immigrant and Non-Citizen Rights Clinic, which represents prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and elsewhere.

STOP HOLDING US BACK (NYT)

By Robert Balfanz

New York Times, June 8, 2014

The Great Divide is a series about inequality.

This month, more than three million high school students will receive their diplomas. At more than 80 percent, America's graduation rate is at a record high. More kids are going to college, too. But one-third of the nation's African-American and Latino young men will not graduate.

In an era when there is virtually no legal work for dropouts, these young men face a bleak future. It is not news that the students who don't make it out of high school largely come from our poorest neighborhoods, but the degree to which they are hyper-concentrated in a small set of schools is alarming. In fact, according to new research I conducted with my colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, half of the African-American boys who veer off the path to high school graduation do so in just 660 of more than 12,600 regular and vocational high schools.

These 660 schools are typically big high schools that teach only poor kids of color. They are concentrated in 15 states. Many are in major cities, but others are in smaller, decaying industrial cities or in the South, especially in Georgia, Florida and North Carolina.

This seemingly intractable problem is a national tragedy, but there is a solution. In the high schools where most of the young men are derailed, the number of ninth-grade boys who desperately need better schooling and extra support is typically between 50 and 100. Keeping many or even most of those boys on track in each entering ninth-grade class in 660 schools does not seem impossible.

If we know where to focus our efforts, we can put strategies in place that have shown promise, particularly over the last few years. While early childhood is critical, the most treacherous time for young African-American and Latino men is from ages 11 to 21. At the very moment they are the most developmentally vulnerable, the response from schools, foster care, the health system and child protective services gets weaker, while the response from the justice system is harsher. Their family responsibilities grow, and their neighborhoods turn meaner. Their middle and high school experience becomes make or break.

But the secondary schools these students attend are not specifically designed for them. It is not unusual for up to half the students to miss a month or more of school, and often more students are suspended in a year than graduate. In a 22-school sample that we studied closely, nearly all ninth-grade students were either too old for their grades, had repeated ninth grade, needed special education, were chronically absent or had academic skills at the seventh grade level or below. The norm in this environment is to fail classes and then repeat ninth grade. But most students do no better the second time around. Either they drop out then or they may briefly transfer to another school before dropping out later. This is a highly predictable, almost mechanical course, which is why we call those schools dropout factories.

We have also learned that most students who eventually drop out can be identified as early as the sixth grade by their attendance, behavior and course performance, according to studies by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins, where I am the director, and the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. Using those indicators, it is possible to identify by the middle of ninth grade virtually everyone who will drop out. These young men are waving their hands early and often to say they need help, but our educational and student-support systems aren't organized to recognize and respond to their distress signals.

In 2008, my colleagues and I decided to focus on those struggling sixth and ninth graders. What if we reorganized entire schools with teams of teachers who shared a common group of students?

What if we added more time for English and math and offered coaching for teachers and principals? What if we welcomed students to school, called them if they didn't show up and helped with homework? What if we used an early warning system that identified struggling students based on their poor attendance, behavior and course performance and then worked to get each student back on track?

To try to provide all that, we developed Diplomas Now, a partnership of three national nonprofits, which works with more than 30,000 students in 40 of the toughest middle and high schools in 14 big cities. (Although I am focusing here on boys, because they have lower graduation rates than girls, the program is coed.)

To evaluate our progress, MDRC, a social policy research organization, is conducting a randomized field trial. Initial indications are positive. In the 2012-13 school year, the program achieved a 41 percent reduction in chronically absent students, a 70 percent reduction in suspended students, a 69 percent reduction in students failing English and a 52 percent reduction in students failing math.

This is not an anomalous result. A recent study of public schools in Chicago shows that getting students back on track in the ninth grade leads to higher graduation rates and that African-American males in particular experience the greatest benefits when schools are reorganized to focus on ninth grade.

What do we need to do on a national scale? First, high-poverty secondary schools need to be redesigned with the special problems of their students in mind, with a focus on freshman year. In practice, this means starting new schools and transforming existing ones.

Second, early warning systems need to be instituted so that teachers and other committed adults can step in at the first sign a student is in trouble, whether it's cutting class, mouthing off or floundering in English or math.

Third, we should employ additional adults to support students who need daily nagging and nurturing to succeed, especially during the key transitional years in sixth and ninth grades.

We also need the larger community, including local businesses and faith-based organizations, to mentor students by showing them how to set goals, apply to college and acquire workplace skills. This sounds expensive, but it does not have to be, particularly if we stop wasting money on failed strategies like holding kids back in high school. Asking struggling students to repeat a grade under the same circumstances almost guarantees the same result.

We are already paying a lot for failure. On average, holding a student back costs \$11,000. The 660 high schools that produce half of African-American male dropouts spend more than \$500 million a year to retain more than 46,000 boys and girls in ninth grade.

There is an unexpected path forward, the outlines of which are in view. We can provide our most vulnerable children with a better chance for adult success. They deserve no less.

Robert Balfanz is a research professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Education and the director of the Everyone Graduates Center.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

BIZ GROUP SETS GOAL OF 5,000 NEW CITY RESIDENTS (WILNJ)

By Yann Ranaivo

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

The organization that promotes business in Wilmington wants to attract 5,000 new residents to the city during the next five years.

But city leaders and people who sell and manage properties in Wilmington say the city has some major humps to get over if it wants to see a major turnaround in residency anytime soon.

The New Castle County Chamber of Commerce plans to host a session at the World Cafe Live at the Queen on June 25 during which it will invite people with a vested interest in the city to take part in discussions to boost city residency.

Chamber President Mark Kleinschmidt said similar sessions will occur quarterly for the remainder of this year. He said there are developments occurring in the city, such as a proposal to establish a creative district near the downtown, that an infusion of new residents would complement well.

"Every new resident to the city represents new revenue to the city," he said.

A big jump in residents would bring a new level of vibrancy to the city because of the increased visits to shops and restaurants, among other things, Kleinschmidt said.

"It would create more of a sense of community. You're going to see more participation in the existing events that are there," he said. "That will also bring other people to Wilmington."

Kleinschmidt knows seeing 5,000 people move into the city during the next few years is an ambitious goal.

"You have to have a target," he said. "It may be a lofty goal, but again you need to have a goal to go for. Say we only got 3,000. I'll take that big three."

Alan Emsley, who sells and rents homes throughout the city and county, said one of the biggest deterrents he deals with when trying to attract tenants to his Wilmington properties is crime.

"The first thing you got to do is quit shooting people," Emsley said. "Wilmington has a lot of very positive things, and I really like Wilmington. But the overriding thing is people are constantly shooting other people, and they don't seem to be able to do anything about it. It overshadows everything else."

Violent crime in the city has been among the nation's highest for the last several years.

In 2012, the last year for which statistics are available, FBI data shows Wilmington was the third most violent of about 450 cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000. That year Wilmington was eighth most violent among all cities in America with more than 50,000 people, including being more violent than the four giants within 120 miles - Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York and Washington, D.C.

The city's poor public safety reputation didn't get any help in 2013 when Wilmington saw a record year in violence with 127 shootings.

Emsley said he knows most of the shootings are between criminals, but innocent bystanders sometimes get caught in the middle of the struggle. He referred to an incident in the city last month during which a woman who was sitting on her porch with her grandson was hit by stray bullets.

"Mayor [Jim] Baker used to say it's one criminal shooting another criminal. There's probably a lot of truth to that," Emsley said, "but some also don't shoot too good and innocent people get hit."

"If the perception is that it's not safe in Wilmington, the end result is people moving out. You might be that person sitting on the porch, and instead of getting wounded, you might get killed."

Mayor Dennis P. Williams, who recently appointed a new police chief, has said improving the relationship between the force and the neighborhoods will be key to addressing crime because it would allow some residents to feel more comfortable about speaking with officers when incidents occur later.

Councilwoman Loretta Walsh, a member of the council's Public Safety Committee, said she thinks neighborhood cooperation can make the difference in serious crimes being solved. She said it could also deter future crimes because it would send a "message that Wilmington is no longer open for crime business."

Others involved in the local real estate market, including Emsley, said some city policies don't seem friendly to growth.

Bob Weir, CEO of the New Castle County Board of Realtors, said city departments such as Public Works, Real Estate and Housing and License and Inspections could be merged because utilities, trash collections and building code inspections all ultimately tie back to real estate.

The extra money generated from merging some operations could be used to knock down houses that have been deemed obsolete, Weir said. The city could then reserve the empty lots for future development, Weir said.

"Now 10 or 15 years down the road, you have a site where you can build a competitive housing marketplace," he said.

Emsley voiced displeasure at an upcoming 5 percent increase in the city's property taxes and a red lights camera program, which he argues is more geared at generating money than improving traffic safety.

Earlier this year, The News Journal collected data on local taxes and fees to compare the costs of living in Wilmington and surrounding cities. A Wilmington homeowner living in a house assessed at \$100,000 with a combined household income of \$100,000 pays an average of \$5,937 a year in local taxes and water and sewer fees. That same homeowner would pay an average of \$3,757 in New Castle, \$3,400 in Newark and \$3,763 in Bear.

"If you can afford to live somewhere else, why wouldn't you do that?" Emsley said. "To get people

to move to the city, you got to make it so there are advantages."

Wilmington does offer advantages, but they have been undersold, Walsh said.

Walsh touted the city's parks system and entertainment venues such as the DuPont Theatre, World Cafe Live, Grand Opera House and the Delaware Art Museum. She said city living also brings residents close to dining venues, which said lowers the need to drive a car.

"For a city our size, it's insane the amount of amenities we have," she said.

But Walsh said crime needs to be handled.

"We have to get a real handle on our neighborhoods where we have very decent people living in them," she said. "Until we get a handle on that, we won't be able to sell the city as a whole."

FIVE RUNNING TO BE NEXT DOVER MAYOR (WILNJ)

By Jon Offredo

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

Voters at polls in Dover will have five candidates to choose from in the scheduled June 17 non-partisan mayoral special election.

The election to fill former Dover mayor Carleton Carey's seat comes after city council pressured Carey to step down following allegations he violated employment and affirmative action policies and abused his authority by influencing the appointment of a deputy police chief. The election is to fill the spot for the remainder of the term. It expires next May.

Dover's mayor is a full-time position and mainly plays the role as economic cheerleader for the city, as well as overseeing Dover's police department.

The common theme among the five candidates was a desire to drive economic development to the city and bring in new revenue through business growth. The candidates will be at a question and answer session at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Mount Zion AME Church on North Queen Street.

"A lot of people have written us off," said former council president and councilman Robin Christiansen. "Commercial spaces remain empty and homes are still unsold."

Christiansen said his prior experience with the city, working with the Delaware Economic Development Office and the larger employers in town puts him in the perfect place to drive the city forward.

Other candidates, like Chevis Anderson, say what the city needs is a new look at how things are done. Anderson, a recent graduate of Delaware State University and licensed banker, said he wants to bring a new perspective. Anderson ran for the Capital School District school board in 2010.

"The city needs a fresh breath of air," he said. "It's been such a long time since we had some different ideas and different opinions and a whole different perspective."

Longtime businessman and state board of education member Jeff Reed said he'd bring a businessman's perspective to the city. The city needs to do some serious and out-of-the box thinking about how they are going to raise revenue, he said.

The city council recently staved off a potential 7-cent hike to property taxes by dipping into its electric fund reserves to plug a \$2.2 million deficit in the general fund. The city has also toyed with the idea of the mayor's role being either part-time or full-time.

Reed said he would want it to be a full-time position.

Councilman David Anderson is the only current council member running for mayor.

Anderson said he wants to focus on economic development that would benefit local businesses and communities.

"We have to grow our way out of the economic problems," he said. One of the ways he'd do that is to ensure that small businesses in the community have all the tools they need to function.

If elected, he says he will reach out to the community more and find out what the exact needs are in relation to the police department.

For James Webster, who ran for council in the mid-2000s, the mayoral position is one that has to bring economic development to the city. New projects coming to the city, like Calpine Corporation's power plant site, are good starts, but with the coming departure of K-mart there are still prime spots that need to be worked on.

One of the things he said he wants to do is get the state more involved with its capital financially, especially in terms of payment in lieu of taxes.

"It's a squeaky wheel that gets the grease," he said. "So I think we're going to have to be squeaky

a bit and make a little noise."

FBI DECLINES TO PROVIDE STATUS ON SHOOTING SUSPECT (WILNJ)

By William H. McMichael

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

The FBI on Saturday declined to provide any information on the man who officials said fired shots in a Wilmington Veterans Affairs Medical Center parking lot the day before, including where he is being held, whether any charges have been filed and any other details related to the case.

The suspect, described by VA officials as a 40-to-50-year-old male, brandished an unidentified firearm and fired shots in the medical center's west parking lot at about 3:15 p.m. Friday, officials said.

VA Police apprehended the man after what witnesses described as two shots fired. The suspect was said to have sustained minor injuries during the apprehension and was being treated at the center's Emergency Department. The VA said it couldn't provide more information as the case had been turned over to the FBI.

For now, the FBI isn't saying anything.

"That may change Monday," Amy Thoreson of the FBI's Baltimore office said Saturday afternoon. She said she was "unable to comment further at this time."

The News Journal asked the FBI which agency is holding the suspect; where the suspect is being held; the suspect's name, age and hometown; whether any charges have been filed; and for any other pertinent details.

State Police received a report of shots fired at about 3:30 p.m. Friday, but their services were not required, spokesman Sgt. Paul Shavack said. As the hospital is federal property, State Police do not have jurisdiction there and do not respond unless requested to assist.

COURT PAPERS SHOW MATUSIEWICZ 'HIT LIST' (WILNJ)

By Sean O'Sullivan

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

Just over a year before her death, Christine Belford warned about the Matusiewicz family's potential to violently lash out, specifically mentioning the man who would later shoot her to death at the New Castle County Courthouse: estranged father-in-law Thomas Matusiewicz.

"Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him," she wrote in an email to her attorney in November 2011.

Belford also predicted that after David Matusiewicz lost his parental rights to the three children they had together, family members might strike out in a rage at everyone involved in the process, including their own attorneys.

Those fears also apparently proved correct. According to court papers filed last month, investigators recovered what appeared to be a hit list from the vehicle Tom Matusiewicz was driving on Feb. 11, 2013.

"The first name on the list was Belford's," according to federal prosecutors, in court papers.

The other dozen or so names on the list are all blanked out in the court filing but prosecutors state in a brief that the names include "lawyers, judges and witnesses involved in David and Lenore Matustiewicz's prior kidnapping cases, as well as prior Family Court custody and termination of parental rights proceedings."

The judge who oversaw the federal kidnapping and bank fraud case against David Matusiewicz, and sentenced him to four years in prison in 2009, was Chief U.S. District Court Judge Gregory M. Sleet.

The News Journal has learned, through interviews with sources who have firsthand knowledge, that Sleet and at least one of Matusiewicz's lawyers are on the list.

Sleet is now presiding over the conspiracy and interstate cyber stalking trial against David Matusiewicz, his mother Lenore and his sister Amy Gonzalez, where if convicted the three each face up to life in prison.

Asked if Sleet was on the list, Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward McAndrew responded that he could not speak to the issue "at this time."

Federal Public Defender Edson Bostic, who is representing David Matusiewicz, declined comment. Jeremy H.G. Ibrahim, who is representing Amy Gonzalez said he was still reviewing government

documents.

Kenneth C. Edelin Jr., who is representing Lenore Matusiewicz, could not be reached for comment.

Sleet's appearance on the list might bring about a motion to have him recuse himself from the case, legal experts say.

In the past several weeks, Sleet denied a defense motion to have the case moved from Delaware and set the case for a 30-35 day trial in March 2015.

Widener Law Professor Emeritus Tom Reed said that "if I were defense counsel I would need to have a conference with that judge" on the apparent hit list.

Reed said defense attorneys generally don't like to file motions to remove a judge from a case, but in a case like this one "it is really worth discussing."

But he added that if such a discussion, or motion to have Sleet step aside, takes place, "it is not open-and-shut."

Judges can sit on cases where they might be peripherally involved, Reed said. And while prosecutors charge there was an orchestrated conspiracy between the surviving members of the Matusiewicz family and Tom Matusiewicz, the defendants have maintained that they had no knowledge of Tom Matusiewicz's violent plans for Feb. 11, 2013.

In interviews and videos posted online before her arrest, Lenore Matusiewicz maintained that her husband acted erratically and irrationally due to a brain tumor.

McAndrew did not want to discuss the list of names, or even address if prosecutors believe that the title of the handwritten document - "HL" - stands for hit list. He said the document has not yet been entered as evidence in the case and was included in a recent court filing for the limited purpose of addressing legal arguments filed by the defense.

The names on the list have been redacted because prosecutors do not believe there is a reason to make them public at this early stage of the case, McAndrew added.

However, an attorney who represented a member of the Matusiewicz family confirmed that shortly after the shooting he was contacted by the FBI and was warned that his name was on what appeared to be a hit list and that he should take appropriate measures to protect his safety. He did not want his name used.

According to court documents, the "HL" document was a page from a red spiral bound notebook that was found in the white Honda SUV that Thomas Matusiewicz used to drive David Matusiewicz to the courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013, where he was set to attend a child support hearing with Christine Belford.

A video that was obtained by The News Journal in 2013 shows father and son getting out of the SUV together and walking to the New Castle County Courthouse shortly before Tom Matusiewicz shot and killed Belford along with her friend Laura "Beth" Mulford. Tom Matusiewicz then exchanged gunfire with Capitol Police before taking his own life.

Surveillance footage shows David and Thomas Matusiewicz entering and leaving the parking garage before the shootings at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013.

The SUV was parked across King Street from the courthouse in the garage underneath the Renaissance Centre. According to the recent court filing, other items recovered in the SUV included: a computer, a photo of one of Belford's children and the note "please copy & send to Dave! :) Love you all!!!! Remember shhhhhhh!!! LOL" and a black duffel bag in the hatch-back area containing a bullet proof vest, ammunition, an electric shock device, knives, plastic zip restraints and the red notebook.

Inside the notebook were handwritten notes about David's criminal kidnapping case; his Family Court case with Belford; phone numbers and addresses of people associated with Belford; real estate listing documents for Belford's home with notes indicating which rooms were occupied by the children and the "HL" list of a dozen or so names.

On the list, Belford was identified by the code "WB," which prosecutors wrote, "stood for a derogatory name that the defendants and Thomas Matusiewicz used for her."

"WB" is believed to stand for "whore bitch."

"WB/NM" is circled on the list along with two other names that are blanked out. While Belford was identified by code, other names were fully spelled out. McAndrew said he could not discuss what "NM" may mean or stand for.

The family also drove a second vehicle from Texas to Delaware in February 2013, and according

to court papers the keys to that car, a silver Honda Civic, were recovered from David Matusiewicz. Inside that car, which had been parked at a home in Maryland on the day of the shooting, investigators recovered a DPMS .223 rifle with scope inside a black rifle case, a Smith & Wesson .357 revolver, a Glock 19 9mm semiautomatic handgun, numerous rounds of ammunition, numerous magazines for firearms, a green metal ammunition case, a shovel and several red gas cans.

A closer look at the Matusiewicz family history and what sparked the tragedy at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11. (2/24/13)

While David and Thomas Matusiewicz were at the courthouse, Lenore Matusiewicz was at the Maryland home where the car was parked on Feb. 11, 2013. Gonzalez was in Texas.

In court papers, defense attorneys have argued that the indictments against the family should be tossed out because the government is essentially trying to criminalize the free speech of family members who were expressing their opinions about Belford in the years and months before her death.

Prosecutors responded that the statements by members of the Matusiewicz family were not protected speech because they were clearly defamatory - accusing Belford of unsubstantiated child abuse - and were also evidence of their criminal intent to harass and stalk Belford, ultimately resulting in her death.

"Speech is not protected by the First Amendment when it is the very vehicle of the crime itself," wrote prosecutors.

Prosecutors charge the Matusiewicz family wanted to put Belford in fear for her life and succeeded in doing so. To back up their charge, the government then quotes from e-mail conversations between Belford and her attorney.

In November 2011, after David's parental rights were terminated and Belford received what prosecutors described as "an intimidating and harassing letter" from Lenore Matusiewicz, Belford wrote: "David and his family like to see my [sic] suffer, especially David ... He plays dirty and tries to obtain his target, regardless of what it takes."

"David has nothing to lose at this point, he has lost everything. He may allow me to survive to suffer. I may survive long enough to watch the girls be harmed. I may even go missing ... BTW: If I go 'missing' - call the police," she wrote.

Belford told her attorney that she had already taken out a life insurance policy, was working on finalizing her will and planned to buy a gun as soon as she had the money.

One of the reasons that Belford apparently feared for her life is that she felt David Matusiewicz had threatened her life previously. In the recent court filing, prosecutors include a redacted version of a letter David Matusiewicz wrote to Judge Sleet before the 2009 kidnapping sentencing.

Matusiewicz acknowledged he made a "wrong" decision in kidnapping his three children and taking them to Central America, but he also still blamed Belford.

"She was an expert at manipulating people and even had me arrested by telling the police I was having a nervous breakdown and had threatened to kill her," he wrote.

Prosecutors also include excerpts from a separate letter to Sleet, written around the same time, by Lenore Matusiewicz who maintained that Belford was a threat to the children. She described Belford as "the next Andrea Yates, Susan Smith [two women who had mental issues and killed their children]... she can snap at any time."

In the Nov. 2011 email exchange, Belford then expresses concern for attorneys, experts and judicial officers that had been involved in the bitter custody battle saying they all "may become a mis-directed target of their anger."

She concludes by noting, "Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him."

COONS VISITS CLOSED I-495 BRIDGE (WILNJ)

By Melissa Nann Burke

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

WILMINGTON - In a visit to the shutdown I-495 bridge Friday morning, U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Delaware, commended Transportation Secretary Shailen Bhatt for the "prompt and effective and responsible action" he and his engineers took to tackle the problem causing the structure to lean. Following the declaration of a limited state of emergency by Gov. Jack Markell on Thursday, federal officials approved \$2 million in emergency-relief funds to assist with traffic control and

preliminary engineering at the site.

"Much more will likely be needed in federal resources, and I'm committed to working with the rest of Delaware's congressional delegation to make sure those resources are available," Coons, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said.

Bhatt said the \$2 million is a great help, but "just the first step in a long process."

"It's a big deal when the feds step in and bring a checkbook because that allows us to worry about one less thing, and we have a lot to worry about right now," Bhatt said.

Discovery of the tilt in the bridge in the area of Christiana Avenue forced a full shutdown of I-495 at the bridge Monday evening, disrupting traffic across the region. An average 90,000 vehicles a day cross the bridge.

The highway is closed between Terminal Avenue and 12th Street, and motorists are advised to use I-95 and I-295 as alternates.

The state Department of Transportation's investigations have focused heavily on a contractor's stockpile of dirt stretching the length of a football field just to the east of the affected piers. The bridge is leaning in that direction by as much as 4 degrees out of vertical alignment.

This week, excavations revealed that steel piles in the bridge's foundation are deformed and displaced sideways, creating cracks across the width of at least two concrete footings.

Experts say the movement observed of steel piles is consistent with a force caused by seismic activity, or the massive load of dirt compressing soils on the east side of the leaning piers.

A dirt hauler, Keogh Contracting Co., has been working to remove the material since Monday.

DelDOT also has hired a contractor to step up the pace of removal, in addition to DelDOT crews who have pitched in.

"We've been working around the clock. We're going to continue to work around the clock," Bhatt said Friday.

Contractors are continuing to excavate other footings to determine the extent of the damage, he said.

Coons took the opportunity to emphasize the need for Congress to restore funding to the federal Highway Trust Fund to help tackle the backload of transportation and port infrastructure improvements needed nationwide.

"There are tens of billions of dollars of repairs that need to be made all over this country. Those repairs would put Americans to work, which would strengthen our economy and grow our community and improve the safety of our highways and bridges," Coons said.

"This is just another area where partisan differences in our Congress are preventing us from coming together as they should."

Officials say the federal emergency-relief dollars that would go to the I-495 bridge are maintained in fund separate from the Highway Trust Fund, which is expected to exhaust its reserves this summer without congressional action.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS:

BRIDGE CLOSURE CAUSE TO RETHINK ROADS (WILNJ)

By John Sweeney

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, June 7, 2014

Last week Delaware closed a bridge and tumbled into a public relations disaster.

Suddenly, a bridge many of us use every day was termed a crucial "East Coast span" and people throughout the country were reading about Delaware's mishap. Google Maps even "disappeared" a section of I-495 from its system, thus, giving headline writers a chance to have some fun with a ghost bridge. They joked, but we felt our heads hurt.

Right now, as we think about how we will get to work on Monday morning or home from the beach Sunday night, that bridge closing is putting pressure on the state.

Thousands of people are plotting how to avoid Delaware. They don't want to pass through, stop by or shop here. The folks who use the state's highways to ship goods are looking for alternative routes. The businesses that produce products in Delaware are trying to make up time and cut the added expenses of slow traffic and stalled highways. Delaware commuters, stuck behind long lines of cars, worry about getting to work on time while their bosses are counting the minutes, then

the hours of lost productivity. Even those who make our summers special - the people behind the Greek, Italian and Firefly festivals - are worrying about the effect tilting columns will have their fun, games and music.

The truth is, we don't know.

We don't know the cause of the tilting. We don't know how the bridge will be fixed or how long it will take. And we don't know whether any of those who are staying away will ever come back.

People follow habits. If a Pennsylvania driver decides it's not worth traveling along those crowded alternate routes to save a little on sales tax, maybe he'll get used to staying home.

Roads do matter, it seems.

The thought must have popped into the minds of many in the General Assembly that a week ago Gov. Markell's plea for a tax increase was all but dead. Judging by public comments, a good number of Delawareans thought the governor had his nerve asking for a 10-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax increase when everything was working fine and dandy.

Of course, the damage to the columns of the I-495 bridge probably would have happened with or without the tax. However, now a lot of people are thinking our roads are a trifle more important than we supposed.

We think of roads in personal terms, that is, when we pay any attention at all to them. They are only important when we need them to get from one place to another. As a Carnegie Endowment report put it a couple of years ago: "The relationship between the locations of things drives demand for transportation." Thus, if someone wants to move goods on a truck from the Port of Wilmington to Baltimore, then the highway span over the Christina River is mighty important. If a closed bridge drives road-choking traffic onto a street I normally use, then reopening the bridge matters a lot more than I ever would have dreamed.

If the relationships between those things change, then the demand for that road and all that goes with it changes too. Right now that ghost span is killing northern New Castle County. Yet there are Delawareans in Sussex County who don't give a hoot about I-495, open or shut.

We expect the government to honor our demand for transportation between the places we want to go to, like our home and the store. But there is no end to the creation of new places we want to go to, so the government always lags behind our demand for quick-moving, convenient, uncrowded roadways.

All of which brings us back to Gov. Markell's tax. He wanted to fix and update and expand the system. He asked for a lot of money, more than anyone wanted to spend.

A week ago we could dismiss the idea because keeping that tax money in our pockets made more sense than a threat to the roads we couldn't see.

We know roads are concrete and asphalt. Yet we don't notice them until they break or get too crowded.

If on normal days, we fail to see the physical deterioration, how can we notice when trouble develops with the true purpose of our roads - transmission lines.

Their construction is based on laws of physics, chemistry and geology. Their usefulness is based on how they allow us to move and the role they play in how our economy operates. We understand why they are useful when we can drive to work or to the store. We don't always understand their importance as value chains. For example, how long does it take a truck carrying grapes from Chile to go from Point A to Point B? How much does it cost in time and fuel? At what point will the cost force the shipper to look for another venue?

Roads and bridges age. The Interstate Highway System was officially declared completed in 1991. That means the newest part of the interstate is 23 years old. Other parts - the ones around here - are considerably older.

They were not built for the constant pounding of trucks and SUVs.

The builders of the highway system also assumed they had found a way to pay for its upkeep.

Taxes on gasoline would be funneled back into the system. That way the users of the roads would pay. Yet neither Congress nor the General Assembly would dare raise the tax per gallon.

The builders didn't consider human nature or our political system. They didn't factor in the core belief of most Americans that they can get something without paying for it. Roads, we assume, pay for themselves.

Nor do any of us understand why we thrill at building a new highway, but shrink from modernizing old ones. Roads are supposed to live forever.

We also are a victim of our success. We drive fewer miles these days. That means we buy less gasoline and pay less in taxes. We also have cars with better gas mileage. So, again, we don't buy as much as gasoline and pay fewer taxes.

Yet our demand that roads not have holes and stay open to traffic all day and all night comes with a price. And that maintenance price - in material, supplies and labor - goes up each year.

Most people would say that at some point something would have to give. Not us. We don't have to reconcile the impossible. We can have it all and not pay the full price.

Until something really goes wrong.

Will the closing of I-495 do anything to revive the governor's tax plan? That will be interesting to watch.

The governor says that the federal government will pay 90 percent of the repair cost for the bridge.

The federal government is having its own money problems when it comes to roads. So at some point, we will have to pay a share of that 90 percent.

More immediately, the important question is: 90 percent of what? We don't know how much the repair will cost. So that tiny little 10 percent may end up costing Delawareans a lot.

At that point, the I-495 bridge closing will be more than a public relations disaster.

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VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Biden Pledges \$48M In Aid To Ukraine

By Ferdous Al-Faruque

[The Hill](#), June 8, 2014

The U.S. is giving an additional \$48 million to the new Ukrainian government to bolster its economy, the White House announced Saturday.

The additional funds will help fight corruption, bolster energy security and strengthen its State Border Guard Service.

Vice President **Biden** announced the pledge during a trip to Kiev for the inauguration of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

"Pending consultation with the U.S. Congress, this assistance will follow the \$1 billion loan guarantee signed on April 14, a \$50 million crisis-response package announced by Vice President **Biden** on April 21, and \$23 million in security assistance announced to date," the administration said in a statement. "When added to previously budgeted funds, the United States is providing over \$184 million in assistance to Ukraine this year in addition to the loan guarantee."

Ukraine is still in a state of civil war as pro-Russian militias in the east are fighting to break away from the country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered increased security along the Ukrainian border Saturday after Porochenko's swearing-in.

Besides Ukraine, the U.S. is also giving similar aid to other pro-Western countries along Russia's borders, including \$8 million to Moldova and \$5 million to Georgia.

The announcement comes a day after President Obama pressed Putin to recognize the new Ukrainian government.

'USA' Chants Welcome Biden To Ukraine

By Rachel Huggins

[The Hill](#), June 8, 2014

Vice President **Biden** and U.S. officials attending inaugural events honoring Ukraine's new leader were warmly greeted as they walked the streets of Kiev.

After Petro Poroshenko was sworn into office on Saturday, **Biden** and Sen. McCain (R-Ariz.) ditched the presidential motorcade and opted to walk to the new president's reception when crowds lined the streets cheering, "thank you" and "USA."

Members of the delegation include: Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt, Daniel B. Baer, ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Biden greeted everyone he encountered as he and other presidential delegation members walked the red carpet leading to the ceremony.

"How are you? You're a handsome boy. I'd like to borrow that tie," **Biden** told a young boy, according to a White House pool report. He also said hello to several officials and introduced McCain, saying, "You know my friend the senator."

Poroshenko and **Biden** spoke for a few minutes at the reception.

"Mr. President, congratulations," **Biden** said before posing for photos. McCain embraced the chocolate tycoon-turned president with a hug.

"It's wonderful to stand with you," Murphy told the new president.

Complex Times For VP's Son To Work At Ukraine Firm

By Stephen Braun

[Associated Press](#), June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON — Vice President Joe **Biden**'s visit Saturday to support Ukraine's fragile democracy came soon after his youngest son was hired by a private Ukrainian company that promotes energy independence from Moscow.

Yet that company leases natural gas fields in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea and is owned by a former government minister with ties to Ukraine's ousted pro-Russian president.

The hiring of Hunter **Biden**, 44, by Burisma Holdings Limited in April was approved by the company's owner, a former senior minister and political ally of Viktor Yanukovich, the exiled Ukrainian president. Yanukovich fled to Russia in February after protests erupted over his efforts to establish closer economic ties with Moscow.

Hunter **Biden**'s employment means he will be working as a director and top lawyer for a Ukrainian energy company during the period when his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence the policies of Ukraine's new government, especially on energy issues.

There's no indication that Hunter **Biden**, his father or Burisma is crossing any legal or ethical lines, although ethics experts appear divided over the implications of Hunter **Biden**'s new job.

American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House.

"The primary problem here is the fact that Hunter **Biden** has set up a financial arrangement with someone who might have business pending before this administration," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert with Public Citizen, a Washington-based government reform organization.

Joe **Biden** led the U.S. delegation at Saturday's inauguration of Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, and announced \$48 million in additional aid for the Kiev government. **Biden** met Poroshenko and said "there is a window for peace and you know as well as anyone that it will not stay open indefinitely ... America is with you."

Ukraine is an important natural-gas and petroleum-liquids transit country. Two major pipeline systems carry Russian gas through Ukraine to Western Europe.

Burisma is headed by Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who held senior posts over natural resources, environment and defense in Ukraine. The company has aggressively bought up Ukrainian oil and natural gas leases and companies.

Hunter **Biden**'s new company says it aims to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

As a Burisma director and the company's top lawyer, the younger **Biden** has yet to take any public actions on behalf of the company.

But the timing of his hiring is politically awkward for the administration's efforts to shore up Ukraine's pro-Western government, and poses potential complications from Burisma's growing energy interests and the background of Hunter **Biden**'s new boss, Zlochevskyi.

At least two oil and natural gas fields leased by subsidiaries of Burisma are in Ukrainian territories where pro-Russian sentiments remain strong, according to government and media releases, independent energy maps and Burisma's website.

One is in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea; the other is in the eastern Ukrainian Kharkiv region. Instability there could force the younger **Biden**'s new company to coordinate with pro-Russian separatists whom the U.S. considers illegitimate.

White House officials declined to comment on Hunter **Biden**'s association with Burisma and the company's holdings in Crimea and east Ukraine.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, previously said that **Biden**'s son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe **Biden** "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Presidents and vice presidents have long been vexed by relatives rewarded for family ties.

Political loan troubles shadowed Vice President Richard Nixon's brother, Donald, during the 1960 election, and President Jimmy Carter's brother, Billy, who accepted a \$220,000 stipend in 1981 from Libya's Moammar Gadhafi.

In recent years, several Bush and Clinton relatives were caught in a string of murky financial and political dealings.

But “unless there’s solid evidence that Hunter **Biden** got his job to influence American foreign policy, there’s no clear line that’s been crossed,” said Melanie Sloan, executive director of the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

A former Washington lobbyist, the vice president’s son is effectively exempt from most rules that would require him to describe publicly the legal work he does on behalf of Burisma.

Hunter **Biden** will not lobby for the company, said Lawrence Pacheco, an official with FTI Consulting, a Washington government affairs company recently hired by Burisma.

Pacheco did not say whether **Biden** might oversee or advise on any future Burisma lobbying strategy in the U.S. Pacheco said the company “does not take positions on political matters.”

But **Biden**’s company may have to deal with Ukrainian enclaves that the U.S. does not recognize diplomatically or are threatened by instability.

One Burisma subsidiary, KrymTopEnergoServis, operates natural gas fields and has headquarters in the Crimea, which seceded from Ukraine this year and now aligns with Russia.

A second subsidiary, Esco-Pivnich, produces oil and natural gas just west of Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city, which was the site of several protests and borders on separatist-controlled provinces. The company’s website confirms that Burisma operates oil and natural gas sites in Crimea and east Ukraine, as well as elsewhere in Ukraine.

“While he’s just at the beginning of his involvement with this company, Ukraine is volatile right now and there are all sorts of problems that might crop up down the line,” said Bill Allison, the editorial director of the Sunlight Foundation, a nonpartisan watchdog group.

Pacheco said the company’s western and eastern operations have been unaffected by Ukraine’s unrest but that its Crimea subsidiary is not operating currently. He did not explain further, but confirmed KrymTopEnergoServis is based and leases gas deposits in Crimea.

Hunter **Biden**, Zlochevskyi and other company officials would not comment publicly, Pacheco said.

Hunter **Biden** is a managing director with Rosemont Seneca Partners, a private equity firm, and worked as a Washington lobbyist for seven years until his father was elected vice president. He lobbied primarily for colleges, hospitals and tech firms.

Pacheco said **Biden**’s son came to Burisma’s attention after he was introduced by Devon Archer, another new Burisma board member, to Alan Apter, Burisma’s board chairman. Archer works with Hunter **Biden** at Rosemont and was a top fundraiser for now-Secretary of State John Kerry when Kerry ran for president in 2004. Zlochevskyi approved **Biden**’s hiring, Pacheco said.

Zlochevskyi, 48, worked as minister of natural resources and environment under Yanukovych and most recently was deputy secretary of Ukraine’s national security and defense council, which advised Yanukovych on defense matters.

Zlochevskyi also served in the Ukrainian parliament from 2007 to 2011 as a member of the Party of Regions, the political party affiliated with Yanukovych and traditionally aligned with pro-Russian interests.

Zlochevskyi’s name is missing from Burisma’s web site, but financial documents in Cyprus as well as U.S. Securities and Exchange records show that he owns the bulk of Burisma’s shares. Zlochevskyi’s Cyprus-based Brociti Investments Limited controls Burisma.

Hunter **Biden** joined Burisma in April, the same month his father visited Kiev to show support for the new interim government.

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Ukraine Energy Firm Hiring Biden's Son Raises Ethical Concerns

[FOX News](#), June 8, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden's** visit Saturday to Ukraine in support of the country's new democratic government is renewing concerns about his youngest son being hired by a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

Hunter **Biden** will be working for the company while his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence energy policies and other issues of the new government, which is gripped in a struggle with Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the county.

The company, Burisma Holdings Limited, says it wants to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

The other major issues are Hunter **Biden's** new employer leases natural gas fields in Crimea, an eastern Ukraine peninsula being controlled by Russia in the country's months-long political upheaval. And the company is owned by a former Ukraine government minister, Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who has ties to the country's ousted pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich.

The 44-year-old **Biden** was hired in April and will be a director and lawyer for the company.

American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House, and there's no indication that the situation crosses legal or ethical lines.

But ethics experts appear divided over the implications.

"The primary problem here is the fact that Hunter **Biden** has set up a financial arrangement with someone who might have business pending before this administration," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert with Public Citizen, a Washington-based government reform organization.

Joe **Biden** led the U.S. delegation at Saturday's inauguration of Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, and announced \$48 million in additional aid for the Kiev government. **Biden** met Poroshenko and said "there is a window for peace and you know as well as anyone that it will not stay open indefinitely ... America is with you."

The Office of the Vice President said some of the money will help Ukraine "enhance its energy security."

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The Associated Press contributed to this report.

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Starting Out Behind

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

Today's young people, ages 18 to 24, should have been the lucky ones. They were preteens or teenagers when the recession hit in late 2007, with high school and college still ahead. Unlike those who had to enter the work force in the depths of the downturn, they had time, or so it seemed, to wait out the weak economy.

But that's not how things have worked out. While the worst is over, economic conditions are still subpar, damaging the immediate job prospects and long-term living standards of young adults starting out now.

In recent years, the economy has grown annually at 2 percent or so. That's too slow to make up the current shortfall of nearly seven million jobs, let alone to absorb new graduates or push up wages in jobs that do exist.

To make matters worse, the economy contracted at an annual rate of 1 percent in the first quarter of 2014. A rebound is expected, but there is little in the economic data or current policy to suggest that an upsurge will be sustained; over all, economic growth is likely to settle at 2 percent to 2.5 percent.

For young people, these conditions will only deepen a long trend of increasing economic hardship. Census data that compares today's 18-to-24-year-olds with the same age group in 1970 and in 1990 show more poverty among young adults over time, as well as lower income and less independence. But young people today are appreciably worse off than those in previous generations.

In 1970, for example, 13.9 percent of people ages 18 to 24 were in poverty. In 1990, 15.9 percent were poor; in 2012, the last year of available data, 20.4 percent were poor, or 6.1 million people. That data excludes students living in dorms, as well as most students who live with their parents or receive cash support from them. For young people who are on their own, either living alone or with housemates or spouses, median household income, recently \$30,604, is nearly \$4,600 less than in 1970 and virtually unchanged since 1990, adjusted for inflation.

Lack of opportunity and lack of resources mean a smaller share of young high school and college graduates are relocating, traditionally a way up a career ladder. In 1970, nearly 40 percent of young

people had moved in the prior year; in 1990, it was nearly 32 percent; in 2013, it was only 21.6 percent. Not surprisingly, the share of young adults living with their parents is 55.3 percent, compared with 47.3 percent in 1970 and 52.8 percent in 1990.

Young people are clearly banking on a college education to improve their prospects — 41 percent of 18-to-24-year-olds were recently enrolled in college, a higher share than in previous generations. But the unemployment rate of college graduates ages 21 to 24 remains high at an average of 8.5 percent over the past year. Underemployment — which includes those who are officially unemployed, those who want to work but haven't looked recently for a job and those stuck in part-time jobs — is 16.8 percent.

Equally worrisome, 44 percent of young college graduates in 2012 were working in jobs that didn't require a college degree (versus 38 percent before the recession in 2007), according to data from researchers at the Federal Reserve. In 2000, half of college-educated workers in jobs that didn't require a degree were in generally well-paid professions, working as electricians, for example, or dental hygienists. Now they are more likely to be waiters, bartenders or cashiers.

College-educated workers still earn much more than less-educated ones, but landing a good job at rising pay is made even more difficult as each new group of graduates joins a backlog of unemployed and underemployed college and high school graduates, dating back to the class of 2008.

Over the last six years, one of the economy's biggest problems has been faulty fiscal policy, with the federal government underestimating the need for economic aid or withholding and reducing help prematurely. Another drag has been lack of business investment, even as financial markets have prospered with the help of loose monetary policy.

The result has been an economy where young people starting out are at risk of prolonged underachievement. It is possible to defuse that risk, but not without responsive policy and robust investment.

Detroit's Fight Against Blight

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

At one level, a new report about blight in Detroit can be seen as a cartographic inventory of the abandoned homes, vacant lots and rundown industrial sites that have spread through the once-thriving Motor City like a metastasized cancer. But there is another way to look at this important document: as the starting point for fresh conversation about what needs to be done to stabilize and revive Detroit and other declining cities around the country.

The report, which is based on an ambitious building-by-building census conducted by paid surveyors and volunteers, shows that 78,506 buildings, or 30 percent of the city's structures, are dilapidated or at risk of becoming so. An additional 114,000 parcels of land are empty. The Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, which the Obama administration commissioned to produce this report, estimates that it would cost \$850 million to demolish blighted homes and commercial buildings in neighborhoods and up to \$1 billion more to deal with large industrial sites.

At its peak in 1950, Detroit was home to 1.85 million people; it now has 700,000 residents. The city shrank as global economic forces undermined its industrial base; corrupt and inept local government officials squandered its wealth; and many residents and businesses fled to the suburbs. It also suffered because a succession of state and federal officials neglected the problems of urban areas.

Given the depths of the decline, reviving Detroit will take many years. City officials have already budgeted about \$456 million for removing blight, with much of that money coming from Detroit's bankruptcy plan, which has to be approved by a federal judge. That money should allow the city to do a

lot, but the state of Michigan, the federal government, foundations and others will need to chip in. The report makes a good case that the city should first address blight in neighborhoods that are on the cusp of losing many or most of their residents and where public intervention has the best chance of raising property values and attracting more investment. It also rightly calls on the city to reform its property tax, which is so high that more than half of property owners don't pay the tax. Since the 2008 financial crisis, more than 60,000 properties have been foreclosed for delinquent tax payments; the report notes that 118,000 more are subject to foreclosure or on the way to being foreclosed because their owners haven't paid taxes. Given those bleak numbers, the city might actually collect more revenue by lowering its property tax rate.

But the report provides few recommendations for what the city should do after it demolishes dilapidated homes and cleans vacant lots. It suggests that some lots could be sold to the owners of adjacent properties, while others could be turned into green open spaces. These are fine ideas but seem small-bore compared with the scope of the devastation. The city is very spread out, and must deal with the fact that there is vastly more land than there is demand for housing or commercial properties.

Any comprehensive plan to address that will need the help of the state and the federal government. Some solutions could include shrinking the size of the city — by, for example, turning some lightly populated areas into parks or farms, or ceding management of some areas to the county or state government. In downtown and midtown areas that are already attracting new businesses and residents, greater investment in public services like police, schools and parks could have a significant economic multiplier effect. Detroit Future City, a nonprofit project, has a plan that would focus resources on residential and commercial clusters to demonstrate that change is possible.

Dilapidated buildings and vacant lots are symptoms of larger economic and social problems. Reviving urban neighborhoods will take more than wrecking balls and dump trucks.

The Fixer Offense In Soccer

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

The passionate rivalries of World Cup soccer will soon be enthralling sports fans across the globe, along with throngs of fanatic gamblers placing untold millions in bets.

As the opening matches in Brazil on June 12 draw near, there are rising doubts that FIFA, soccer's world governing body, has enough security and personnel to protect the quadrennial competition from the threat of match fixing that has been bedeviling the sport.

The results of an estimated 680 global matches from 2008 to 2011 — including some World Cup qualifying matches — were found to be suspicious, according to Europol, the European Union's police agency, which counted more than 400 officials, players and criminals involved in match fixing.

The agency increasingly has its eye on gambling syndicates that exploit the vast and largely unregulated Asian gambling markets, where an estimated hundreds of billions of dollars in bets are wagered each year.

According to an investigative report by Declan Hill and Jeré Longman of The Times, fixers have found teams and referees from impoverished countries to be particularly vulnerable to bribery. FIFA promises that the Brazil matches will have tighter security and more rigorous screening of referees and players. But gambling on global soccer is booming, and the syndicates are experienced at beating the game with protection muscle, locker-room infiltrators and businessmen capitalizing on fixes.

FIFA already has a backlog of 90 cases of suspected fixing it deems worthy of investigation, but it has had only six investigators responsible for assorted security needs. The investigators have no

subpoena or criminal law authority in an area that needs a considerably larger staff devoted full time to investigations.

“There are no checks and balances and no oversight,” Terry Steans, a former FIFA investigator, warned after a notorious exhibition match four years ago in South Africa in which a syndicate fixer later bragged he paid \$60,000 to a referee to influence the score.

Global gambling is so frenzied and lucrative that fixers have even staged a tournament in a largely empty stadium devoid of television coverage, all the easier to guide bribed referees and players to the desired result — with no shortage of electronic bettors ready to be fleeced.

No games are watched as intently as World Cup games. FIFA owes it to the world to strengthen its watch so soccer fans can cheer without any doubts.

Pot Rules

By Maureen Dowd

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON — IN the last chapter, I covered how not to get high. In this one, I will cover how to get high.

After my admission that I did a foolish thing in Denver — failing to realize that consuming a single square, about a quarter, of a pot candy bar was dicey for an edibles virgin — many in the pot industry upbraided me for doing a foolish thing.

But some in Mary Jane world have contacted me to say that my dysphoria (i.e., bummer) is happening more and more in Colorado.

Justin Hartfield is the California founder of Marijuana.com and Weedmaps.com (a sort of Yelp for pot), and an entrepreneur involved in some of the nation’s top marijuana-technology companies. As The Wall Street Journal noted in a profile last March, the 30-year-old former high school pot dealer wants to be “the Philip Morris of pot.”

“Your experience points out a significant need for standardized dosing, testing and labeling,” he told me, recalling a similar vertiginous paranoia spiral when he and his wife split a pot brownie in Amsterdam in 2008.

On Friday, Marijuana.com launched an ongoing guide to “the best practices towards both consumption and sale of edibles.” It urged every dispensary in Colorado and throughout America to follow Amsterdam’s lead and put up signs warning about the dangers of oversampling psychotropic treats. (Other websites, from Vice to Vox, also weighed in with helpful safety tips on edibles.)

Hartfield said Weedmaps is providing pamphlets, posters and video to dispensaries and users, including an “Edibles Education” pamphlet with headings like “Start Small,” “Wait” because edibles take two hours or longer to take effect, “Don’t Mix” with alcohol or other substances, and keep “Out of Reach” of children.

“Edibles are not the best delivery device in general for marijuana because it’s notoriously hard to control the titration in your stomach,” Hartfield said. “When you smoke it’s so easy. You have a hit, it affects you immediately. Then you can decide to take another if you want to get higher. With edibles, it hits your stomach all at once, and holy Nelly!”

Some Colorado pols are nervous about stories like that of the Longmont mother who found her 2-year-old daughter eating a pot cookie in front of their apartment building and the two 10-year-olds in Greeley who were caught selling and swapping pot purloined from relatives. (Not to mention the new British study suggesting there may be a correlation between smoking cannabis and a temporary change in the size and shape of sperm.)

"It's kind of shocking in a way that the states that approved it have not had more oversight and consumer information," said Dr. Jerome Groopman of Harvard Medical School, who favors legalization. "The horse is out of the barn, so to speak, and there's a responsibility to consumers and particularly young people. THC is a serious substance. It has increased by 5 to 15 times in today's plants compared to the 1960s. It's a long time since Upton Sinclair. Now consumers have to know: Is it pure? What is the concentration? What are the hazards?"

On Wednesday, the state task force met to forge a rule denoting 10 milligrams as a serving, so that the dosage is clearly demarcated. And on Friday, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed legislation proposing a banking solution for the mainly cash pot business, but the Federal Reserve will need to sign off on it.

Because the Colorado law was approved by referendum, it's like a Wild West statute, where things are getting filled in underneath, with a haphazard application of the regulatory process.

"One major reason I got involved in the movement was so that consumers could have basic access to information about the products they're consuming, which was totally impossible under the prohibition that created the black market," said Tom Angell, the founder and chairman of Marijuana Majority. "So it's particularly disappointing to see that some companies in the legal marijuana industry — which our years of advocacy allowed to exist — are falling short of those principles. It seems basic labeling and consumer information hasn't been a chief priority, but hopefully now it's starting to change."

He wants budtenders behind the counter to be trained so they can give customized guidance to customers of varying tolerance levels.

As the black market comes into the light, the hang-loose community can be uptight about any moves to regulate or put contours around the sale of pot to better protect neophytes, teenagers and children. Perhaps because they have spent so much time fighting to move past the old "Reefer Madness" caricature, the reefer crowd gets mad at the suggestion of any regulation, no matter how small or helpful. The clubby community that long existed in the shadows can have a countercultural reaction to rules.

Also, as one Colorado political aide pointed out: "There's so much money involved. This is a group of people who probably never thought about money, and now a lot of people just have dollar signs in their eyes."

Laughing, he noted, "The weirdest thing in the world is to hear from an angry pothead who finishes a tirade about rules with 'dude.' "

Obama On Obama On Climate

By Thomas L. Friedman

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WHEN it comes to dealing with the world's climate and energy challenges I have a simple rule: change America, change the world.

If America raises its clean energy standards, not only will others follow — others who have hid behind our inaction — we'll also stimulate our industry to invent more of the clean air, clean power and energy efficiency systems, and move them down the cost curve faster, so U.S. companies will be leaders in this next great global industry and American consumers will be the first to benefit. That is why the new Environmental Protection Agency rules President Obama proposed last week to curb carbon emissions from power plants are so pivotal. You can't make power systems greener without making them smarter — smarter materials, software or design. One new ruling will not change the world — and we have to be careful that this one doesn't replace our addiction to coal with an addiction to natural gas alone. But coming at a time when clean energy technologies are becoming more competitive, and when awareness

of climate change is becoming more pervasive, this E.P.A. ruling should give a real boost to clean power and efficiency innovation and make our country more resilient, healthy, secure — and respected.

Several weeks ago, as he was drawing up these new emission rules, I interviewed President Obama in the White House library about climate and energy. Following are highlights. (The interview is also featured in the final episode of Showtime's climate series, "Years of Living Dangerously" airing on Monday.)

For starters, Obama is aware that we can't just keep burning oil, coal and gas until they run out. As the International Energy Agency warned, "no more than one-third of proven reserves of fossil fuels can be consumed prior to 2050" — unless carbon capture and storage technology is widely deployed — otherwise we'll bust through the limit of a 2 degree Celsius rise in average temperature that climate scientists believe will unleash truly disruptive ice melt, sea level rise and weather extremes. The rest has to stay in the ground, and we need to steadily find cleaner alternatives and more energy efficiency. I asked Obama if he agreed with that analysis.

"Science is science," he said. "And there is no doubt that if we burned all the fossil fuel that's in the ground right now that the planet's going to get too hot and the consequences could be dire."

So we can't burn it all?

"We're not going to be able to burn it all. Over the course of the next several decades, we're going to have to build a ramp from how we currently use energy to where we need to use energy. And we're not going to suddenly turn off a switch and suddenly we're no longer using fossil fuels, but we have to use this time wisely, so that you have a tapering off of fossil fuels replaced by clean energy sources that are not releasing carbon. ... But I very much believe in keeping that 2 [degree] Celsius target as a goal."

If that is so, your environmental supporters wonder why you keep touting how much we're still exploring for oil, coal and natural gas?

"We have got to meet folks where they are," said Obama. "We've gone through, obviously, in the last five years, a tough economic crisis. ... I don't always lead with the climate change issue because if you right now are worried about whether you've got a job or if you can pay the bills, the first thing you want to hear is how do I meet the immediate problem? One of the hardest things in politics is getting a democracy to deal with something now where the payoff is long term or the price of inaction is decades away. What we've tried to do is continually find ways in which we can make progress, recognizing that we're not immediately going to get people to abandon the old gas-guzzler" [because] "they can't afford an electric car."

Every morning you get a security briefing from the intelligence community on global threats; do you now also get the same on environmental threats?

"I do," said Obama. Science adviser "John Holdren typically makes presentations when there are new findings," and his reports show that environmental stresses are now impacting both foreign and domestic policy. For instance, wildfires are now "consuming a larger and larger portion of the Department of Interior budget. And if we continue to fund fighting fires the same way we've done in the past, all the money for everything else — for conservation, for maintenance of forests — all that money gets used up."

But the area he's just as worried about, said Obama, "is how climate change could end up having profound national security implications in poorer countries. We're obviously concerned about drought in California or hurricanes and floods along our coastlines and the possibility of more powerful storms or more severe droughts. All of those things are bread-and-butter issues that touch on American families. But when you start seeing how these shifts can displace people — entire countries can be finding

themselves unable to feed themselves and the potential incidence of conflict that arises out of that — that gets your attention. There's a reason why the quadrennial defense review — [which] the secretary of defense and the Joints Chiefs of Staff work on — identified climate change as one of our most significant national security problems. It's not just the actual disasters that might arise, it is the accumulating stresses that are placed on a lot of different countries and the possibility of war, conflict, refugees, displacement that arise from a changing climate."

Syria couldn't manage a four-year drought when it had a government, and that drought helped fuel the uprising there, because the government did nothing for the people. Imagine what will happen if they have another prolonged drought and they've destroyed half their country?

"Which gives you a sense of what happens in a lot of these countries that are just barely hanging on," said Obama. "They don't have a lot of margin for error, and that has national security implications. When people are hungry, when people are displaced, when there are a lot of young people, particularly young men, who are drifting without prospects for the future, the fertility of the soil for terrorism ends up being significant. And it can have an impact on us."

What is the one thing you would still like to see us do to address climate change? Said Obama: put a price on carbon.

The way we've solved previous problems, like acid rain, he noted, "was that we said: 'We're going to charge you if you're releasing this stuff into the atmosphere, but we're going to let you figure out — with the marketplace and with the technology' " how best to mitigate it. But "you can't keep dumping it out in the atmosphere and making everybody else pay for it. So if there's one thing I would like to see, it'd be for us to be able to price the cost of carbon emissions. ... We've obviously seen resistance from the Republican side of the aisle on that. And out of fairness, there's some Democrats who've been concerned about it as well, because regionally they're very reliant on heavy industry and old-power plants. ... I still believe, though, that the more we can show the price of inaction — that billions and potentially trillions of dollars are going to be lost because we do not do something about it — ultimately leads us to be able to say, 'Let's go ahead and help the marketplace discourage this kind of activity.' "

Where does natural gas fit in?

After all, it can be a blessing and a curse. Natural gas emits only half the carbon dioxide of coal when burned, but if methane leaks when oil companies extract it from the ground in a sloppy manner — methane is far more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide — it can wipe out all the advantages of natural gas over coal.

Natural gas, the president said, "is a useful bridge" to span "where we are right now and where we hope to be — where we've got entirely clean energy economies based around the world." Environmentalists, he added, "are right, though, to be concerned if it's done badly, then you end up having methane gas emitted. And we know how to do it properly. But right now what we've got to do is make sure that there are industry standards that everybody is observing." That doesn't "necessarily mean that it has to be a national law," he said. "You could have a series of states working together — and, hopefully, industry working together — to make sure that the extraction of natural gas is done safely."

Do you ever want to just go off on the climate deniers in Congress?

"Yeah, absolutely," the president said with a laugh. "Look, it's frustrating when the science is in front of us. ... We can argue about how. But let's not argue about what's going on. The science is compelling. ... The baseline fact of climate change is not something we can afford to deny. And if you profess leadership in this country at this moment in our history, then you've got to recognize this is going to be one of the most significant long-term challenges, if not the most significant long-term challenge, that this

country faces and that the planet faces. The good news is that the public may get out ahead of some of their politicians” — as people start to see the cost of cleaning up for hurricanes like Sandy or the drought in California — and when “those start multiplying, then people start thinking, ‘You know what? We’re going to reward politicians who talk to us honestly and seriously about this problem.’ “

The president added: “The person who I consider to be the greatest president of all time, Abraham Lincoln, was pretty consistent in saying, ‘With public opinion there’s nothing I cannot do, and without public opinion there’s nothing I can get done,’ and so part of my job over these next two and a half years and beyond is trying to shift public opinion. And the way to shift public opinion is to really focus in on the fact that if we do nothing our kids are going to be worse off.”

The trick, I argued, is to find that fine line between making people feel the problem is urgent, but not insoluble so they just say: If the end is nigh, let’s party.

“The most important thing is to guard against cynicism,” responded the president. “I want to make sure that everybody who’s been watching this program or listening to this interview doesn’t start concluding that, well, we’re all doomed, there’s nothing we can do about it. There’s a lot we can do about it. It’s not going to happen as fast or as smoothly or as elegantly as we like, but, if we are persistent, we will make progress.”

There Is No Alternative

By Ross Douthat

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

IF the excerpts currently circulating in the press are any indication, Hillary Clinton’s latest memoir will resemble pretty much every recent political memoir from a potential presidential candidate: That is, it will be chloroform in print.

Which no doubt troubles its “author” not at all. Clinton has every incentive to bore us, sedate us, lull us to sleep — to hit the snooze button, in effect, for as long as our politics makes possible. She is the rare presidential hopeful who has nothing whatsoever to gain from making news. Leading the Democratic presidential field by a Secretariat-esque margin; leading every potential Republican candidate by around 10 points; running far ahead of President Obama’s job approval numbers ... if she had her way, all the months from here till 2016 would be consumed by devouring time without anything altering her current image.

And her desire converges almost perfectly with the interests of her party, even if not every liberal quite realizes it yet. That’s because Clinton’s iconic status is, increasingly, the only clear advantage the Democratic Party has. If her position is weakened, diminished or challenged, the entire coalition risks collapse.

Liberals don’t see this clearly yet because they tend to regard the Obama coalition as a left-of-center mirror-image of Nixon’s and Reagan’s conservative majority — a natural, settled and, thanks to demographic trends, growing presidential majority (if not a congressional one) that should deliver the White House to their party reliably for cycles to come.

Because of this confidence, many Democratic partisans assume that 2016 will inevitably be better for their party than the looming midterms, and many analysts assume that the Republican Party is a long, long way from mounting a substantive challenge to liberalism. My friends on the left have an extensive list of things that the right simply “must” do before the G.O.P. can be relevant at the presidential level again (crush the Tea Party, then move left on immigration, then move left on everything else ...), and they express a certain condescension toward the recent stirrings of conservative policy innovation: Nice effort, but you’ll have to move a lot further in our direction if you expect to win the White House back.

But there's a big flaw in their historical analogy. Political skill builds majorities, but popular policy successes cement them — and that is what has consistently eluded Obama. He resembles Reagan when it comes to electoral-majority building, but he's a Reagan without the economic boom, without the foreign policy achievements and without the high approval ratings.

As Ramesh Ponnuru writes in the latest issue of *National Review*, while “the Democrats of the 1980s had to respond to a country that was largely happy with Republican governance and to specific conservative policy successes,” today's electorate “is persistently unhappy” with the direction of the country, and “liberal policy successes are too hard to detect to be the basis for concessions” by the right. And liberalism's current forward-looking agenda, such as it is — immigration reform, climate-change regulations, some jaw-jaw about inequality — doesn't really align with those unhappy voters' immediate priorities.

Which means that Obama's coalition, while real enough, may not be durable — and that a Republican comeback at the presidential level might be more likely than many Democrats currently assume.

Especially since the liberal coalition's extraordinary diversity also offers many potential lines of fracture. To invoke an example from this year's grim centennial, the post-Obama Democratic Party could well be the Austro-Hungarian empire of presidential majorities: a sprawling, ramshackle and heterogeneous arrangement, one major crisis away from dissolution.

But this is where Hillary Clinton comes in. If her party is Austria-Hungary, she might be its Franz Josef — the beloved emperor whose imperial persona (“coffered up,” the novelist Joseph Roth wrote, “in an icy and everlasting old age, like armour made of an awe-inspiring crystal”), as much as any specific political strategy, helped keep dissolution from the empire's door.

I really have no idea what proposals Clinton will run on, what arguments she'll make. But as with Franz Josef, it's not her policies that make her formidable; it's the multitudes that “Hillary” the brand and icon now contains. Academic liberalism and waitress-mom populism and Davos/Wall Street/Bloomberg centrism. Female empowerment and stand-by-your-man martyrdom. The old Clintonian bond with minority voters and her own 2008 primary-trail identification with Scots-Irish whites. And then the great trifecta: continuity with the Obama present, a restoration of the more prosperous Clintonian past and (as the first ... female ... president) a new “yes we can” progressive future.

Like the penultimate Hapsburg emperor with his motley empire, then, she has the potential to embody a political coalition — its identities and self-conceptions, its nostalgias and aspirations — in ways that might just keep the whole thing hanging together.

But without her, the deluge.

Dear Millennials, We're Sorry

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

AMONG Americans age 40 and older, there's a pastime more popular than football, Candy Crush or HBO.

It's bashing millennials.

Oh, the hours of fun we have, marveling at their self-fascination and gaping at their sense of entitlement! It's been an especially spirited romp lately, as a new batch of them graduate from college and gambol toward our cubicles, prompting us to wonder afresh about the havoc they'll wreak on our world.

We have a hell of a lot of nerve, considering the havoc we've wrought on theirs.

For decades they'll be saddled with our effluvium: a monstrous debt, an epidemic of obesity, Adam Sandler movies. In their lifetimes the Atlantic will possibly swallow Miami Beach (I foresee a "Golden Girls" sequel with dinghies and life preservers) and the footwear for Anchorage in February may be flip-flops. At least everyone will be saving on heating bills.

The Obama administration did unveil a bold climate-change measure last week. Or, rather, it signaled its intent to act: We'll have to wait and see whether Congress figures out a way to foil the president or the courts gum things up. The plan as it stands would cut carbon pollution from American power plants 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030.

But that may be too little, too late, according to an assessment last year by John Podesta, now a counselor to President Obama, in an interview with Harper's Magazine before he joined the White House staff in late 2013.

In the interview, excerpts from which were released only last week, Podesta apparently reviewed what had been proposed and actually done in terms of carbon emissions and the like.

"But 50 years from now, is that going to seem like enough?" he said. "I think the answer to that is going to be no." And that's chilling, given the stakes. As the title of a book by Al Gore observed, the earth itself is in the balance.

The country's slowness to deal with swelling seas and melting glaciers is just one manifestation of our myopia, just one metaphor for our failure to reckon with the future that we're visiting upon today's children, who get more lip service than legislation from us.

"If you're going along with the status quo, it should be a crime to say that you care about our children and grandchildren, because you're not putting your money where your mouth is," Bob Kerrey, a Democrat who governed Nebraska for four years and represented that state in the Senate for another 12, told me recently.

This subject haunts him more and more. "If we're trying to figure out how to advance the next generation's future, we need to be spending more on the next generation, and we're spending it on yesterday's generation," said Kerrey, 70. "I am not the future. My 12-year-old son is. But if you look at the spending, you'd think I'm the future."

Kerrey is referring mostly to Social Security and Medicare, which, along with Medicaid, are the so-called entitlements that claim a larger and larger share of the federal budget.

He's fixated on those sorts of numbers: According to the Congressional Budget Office, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid totaled 6.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 1990. By 2010, they were 10 percent. And by 2038, such spending may represent 14.3 percent. It's hard to see how that leaves much money for discretionary spending on infrastructure, on education, on research, on a range of investments that safeguard or improve the America that today's young people will inherit.

And there's too little money for that even now. Talk to physicians and other scientists who have long depended on research grants from the National Institutes of Health to keep the United States at the forefront of invention and innovation and they'll tell you how thoroughly that spigot has closed over the last 10 years. They're defeated, despondent.

The Urban Institute released a report in 2012 that looked at figures from 2008 for the combined local, state and federal spending that directly benefited Americans 65 and older versus spending that went to Americans under 19; the per capita discrepancy was \$26,355 versus \$11,822. Julia Isaacs, a senior fellow at the institute, told me that while data for subsequent years hadn't been analyzed yet, it wouldn't show a significant change in that gap.

Isaacs also drew attention to a follow-up report released by the institute last year. It projected federal spending in 2023 and envisioned that entitlement payments to older Americans would rise to 46 percent of the budget from 40 percent now. Interest payments on the debt would be another 14 percent. That would leave well under 50 percent for everything else, including the military.

She noted that the population was aging. Meanwhile, there's a resistance to tax increases. "That makes me very worried that children will be squeezed out," Isaacs said.

"I'm glad that my parents are living longer," she added. "But it's creating this budgetary math problem that we're unwilling to look at."

That unwillingness includes the predictable pushback from many members of Congress, from voters and from various advocacy groups when proposals are made to limit the growth of Social Security by, say, fiddling with cost-of-living adjustments. Older Americans, who would be instantly affected by such a change, turn out more reliably on Election Day than any other age group. Lawmakers are loath to cross them.

Younger voters need to assert themselves. Perhaps they're poised to do just that. A recent poll by ABC News and The Washington Post showed a significant rise — to 66 percent now from 53 percent two months ago — of voters between the ages of 18 and 39 who said they definitely planned to vote in November.

In Washington last week, hundreds of concerned young leaders gathered for an inaugural Millennial Week conference, devoted to youth-oriented policy discussions. And I've noticed more bulletins and agitating from organizations like Generation Opportunity, which crunched May's employment figures to confirm a much higher rate of joblessness among Americans ages 18 to 29 than among the whole population.

We millennial bashers of course have our stock responses to that. We quibble with the college majors that millennials choose. We question their willingness to hunt for work outside their comfort zones.

We conveniently overlook how much more they've had to pay for college than we did, the loans they've racked up and the fact that nothing explains their employment difficulties better than a generally crummy economy, which certainly isn't their fault.

They get our derision when they deserve our compassion and a political selflessness we've been unable to muster. While we're at it, we might even want to murmur an apology.

Madam Secretary Made A Difference

By Nicholas Kristof

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WHEN politicians have trouble spinning their own glories, that's a problem.

So it was bizarre that Hillary Rodham Clinton, asked at a forum in April about her legacy at the State Department, had trouble articulating it. That feeds into a narrative — awaiting her memoir on Tuesday — that she may have been glamorous as secretary of state but didn't actually accomplish much.

In fact, that's dead wrong, for Clinton achieved a great deal and left a hefty legacy — just not the traditional kind. She didn't craft a coalition of allies, like James Baker, one of the most admired secretaries of state. She didn't seal a landmark peace agreement, nor is there a recognizable "Hillary Clinton doctrine."

No, her legacy is different.

For starters, Clinton recognized that our future will be more about Asia than Europe, and she pushed hard to rebalance our relations. She didn't fully deliver on this "pivot" — generally she was more

successful at shaping agendas than delivering on them — but the basic instinct to turn our ship of state to face our Pacific future was sound and overdue.

More fundamentally, Clinton vastly expanded the diplomatic agenda. Diplomats historically focused on “hard” issues, like trade or blowing up stuff, and so it may seem weird and “soft” to fret about women’s rights or economic development.

Yet Clinton understood that impact and leverage in 21st-century diplomacy often come by addressing poverty, the environment, education and family planning.

It’s not that Clinton was a softie. She was often more hawkish than the White House, favoring the surge in Afghanistan (a mistake, I believe) and the arming of moderate Syrian rebel groups (a good call, but one vetoed by President Obama).

Yet she grew truly animated when discussing the new diplomatic agenda. A couple of times I moderated panels during the United Nations General Assembly in which she talked passionately — and bewilderingly, for some of the audience — about civil society, women leaders and agricultural investments.

Pinstriped foreign and prime ministers looked on, happy to be considered important enough to be invited. They listened with increasingly furrowed brows, as if absorbing an alien language, as Clinton brightly spoke about topics such as “the business case for focusing on gender in agricultural development.”

Clinton was relentless about using the spotlight that accompanied her to highlight those who needed it more. At one global forum, she went out of her way to praise Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning entrepreneur of microfinance, who was being persecuted by the Bangladesh prime minister. On trips, she found time to visit shelters for victims of human trafficking or aid groups doing groundbreaking work.

She may hide it, but Clinton is a policy nerd. Ask about microfinance, and she’ll talk your ear off. Mention early childhood interventions, and she will gush about obscure details of a home visitation experiment in Elmira, N.Y., that dramatically improved child outcomes.

The kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls in April was the kind of issue Clinton was out front of. She understood that educating girls isn’t a frilly “soft” issue, but a way to transform a country to make it less hospitable to extremists. No one argued more presciently that women’s rights are security issues.

“Those who argue that her championing of outreach to women and girls and her elevation of development was not serious miss a central reality of international politics in this century,” notes Nicholas Burns, who was undersecretary of state in the George W. Bush presidency. “These issues are now mainstream globally.”

“I disagree very strongly with those who charge that Hillary Clinton was not successful,” adds Burns, who is now at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. “A fair-minded view is that she was, in fact, highly effective.”

Clinton was pioneering not only in the way she expanded the diplomatic agenda, but also in the tools she forged to promote it. She pushed government-to-people relations and people-to-people ties.

Some of this was pioneered in the George W. Bush administration, but Clinton greatly escalated public diplomacy with a rush into social media.

“She was very clear about it: This is the 21st century, and we’re fools if we don’t use it,” recalls Michael McFaul, who became ambassador to Russia in this time. McFaul then had no idea what a tweet was, and there was strong resistance from senior diplomats. “I said the boss wants to do this,” McFaul recalls, and he ultimately became a champion tweeter.

Today it's routine to use social media in multiple languages to communicate American diplomatic messages to the world.

So, sure, critics are right that Hillary Rodham Clinton never achieved the kind of landmark peace agreement that would make the first sentence of her obituary. But give her credit: She expanded the diplomatic agenda and adopted new tools to promote it — a truly important legacy.

And, anyway, she may have grander dreams about how her obituary should begin.

The Ghosts In The Machine

By Timothy H. Evans

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A SURPRISING number of knife attacks on and by teenagers have appeared in the national news in recent weeks, but in terms of sheer tragic weirdness, nothing can match the case of two 12-year-old Wisconsin girls who stabbed a classmate 19 times, nearly killing her — and then said they did it to appease someone called “Slenderman.”

Slenderman is not, in fact, a man, but an Internet meme, an urban legend for the digital age, a fictitious figure — tall, thin, faceless and dressed in a black suit — who appears in homemade “found” videos on YouTube, in Photoshopped pictures and on blogs describing alleged sightings around the country.

Although Slenderman has been around since 2009, the stabbing case has brought the phenomenon, most popular among teenagers, into the harsh glare of the media spotlight, with worried parents and pundits wringing their hands about the dangers of modern technology.

But they shouldn't worry: Slenderman is a largely harmless fixation of teen pop culture who fits firmly within America's long tradition of horror folklore.

The girls apparently became obsessed with Slenderman from reading about him on the website Creepypasta, a collection of fan-submitted horror microfiction. He's just one of many characters popular on the site, alongside “Jeff the Killer,” vampires, zombies and aliens — and Creepypasta is just one of thousands of similar fan fiction sites.

Slenderman is usually shown as a shadowy figure (sometimes sprouting tentacles), momentarily glimpsed in the background of altered photographs or videos, intruding on scenes of everyday life: parties, hikes in the woods or children playing. His mix of specifics (height, dress) and ambiguity is a common notion in American horror folklore.

Indeed, Slenderman's creator, Eric Knudsen (who goes by the web handle “Victor Surge”), says he invented the character as an explicit “attempt to cooperatively create new folklore” by mixing stock horror tropes with the generative power of the Internet.

Mr. Knudsen had a lot to draw on. Legends of the supernatural, paranormal and horrific have existed in oral culture for a very long time. Many urban legends have a horror component. Almost everyone has heard, and probably told, stories about ghosts, haunted places (houses, bridges, cemeteries), the “Vanishing Hitchhiker,” the teenage couple making out in a car when the radio flashes a story about an escaped serial killer. That Slenderman has proliferated online is new in terms of the medium, but not the message.

Nor is it new for someone to act on his or her relationship to horror folklore. In 1929 Nancy Bowen, a woman living near Buffalo, became convinced, through a Ouija board, that her dead husband had been killed by another woman. A few days later, Bowen killed her.

More prosaically, consider the “Bloody Mary” ritual carried on (usually) by preteenage girls, who recite “Bloody Mary” into a darkened bathroom mirror, half-expecting to see a monstrous image, or groups of high school students “legend tripping” to a local haunted house.

That said, we also have to recognize how Slenderman, as an Internet phenomenon, differs from past horror folklore. The web takes oral traditions — jokes, rumors, legends — and transmits them with a speed that far surpasses the word-of-mouth circulation of most pre-Internet folklore. Dead-celebrity jokes and 9/11 conspiracy theories go viral within hours.

In the past, Slenderman might have remained localized, a regional legend about a haunted neighborhood in Northern California or suburban Virginia. Instead, he is everywhere, at the same time.

And it makes sense that Slenderman appears predominantly in photos and film, rather than text. As digital cameras and home-editing programs proliferate, Internet memes are becoming increasingly visual — think LOLcats and “Thanks Obama,” among countless others. As a visual meme, Slenderman is at once more accessible and more frightening, in ways that oral memes can’t replicate.

Moreover, the Internet has become a melting pot where long-held distinctions among folklore, mass culture and literary or high culture break down. The stories of H. P. Lovecraft, a once obscure early 20th-century horror writer, have gained immense mainstream currency thanks to the web, where people who may never have read the books still revel in breaking apart the complex and immense world of Lovecraft’s extraterrestrial monster Cthulhu, for visual fodder for everything from toys, games and fan fiction to YouTube films and even erotica.

In that regard Slenderman, who is both a very specific character and an infinitely pliable meme, is like Cthulhu, without the literary origins.

As a folklorist, I can’t comment on what may have motivated those two girls in Wisconsin. I’ll leave that to the psychologists. But I can say that we’ve seen this pattern before, especially when it comes to technology, pop culture and violence: killings said to be inspired by Dungeons & Dragons games or heavy metal in the 1980s, or Ouija boards long before that. Sometimes these are real but isolated incidents; often they are rumors, themselves a part of the folklore.

Internet horror memes are no more likely to motivate violence or insanity than any other aspect of contemporary culture. But like other examples of the folklore of horror and the supernatural, they can lead us to question distinctions between “everyday life” and the unreal or the numinous — distinctions that may be made even more ambiguous by the bewildering variety of alternative realities found online.

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The Biology Of Risk

By John Coates

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

SIX years after the financial meltdown there is once again talk about market bubbles. Are stocks succumbing to exuberance? Is real estate? We thought we had exorcised these demons. It is therefore with something close to despair that we ask: What is it about risk taking that so eludes our understanding, and our control?

Part of the problem is that we tend to view financial risk taking as a purely intellectual activity. But this view is incomplete. Risk is more than an intellectual puzzle — it is a profoundly physical experience, and it involves your body. Risk by its very nature threatens to hurt you, so when confronted by it your body and brain, under the influence of the stress response, unite as a single functioning unit. This occurs

in athletes and soldiers, and it occurs as well in traders and people investing from home. The state of your body predicts your appetite for financial risk just as it predicts an athlete's performance.

If we understand how a person's body influences risk taking, we can learn how to better manage risk takers. We can also recognize that mistakes governments have made have contributed to excessive risk taking.

Consider the most important risk manager of them all — the Federal Reserve. Over the past 20 years, the Fed has pioneered a new technique of influencing Wall Street. Where before the Fed shrouded its activities in secrecy, it now informs the street in as clear terms as possible of what it intends to do with short-term interest rates, and when. Janet L. Yellen, the chairwoman of the Fed, declared this new transparency, called forward guidance, a revolution; Ben S. Bernanke, her predecessor, claimed it reduced uncertainty and calmed the markets. But does it really calm the markets? Or has eliminating uncertainty in policy spread complacency among the financial community and actually helped inflate market bubbles?

We get a fascinating answer to these questions if we turn from economics and look into the biology of risk taking.

ONE biological mechanism, the stress response, exerts an especially powerful influence on risk taking. We live with stress daily, especially at work, yet few people truly understand what it is. Most of us tend to believe that stress is largely a psychological phenomenon, a state of being upset because something nasty has happened. But if you want to understand stress you must disabuse yourself of that view. The stress response is largely physical: It is your body priming itself for impending movement.

As such, most stress is not, well, stressful. For example, when you walk to the coffee room at work, your muscles need fuel, so the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol recruit glucose from your liver and muscles; you need oxygen to burn this fuel, so your breathing increases ever so slightly; and you need to deliver this fuel and oxygen to cells throughout your body, so your heart gently speeds up and blood pressure increases. This suite of physical reactions forms the core of the stress response, and, as you can see, there is nothing nasty about it at all.

Far from it. Many forms of stress, like playing sports, trading the markets, even watching an action movie, are highly enjoyable. In moderate amounts, we get a rush from stress, we thrive on risk taking. In fact, the stress response is such a healthy part of our lives that we should stop calling it stress at all and call it, say, the challenge response.

This mechanism hums along, anticipating challenges, keeping us alive, and it usually does so without breaking the surface of consciousness. We take in information nonstop and our brain silently, behind the scenes, figures out what movement might be needed and then prepares our body. Many neuroscientists now believe our brain is designed primarily to plan and execute movement, that every piece of information we take in, every thought we think, comes coupled with some pattern of physical arousal. We do not process information as a computer does, dispassionately; we react to it physically. For humans, there is no pure thought of the kind glorified by Plato, Descartes and classical economics.

Our challenge response, and especially its main hormone cortisol (produced by the adrenal glands) is particularly active when we are exposed to novelty and uncertainty. If a person is subjected to something mildly unpleasant, like bursts of white noise, but these are delivered at regular intervals, they may leave cortisol levels unaffected. But if the timing of the noise changes and it is delivered randomly, meaning it cannot be predicted, then cortisol levels rise significantly.

Uncertainty over the timing of something unpleasant often causes a greater challenge response than the unpleasant thing itself. Sometimes it is more stressful not knowing when or if you are going to be fired

than actually being fired. Why? Because the challenge response, like any good defense mechanism, anticipates; it is a metabolic preparation for the unknown.

You may now have an inkling of just how central this biology is to the financial world. Traders are immersed in novelty and uncertainty the moment they step onto a trading floor. Here they encounter an information-rich environment like none other. Every event in the world, every piece of news, flows nonstop onto the floor, showing up on news feeds and market prices, blinking and disappearing. News by its very nature is novel, adds volatility to the market and puts us into a state of vigilance and arousal.

I observed this remarkable call and echo between news and body when, after running a trading desk on Wall Street for 13 years, I returned to the University of Cambridge and began researching the neuroscience of trading.

In one of my studies, conducted with 17 traders on a trading floor in London, we found that their cortisol levels rose 68 percent over an eight-day period as volatility increased. Subsequent, as yet unpublished, studies suggest to us that this cortisol response to volatility is common in the financial community. A question then arose: Does this cortisol response affect a person's risk taking? In a follow-up study, my colleagues from the department of medicine pharmacologically raised the cortisol levels of a group of 36 volunteers by a similar 69 percent over eight days. We gauged their risk appetite by means of a computerized gambling task. The results, published recently in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed that the volunteers' appetite for risk fell 44 percent.

Most models in economics and finance assume that risk preferences are a stable trait, much like your height. But this assumption, as our studies suggest, is misleading. Humans are designed with shifting risk preferences. They are an integral part of our response to stress, or challenge.

When opportunities abound, a potent cocktail of dopamine — a neurotransmitter operating along the pleasure pathways of the brain — and testosterone encourages us to expand our risk taking, a physical transformation I refer to as “the hour between dog and wolf.” One such opportunity is a brief spike in market volatility, for this presents a chance to make money. But if volatility rises for a long period, the prolonged uncertainty leads us to subconsciously conclude that we no longer understand what is happening and then cortisol scales back our risk taking. In this way our risk taking calibrates to the amount of uncertainty and threat in the environment.

Under conditions of extreme volatility, such as a crisis, traders, investors and indeed whole companies can freeze up in risk aversion, and this helps push a bear market into a crash. Unfortunately, this risk aversion occurs at just the wrong time, for these crises are precisely when markets offer the most attractive opportunities, and when the economy most needs people to take risks. The real challenge for Wall Street, I now believe, is not so much fear and greed as it is these silent and large shifts in risk appetite.

I consult regularly with risk managers who must grapple with unstable risk taking throughout their organizations. Most of them are not aware that the source of the problem lurks deep in our bodies. Their attempts to manage risk are therefore comparable to firefighters' spraying water at the tips of flames.

THE Fed, however, through its control of policy uncertainty, has in its hands a powerful tool for influencing risk takers. But by trying to be more transparent, it has relinquished this control.

Forward guidance was introduced in the early 2000s. But the process of making monetary policy more transparent was in fact begun by Alan Greenspan back in the early 1990s. Before that time the Fed, especially under Paul A. Volcker, operated in secrecy. Fed chairmen did not announce rate changes, and they felt no need to explain themselves, leaving Wall Street highly uncertain about what was coming next. Furthermore, changes in interest rates were highly volatile: When Mr. Volcker raised

rates, he might first raise them, cut them a few weeks later, and then raise again, so the tightening proceeded in a zigzag. Traders were put on edge, vigilant, never complacent about their positions so long as Mr. Volcker lurked in the shadows. Street wisdom has it that you don't fight the Fed, and no one tangled with that bruiser.

Under Mr. Greenspan, the Fed became less intimidating and more transparent. Beginning in 1994 the Fed committed to changing fed funds only at its scheduled meetings (except in emergencies); it announced these changes at fixed times; and it communicated its easing or tightening bias. Mr. Greenspan notoriously spoke in riddles, but his actions had no such ambiguity. Mr. Bernanke reduced uncertainty even further: Forward guidance detailed the Fed's plans.

Under both chairmen fed funds became far less erratic. Whereas Mr. Volcker changed rates in a volatile fashion, up one week down the next, Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke raised them in regular steps. Between 2004 and 2006, rates rose .25 percent at every Fed meeting, without fail... tick, tick, tick. As a result of this more gradualist Fed, volatility in fed funds fell after 1994 by as much as 60 percent.

In a speech to the Cato Institute in 2007, Mr. Bernanke claimed that minimizing uncertainty in policy ensured that asset prices would respond "in ways that further the central bank's policy objectives." But evidence suggests that quite the opposite has occurred.

Cycles of bubble and crash have always existed, but in the 20 years after 1994, they became more severe and longer lasting than in the previous 20 years. For example, the bear markets following the Nifty Fifty crash in the mid-70s and Black Monday of 1987 had an average loss of about 40 percent and lasted 240 days; while the dot-com and credit crises lost on average about 52 percent and lasted over 430 days. Moreover, if you rank the largest one-day percentage moves in the market over this 40-year period, 76 percent of the largest gains and losses occurred after 1994.

I suspect the trends in fed funds and stocks were related. As uncertainty in fed funds declined, one of the most powerful brakes on excessive risk taking in stocks was released.

During their tenures, in response to surging stock and housing markets, both Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke embarked on campaigns of tightening, but the metronome-like ticking of their rate increases was so soothing it failed to dampen exuberance.

There are times when the Fed does need to calm the markets. After the credit crisis, it did just that. But when the economy and market are strong, as they were during the dot-com and housing bubbles, what, pray tell, is the point of calming the markets? Of raising rates in a predictable fashion? If you think the markets are complacent, then unnerve them. Over the past 20 years the Fed may have perfected the art of reassuring the markets, but it has lost the power to scare. And that means stock markets more easily overshoot, and then collapse.

The Fed could dampen this cycle. It has, in interest rate policy, not one tool but two: the level of rates and the uncertainty of rates. Given the sensitivity of risk preferences to uncertainty, the Fed could use policy uncertainty and a higher volatility of funds to selectively target risk taking in the financial community. People running factories or coffee shops or drilling wells might not even notice. And that means the Fed could keep the level of rates lower than otherwise to stimulate the economy.

It may seem counterintuitive to use uncertainty to quell volatility. But a small amount of uncertainty surrounding short-term interest rates may act much like a vaccine immunizing the stock market against bubbles. More generally, if we view humans as embodied brains instead of disembodied minds, we can see that the risk-taking pathologies found in traders also lead chief executives, trial lawyers, oil executives and others to swing from excessive and ill-conceived risks to petrified risk aversion. It will also

teach us to manage these risk takers, much as sport physiologists manage athletes, to stabilize their risk taking and to lower stress.

And that possibility opens up exciting vistas of human performance.

John Coates is a research fellow at Cambridge who traded derivatives for Goldman Sachs and ran a desk for Deutsche Bank. He is the author of "The Hour Between Dog and Wolf: How Risk Taking Transforms Us, Body and Mind."

Best Of Both Worlds? Northeast Cut Emissions And Enjoyed Growth

By Hannah Fairfield

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

Some critics of the Environmental Protection Agency's new requirements for power plants argue that forcing emissions reduction will curtail economic growth. But the recent experience of states that already cap carbon emissions reveals that emissions and economic growth are no longer tightly tied together.

One of the ways that states will be able to meet the new E.P.A. standards is by joining a Northeastern cap-and-trade program known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which first put in a carbon cap in 2009. In a cap-and-trade system, the government places a ceiling on total carbon emissions and issues permits for those emissions, which companies can buy and sell from one another.

The nine states already in the program — Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont — have substantially reduced their carbon emissions in recent years. At the same time, those states have had stronger economic growth than the rest of the country.

Historically, the demand for electricity was closely tied to growth in the economy; only recently have the two decoupled.

These nine states had large emissions drops even before the program began in 2009, in part because the recession and warmer winters lowered the demand for power. The states also began switching to natural gas power, retiring coal units, and adding wind and solar energy generation. As the economy recovered, participation in the program spurred the states to find ways to meet the increasing demand for power without driving up emissions.

Since 2009, the nine states have cut their emissions by 18 percent, while their economies grew by 9.2 percent. By comparison, emissions in the other 41 states fell by 4 percent, while their economies grew by 8.8 percent.

The states in the program "were able to reduce emissions faster and more efficiently than was previously assumed," said Peter Shattuck, director of market initiatives at ENE, a research and advocacy group based in Boston. "It was encouraging to see how quickly they hit the targets."

Capping carbon emissions could still slow economic growth, and it is possible that the nine states that joined the cap-and-trade program would have had even better economic growth without the program. These states have more nuclear and natural-gas energy in their portfolios than do many other states; other states that depend primarily on coal power may not be able to reduce emissions as swiftly.

But the results in the nine states suggest that the effect of the cap-and-trade program on growth was, at most, modest. The sharp cut in emissions in the Northeast did not prevent the economy there from doing just as well as elsewhere.

Joining the Northeast cap-and-trade program, or another similar program in California that began in 2013, is one of many ways states can reach the new goals the E.P.A. has set. Other options include taking a series of individual steps — such as upgrading older power plants and expanding nuclear, wind

and solar power generation — without a statewide cap. The states themselves will decide exactly how they will meet the goals set for them.

Economists have long praised cap-and-trade programs, compared with detailed mandates from regulators, because they create a market in which businesses are responsible for finding the cheapest way to comply with the regulation. Businesses that devise less expensive ways to reduce pollution can sell their permits to those that cannot change their habits so easily.

The administration of President George H.W. Bush began the original cap-and-trade program in the United States, for emissions related to acid rain. It is considered a major success, with sharp reductions in acid rain at little economic cost.

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How To Beat Malaria, Once And For All

By François H. Nosten

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

MAE SOT, Thailand — MALARIA is a seasonal disease; with tropical rains come the fevers. In the news media, malaria is also seasonal. Every spring around World Malaria Day we hear about its devastating effects, including deaths in the hundreds of thousands. This year the reports were encouraging: Infections have been reduced and many lives saved. In May, researchers reported in *Science* that yet another potential malaria vaccine may be around the corner. Malaria seems to be on the retreat.

But is it really?

Malaria is caused by a tiny parasite, transported by a particular type of mosquito from person to person. Preventing mosquito bites by using insect repellents or nets and clothing treated with insecticides can reduce malaria in some areas. And if people are infected, drugs can be used to kill the parasites in their blood.

But the mosquitoes are constantly adapting and becoming resistant to the chemicals, while at the same time the parasites are adapting and becoming resistant to the drugs. So the fight against malaria is really a race against time in which we try to develop new treatments before they become ineffective, causing millions to die.

I have been working on the Thai-Myanmar border for 30 years. Once, in the early '90s, we faced the prospect of untreatable malaria. The number of people infected with the parasite (*Plasmodium falciparum* in this case) had been in decline, but the drug we were using — mefloquine, brand name Lariam — was becoming less effective and more patients were dying.

I remember a young Buddhist monk who was carried to our bamboo clinic two weeks after taking Lariam. His blood was still full of parasites. Lying in his saffron robe, he was unconscious, burning up and agitated by frequent convulsions. We tried in vain to save his life.

Then we heard about artesunate, a drug that comes from the *Artemisia annua* plant in China and was just becoming available. Preliminary studies indicated that it was very safe and was killing the malaria parasite extremely rapidly. But it was also quickly eliminated from the body, requiring too many days of treatment to be practical. We reasoned that combining this new drug with the more long-lasting mefloquine could be the answer.

Indeed it was. In 1994, after large studies confirmed the safety and the efficacy of this new treatment, this first artemisinin-based combination therapy, or ACT, was deployed in all the refugee camps. The number of new cases, and lives lost, declined sharply.

By the end of the 1990s, there was strong evidence that ACTs worked, but the World Health Organization was slow to recommend the treatments in other parts of the world, particularly in Africa, where malaria was on the rampage. Thousands of people died in the 2000-01 malaria epidemic in Burundi largely because they received ineffective drugs. Despite this, in 2002 an adviser for U.S.A.I.D. declared that ACTs were “not ready for prime time.” Only after The Lancet published a virulent attack in 2004 accusing the W.H.O. of medical malpractice did it effectively make ACTs the standard worldwide.

But history repeats itself. While malaria rates went down again as a result of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and widespread deployment of ACTs, the parasite adapted its genetic machinery to resist these powerful medicines and is now preparing for a devastating return.

Today, the artemisinins in ACTs are taking longer to kill parasites in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar. Recently, a young patient in our clinic tested positive for malaria for more than seven days after starting treatment (instead of the usual two), and when we sampled her blood after six days of treatment, the parasite was still healthy. If *P. falciparum* becomes totally resistant, then the ACTs would become ineffective and all investments in their development and distribution would be lost, with dire consequences.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been spent on fighting malaria. Late last year, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria allocated \$100 million to tackle artemisinin resistance in the Mekong region where I work. But all this well-intentioned money keeps us only a step ahead of the parasites. We have to keep coming up with new combinations of drugs before our patients taking the old ones start dying. And bed nets, on which at least \$20 million will be spent, aren't always effective here in Southeast Asia, where many mosquitoes that carry the parasite bite outside and early in the evening. Of course, an effective vaccine could save us but, despite the frequent announcements that we're close to developing one, it has never materialized because we do not fully understand the underlying biology.

We have to accept that these strategies of control are failing and instead start figuring out how to eliminate the parasite altogether, as we have in Europe, Russia and North America.

In pilot studies in Cambodia, Vietnam and here on the Thai-Myanmar border, we have begun testing one approach to rapid elimination. Doing surveys of the population, we discovered that in some communities, many villagers — sometimes more than half — carry malaria parasites in their blood but are not ill and therefore are not treated. Because these “healthy” carriers have only a small number of parasites in their blood, they are difficult to detect with conventional tests. So eliminating the parasites may require treating everybody in the village, an approach that is used for other parasitic diseases, like river blindness and filariasis. Because *P. falciparum* infects only humans, if we can treat entire populations, we should be able to eliminate this parasite from certain regions.

Giving medicines to large numbers of villagers in remote areas who are not ill is not an easy task. It cannot work without the trust and participation of the local population. And we would need to hit whole regions at once. Even then we don't know that it would work; the effectiveness, feasibility and economics of mass treatment are still being studied. But what else can we do to stop the seemingly inevitable spread of drug-resistant malaria across Asia to Africa, and the enormous consequent death toll?

Some funding bodies — like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Wellcome Trust and Britain's Department for International Development, which also support our research unit — are moving in this direction already. But for now, governments and medical organizations need more evidence, and they need leadership from the W.H.O.

For years, the fight against malaria in tropical countries has been compromised by politics. Here on the front line, our work is more difficult because of the bureaucracy, the inertia and sometimes the

incompetence of the people in control. Money and its corruptive power are flying around. And the more money we throw at malaria, the bigger the problems get. We have the science to defeat malaria. We just have to act, before it defeats us.

François H. Nosten is a professor of tropical medicine at the University of Oxford and the director of the Shoklo Malaria Research Unit.

A View From Gitmo

By Ramzi Kassem

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba — THE week's national debate around the exchange of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl for five Afghans imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay found me at the American base in Cuba for meetings with my clients. Here, too, the swap is the talk of the town — among prisoners, among guards and between the two groups.

Some Guantánamo prison guards voiced anger at the news of how their fellow soldier, Sergeant Bergdahl, had been liberated. In their view, he was a deserter, unworthy of the sustained media interest his release had garnered, especially compared to the dearth of attention paid to the sacrifice of those killed and wounded in the Afghan conflict.

But to the emaciated man sitting across a rickety table from me in an orange jumpsuit, chained to the floor inside a dilapidated shack, that furious reaction was baffling. My client, Moath al-Alwi, wondered aloud "why those people are not simply happy that this American soldier will soon be reunited with his family." He reflected that the critics have probably "never tasted this sort of ordeal themselves."

In contrast to the guards, Mr. Alwi and many of his fellow prisoners empathized with Sergeant Bergdahl and his family. After all, they only wanted the same for themselves: to see their loved ones after long years in captivity.

My students and I have been representing Guantánamo inmates for most of the last decade. Mr. Alwi was on one of the first planes to shuttle so-called enemy combatants to the prison in early 2002.

A Yemeni citizen raised in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Alwi traveled to Afghanistan in early 2001 to teach the Quran and live in a society that appeared from afar to honor Islamic ideals. He was 24 when he fled the conflict there, was seized by the authorities in Pakistan and likely sold into American captivity for a bounty.

At a 2008 hearing, having given Mr. Alwi only three weeks to review a lengthy dossier compiled by the United States government over seven years and consisting largely of uncorroborated and self-incriminating statements that we argued were extracted under coercive circumstances, a federal judge ruled his detention justified. A court of appeals found that the judge's "haste" was "hard to understand," but upheld the decision.

To protest the injustice of his open-ended imprisonment without fair process, Mr. Alwi has been on hunger strike since February 2013. Every day, Guantánamo personnel strap him in a chair with restraints and force-feed him, in an effort to break his will.

Mr. Alwi never fought against the United States and has not been found guilty of any crime.

The political controversy over whether the prisoner exchange was conducted legally is even less comprehensible to the inmates at Guantánamo than the guards' anger. To their mind, before debating the finer point of whether the transfer of the five Afghans adhered to the law, the American public should ask if the detention and abuse at Guantánamo Bay of hundreds — without charge, fair process or the protections of the Geneva Conventions — were lawful in the first place.

From where Mr. Alwi sits, the talking point of legality is almost amusingly quaint. Guantánamo remains at its core a lawless place, and this release in seeming contravention of a solitary statute appears par for the course. In the absurd history of the detention camp, it is not uncommon for inmates among the handful who have been convicted by the military commissions to be the ones who are released. Questionable though their legitimacy and fairness may be, the military commissions can at least determine a finite term for internment at Guantánamo, one that the American government has chosen to honor so far.

So the release of the five Afghans, including, by some accounts, known figures in the Taliban, fits a larger pattern in which the many dozens of inmates not accused of any crime and, in fact, cleared for release by successive American administrations languish for years on end. For many, the difference between liberation and limbo has nothing to do with justice or legality, but just the luck of what nationality a prisoner happens to hold. Because no Guantánamo inmate has been repatriated to Yemen in years, Mr. Alwi said that some inmates are considering relinquishing their Yemeni citizenship in the hope that it might facilitate their resettlement elsewhere.

The furor over the Sergeant Bergdahl affair has simply reinforced a commonly held view among the inmates that the prospects for release from Guantánamo are tied far less to court decisions, threat assessments and the determinations of the military review board, and far more to the politics of the moment. “It is all political,” Mr. Alwi said. “It is all theater, it is all a game.”

Guantánamo has indeed become a sideshow of the American political spectacle, a drama in which the vast majority of the camp’s inmates are held hostage to our partisan politics. If the current upheaval around Sergeant Bergdahl’s release proves anything, it is that President Obama is capable of pushing past the congressional histrionics that, until recently, he has pointed to as cover for his failure to shutter the infamous prison.

Ending indefinite detention at Guantánamo Bay, in the face of opposition from his political adversaries and reluctance from some officials within his administration, requires fortitude of Mr. Obama. What is needed now is decisive action to resettle and repatriate as many inmates as possible and give fair trials to any that remain. Only by doing so can America end this grim farce.

Ramzi Kassem is an associate professor of law at the City University of New York who directs the Immigrant and Non-Citizen Rights Clinic, which represents prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and elsewhere.

Stop Holding Us Back

By Robert Balfanz

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

The Great Divide is a series about inequality.

This month, more than three million high school students will receive their diplomas. At more than 80 percent, America’s graduation rate is at a record high. More kids are going to college, too. But one-third of the nation’s African-American and Latino young men will not graduate.

In an era when there is virtually no legal work for dropouts, these young men face a bleak future. It is not news that the students who don’t make it out of high school largely come from our poorest neighborhoods, but the degree to which they are hyper-concentrated in a small set of schools is alarming. In fact, according to new research I conducted with my colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, half of the African-American boys who veer off the path to high school graduation do so in just 660 of more than 12,600 regular and vocational high schools.

These 660 schools are typically big high schools that teach only poor kids of color. They are concentrated in 15 states. Many are in major cities, but others are in smaller, decaying industrial cities or in the South, especially in Georgia, Florida and North Carolina.

This seemingly intractable problem is a national tragedy, but there is a solution. In the high schools where most of the young men are derailed, the number of ninth-grade boys who desperately need better schooling and extra support is typically between 50 and 100. Keeping many or even most of those boys on track in each entering ninth-grade class in 660 schools does not seem impossible.

If we know where to focus our efforts, we can put strategies in place that have shown promise, particularly over the last few years. While early childhood is critical, the most treacherous time for young African-American and Latino men is from ages 11 to 21. At the very moment they are the most developmentally vulnerable, the response from schools, foster care, the health system and child protective services gets weaker, while the response from the justice system is harsher. Their family responsibilities grow, and their neighborhoods turn meaner. Their middle and high school experience becomes make or break.

But the secondary schools these students attend are not specifically designed for them. It is not unusual for up to half the students to miss a month or more of school, and often more students are suspended in a year than graduate. In a 22-school sample that we studied closely, nearly all ninth-grade students were either too old for their grades, had repeated ninth grade, needed special education, were chronically absent or had academic skills at the seventh grade level or below. The norm in this environment is to fail classes and then repeat ninth grade. But most students do no better the second time around. Either they drop out then or they may briefly transfer to another school before dropping out later. This is a highly predictable, almost mechanical course, which is why we call those schools dropout factories.

We have also learned that most students who eventually drop out can be identified as early as the sixth grade by their attendance, behavior and course performance, according to studies by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins, where I am the director, and the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. Using those indicators, it is possible to identify by the middle of ninth grade virtually everyone who will drop out. These young men are waving their hands early and often to say they need help, but our educational and student-support systems aren't organized to recognize and respond to their distress signals.

In 2008, my colleagues and I decided to focus on those struggling sixth and ninth graders. What if we reorganized entire schools with teams of teachers who shared a common group of students? What if we added more time for English and math and offered coaching for teachers and principals? What if we welcomed students to school, called them if they didn't show up and helped with homework? What if we used an early warning system that identified struggling students based on their poor attendance, behavior and course performance and then worked to get each student back on track?

To try to provide all that, we developed Diplomas Now, a partnership of three national nonprofits, which works with more than 30,000 students in 40 of the toughest middle and high schools in 14 big cities. (Although I am focusing here on boys, because they have lower graduation rates than girls, the program is coed.)

To evaluate our progress, MDRC, a social policy research organization, is conducting a randomized field trial. Initial indications are positive. In the 2012-13 school year, the program achieved a 41 percent reduction in chronically absent students, a 70 percent reduction in suspended students, a 69 percent reduction in students failing English and a 52 percent reduction in students failing math.

This is not an anomalous result. A recent study of public schools in Chicago shows that getting students back on track in the ninth grade leads to higher graduation rates and that African-American males in particular experience the greatest benefits when schools are reorganized to focus on ninth grade.

What do we need to do on a national scale? First, high-poverty secondary schools need to be redesigned with the special problems of their students in mind, with a focus on freshman year. In practice, this means starting new schools and transforming existing ones.

Second, early warning systems need to be instituted so that teachers and other committed adults can step in at the first sign a student is in trouble, whether it's cutting class, mouthing off or floundering in English or math.

Third, we should employ additional adults to support students who need daily nagging and nurturing to succeed, especially during the key transitional years in sixth and ninth grades.

We also need the larger community, including local businesses and faith-based organizations, to mentor students by showing them how to set goals, apply to college and acquire workplace skills.

This sounds expensive, but it does not have to be, particularly if we stop wasting money on failed strategies like holding kids back in high school. Asking struggling students to repeat a grade under the same circumstances almost guarantees the same result.

We are already paying a lot for failure. On average, holding a student back costs \$11,000. The 660 high schools that produce half of African-American male dropouts spend more than \$500 million a year to retain more than 46,000 boys and girls in ninth grade.

There is an unexpected path forward, the outlines of which are in view. We can provide our most vulnerable children with a better chance for adult success. They deserve no less.

Robert Balfanz is a research professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Education and the director of the Everyone Graduates Center.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Biz Group Sets Goal Of 5,000 New City Residents

By Yann Ranaivo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

The organization that promotes business in Wilmington wants to attract 5,000 new residents to the city during the next five years.

But city leaders and people who sell and manage properties in Wilmington say the city has some major humps to get over if it wants to see a major turnaround in residency anytime soon.

The New Castle County Chamber of Commerce plans to host a session at the World Cafe Live at the Queen on June 25 during which it will invite people with a vested interest in the city to take part in discussions to boost city residency.

Chamber President Mark Kleinschmidt said similar sessions will occur quarterly for the remainder of this year. He said there are developments occurring in the city, such as a proposal to establish a creative district near the downtown, that an infusion of new residents would complement well.

"Every new resident to the city represents new revenue to the city," he said.

A big jump in residents would bring a new level of vibrancy to the city because of the increased visits to shops and restaurants, among other things, Kleinschmidt said.

"It would create more of a sense of community. You're going to see more participation in the existing events that are there," he said. "That will also bring other people to Wilmington."

Kleinschmidt knows seeing 5,000 people move into the city during the next few years is an ambitious goal.

"You have to have a target," he said. "It may be a lofty goal, but again you need to have a goal to go for. Say we only got 3,000. I'll take that big three."

Alan Emsley, who sells and rents homes throughout the city and county, said one of the biggest deterrents he deals with when trying to attract tenants to his Wilmington properties is crime.

"The first thing you got to do is quit shooting people," Emsley said. "Wilmington has a lot of very positive things, and I really like Wilmington. But the overriding thing is people are constantly shooting other people, and they don't seem to be able to do anything about it. It overshadows everything else."

Violent crime in the city has been among the nation's highest for the last several years.

In 2012, the last year for which statistics are available, FBI data shows Wilmington was the third most violent of about 450 cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000. That year Wilmington was eighth most violent among all cities in America with more than 50,000 people, including being more violent than the four giants within 120 miles – Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York and Washington, D.C.

The city's poor public safety reputation didn't get any help in 2013 when Wilmington saw a record year in violence with 127 shootings.

Emsley said he knows most of the shootings are between criminals, but innocent bystanders sometimes get caught in the middle of the struggle. He referred to an incident in the city last month during which a woman who was sitting on her porch with her grandson was hit by stray bullets.

"Mayor [Jim] Baker used to say it's one criminal shooting another criminal. There's probably a lot of truth to that," Emsley said, "but some also don't shoot too good and innocent people get hit.

"If the perception is that it's not safe in Wilmington, the end result is people moving out. You might be that person sitting on the porch, and instead of getting wounded, you might get killed."

Mayor Dennis P. Williams, who recently appointed a new police chief, has said improving the relationship between the force and the neighborhoods will be key to addressing crime because it would allow some residents to feel more comfortable about speaking with officers when incidents occur later.

Councilwoman Loretta Walsh, a member of the council's Public Safety Committee, said she thinks neighborhood cooperation can make the difference in serious crimes being solved. She said it could also deter future crimes because it would send a "message that Wilmington is no longer open for crime business."

Others involved in the local real estate market, including Emsley, said some city policies don't seem friendly to growth.

Bob Weir, CEO of the New Castle County Board of Realtors, said city departments such as Public Works, Real Estate and Housing and License and Inspections could be merged because utilities, trash collections and building code inspections all ultimately tie back to real estate.

The extra money generated from merging some operations could be used to knock down houses that have been deemed obsolete, Weir said. The city could then reserve the empty lots for future development, Weir said.

"Now 10 or 15 years down the road, you have a site where you can build a competitive housing marketplace," he said.

Emsley voiced displeasure at an upcoming 5 percent increase in the city's property taxes and a red lights camera program, which he argues is more geared at generating money than improving traffic safety.

Earlier this year, The News Journal collected data on local taxes and fees to compare the costs of living in Wilmington and surrounding cities. A Wilmington homeowner living in a house assessed at \$100,000 with a combined household income of \$100,000 pays an average of \$5,937 a year in local taxes and water and sewer fees. That same homeowner would pay an average of \$3,757 in New Castle, \$3,400 in Newark and \$3,763 in Bear.

"If you can afford to live somewhere else, why wouldn't you do that?" Emsley said. "To get people to move to the city, you got to make it so there are advantages."

Wilmington does offer advantages, but they have been undersold, Walsh said.

Walsh touted the city's parks system and entertainment venues such as the DuPont Theatre, World Cafe Live, Grand Opera House and the Delaware Art Museum. She said city living also brings residents close to dining venues, which said lowers the need to drive a car.

"For a city our size, it's insane the amount of amenities we have," she said.

But Walsh said crime needs to be handled.

"We have to get a real handle on our neighborhoods where we have very decent people living in them," she said. "Until we get a handle on that, we won't be able to sell the city as a whole."

Five Running To Be Next Dover Mayor

By Jon Offredo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Voters at polls in Dover will have five candidates to choose from in the scheduled June 17 non-partisan mayoral special election.

The election to fill former Dover mayor Carleton Carey's seat comes after city council pressured Carey to step down following allegations he violated employment and affirmative action policies and abused his authority by influencing the appointment of a deputy police chief. The election is to fill the spot for the remainder of the term. It expires next May.

Dover's mayor is a full-time position and mainly plays the role as economic cheerleader for the city, as well as overseeing Dover's police department.

The common theme among the five candidates was a desire to drive economic development to the city and bring in new revenue through business growth. The candidates will be at a question and answer session at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Mount Zion AME Church on North Queen Street.

"A lot of people have written us off," said former council president and councilman Robin Christiansen. "Commercial spaces remain empty and homes are still unsold."

Christiansen said his prior experience with the city, working with the Delaware Economic Development Office and the larger employers in town puts him in the perfect place to drive the city forward.

Other candidates, like Chevis Anderson, say what the city needs is a new look at how things are done. Anderson, a recent graduate of Delaware State University and licensed banker, said he wants to bring a new perspective. Anderson ran for the Capital School District school board in 2010.

"The city needs a fresh breath of air," he said. "It's been such a long time since we had some different ideas and different opinions and a whole different perspective."

Longtime businessman and state board of education member Jeff Reed said he'd bring a businessman's perspective to the city. The city needs to do some serious and out-of-the box thinking about how they are going to raise revenue, he said

The city council recently staved off a potential 7-cent hike to property taxes by dipping into its electric fund reserves to plug a \$2.2 million deficit in the general fund. The city has also toyed with the idea of the mayor's role being either part-time or full-time.

Reed said he would want it to be a full-time position.

Councilman David Anderson is the only current council member running for mayor.

Anderson said he wants to focus on economic development that would benefit local businesses and communities.

"We have to grow our way out of the economic problems," he said. One of the ways he'd do that is to ensure that small businesses in the community have all the tools they need to function.

If elected, he says he will reach out to the community more and find out what the exact needs are in relation to the police department.

For James Webster, who ran for council in the mid-2000s, the mayoral position is one that has to bring economic development to the city. New projects coming to the city, like Calpine Corporation's power plant site, are good starts, but with the coming departure of K-mart there are still prime spots that need to be worked on.

One of the things he said he wants to do is get the state more involved with its capital financially, especially in terms of payment in lieu of taxes.

"It's a squeaky wheel that gets the grease," he said. "So I think we're going to have to be squeaky a bit and make a little noise."

FBI Declines To Provide Status On Shooting Suspect

By William H. McMichael

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

The FBI on Saturday declined to provide any information on the man who officials said fired shots in a Wilmington Veterans Affairs Medical Center parking lot the day before, including where he is being held, whether any charges have been filed and any other details related to the case.

The suspect, described by VA officials as a 40-to-50-year-old male, brandished an unidentified firearm and fired shots in the medical center's west parking lot at about 3:15 p.m. Friday, officials said.

VA Police apprehended the man after what witnesses described as two shots fired. The suspect was said to have sustained minor injuries during the apprehension and was being treated at the center's Emergency Department. The VA said it couldn't provide more information as the case had been turned over to the FBI.

For now, the FBI isn't saying anything.

"That may change Monday," Amy Thoreson of the FBI's Baltimore office said Saturday afternoon. She said she was "unable to comment further at this time."

The News Journal asked the FBI which agency is holding the suspect; where the suspect is being held; the suspect's name, age and hometown; whether any charges have been filed; and for any other pertinent details.

State Police received a report of shots fired at about 3:30 p.m. Friday, but their services were not required, spokesman Sgt. Paul Shavack said. As the hospital is federal property, State Police do not have jurisdiction there and do not respond unless requested to assist.

Court Papers Show Matusiewicz 'Hit List'

By Sean O'Sullivan

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Just over a year before her death, Christine Belford warned about the Matusiewicz family's potential to violently lash out, specifically mentioning the man who would later shoot her to death at the New Castle County Courthouse: estranged father-in-law Thomas Matusiewicz.

"Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him," she wrote in an email to her attorney in November 2011.

Belford also predicted that after David Matusiewicz lost his parental rights to the three children they had together, family members might strike out in a rage at everyone involved in the process, including their own attorneys.

Those fears also apparently proved correct. According to court papers filed last month, investigators recovered what appeared to be a hit list from the vehicle Tom Matusiewicz was driving on Feb. 11, 2013.

"The first name on the list was Belford's," according to federal prosecutors, in court papers.

The other dozen or so names on the list are all blanked out in the court filing but prosecutors state in a brief that the names include "lawyers, judges and witnesses involved in David and Lenore Matusiewicz's prior kidnapping cases, as well as prior Family Court custody and termination of parental rights proceedings."

The judge who oversaw the federal kidnapping and bank fraud case against David Matusiewicz, and sentenced him to four years in prison in 2009, was Chief U.S. District Court Judge Gregory M. Sleet.

The News Journal has learned, through interviews with sources who have firsthand knowledge, that Sleet and at least one of Matusiewicz's lawyers are on the list.

Sleet is now presiding over the conspiracy and interstate cyber stalking trial against David Matusiewicz, his mother Lenore and his sister Amy Gonzalez, where if convicted the three each face up to life in prison.

Asked if Sleet was on the list, Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward McAndrew responded that he could not speak to the issue "at this time."

Federal Public Defender Edson Bostic, who is representing David Matusiewicz, declined comment. Jeremy H.G. Ibrahim, who is representing Amy Gonzalez said he was still reviewing government documents.

Kenneth C. Edelin Jr., who is representing Lenore Matusiewicz, could not be reached for comment.

Sleet's appearance on the list might bring about a motion to have him recuse himself from the case, legal experts say.

In the past several weeks, Sleet denied a defense motion to have the case moved from Delaware and set the case for a 30-35 day trial in March 2015.

Widener Law Professor Emeritus Tom Reed said that "if I were defense counsel I would need to have a conference with that judge" on the apparent hit list.

Reed said defense attorneys generally don't like to file motions to remove a judge from a case, but in a case like this one "it is really worth discussing."

But he added that if such a discussion, or motion to have Sleet step aside, takes place, "it is not open-and-shut."

Judges can sit on cases where they might be peripherally involved, Reed said. And while prosecutors charge there was an orchestrated conspiracy between the surviving members of the

Matusiewicz family and Tom Matusiewicz, the defendants have maintained that they had no knowledge of Tom Matusiewicz's violent plans for Feb. 11, 2013.

In interviews and videos posted online before her arrest, Lenore Matusiewicz maintained that her husband acted erratically and irrationally due to a brain tumor.

McAndrew did not want to discuss the list of names, or even address if prosecutors believe that the title of the handwritten document – "HL" – stands for hit list. He said the document has not yet been entered as evidence in the case and was included in a recent court filing for the limited purpose of addressing legal arguments filed by the defense.

The names on the list have been redacted because prosecutors do not believe there is a reason to make them public at this early stage of the case, McAndrew added.

However, an attorney who represented a member of the Matusiewicz family confirmed that shortly after the shooting he was contacted by the FBI and was warned that his name was on what appeared to be a hit list and that he should take appropriate measures to protect his safety.

He did not want his name used.

According to court documents, the "HL" document was a page from a red spiral bound notebook that was found in the white Honda SUV that Thomas Matusiewicz used to drive David Matusiewicz to the courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013, where he was set to attend a child support hearing with Christine Belford.

A video that was obtained by The News Journal in 2013 shows father and son getting out of the SUV together and walking to the New Castle County Courthouse shortly before Tom Matusiewicz shot and killed Belford along with her friend Laura "Beth" Mulford. Tom Matusiewicz then exchanged gunfire with Capitol Police before taking his own life.

Surveillance footage shows David and Thomas Matusiewicz entering and leaving the parking garage before the shootings at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013.

The SUV was parked across King Street from the courthouse in the garage underneath the Renaissance Centre. According to the recent court filing, other items recovered in the SUV included: a computer, a photo of one of Belford's children and the note "please copy & send to Dave! :) Love you all!!!! Remember shhhhhhhh!!! LOL" and a black duffel bag in the hatch-back area containing a bullet proof vest, ammunition, an electric shock device, knives, plastic zip restraints and the red notebook.

Inside the notebook were handwritten notes about David's criminal kidnapping case; his Family Court case with Belford; phone numbers and addresses of people associated with Belford; real estate listing documents for Belford's home with notes indicating which rooms were occupied by the children and the "HL" list of a dozen or so names.

On the list, Belford was identified by the code "WB," which prosecutors wrote, "stood for a derogatory name that the defendants and Thomas Matusiewicz used for her."

"WB" is believed to stand for "whore bitch."

"WB/NM" is circled on the list along with two other names that are blanked out. While Belford was identified by code, other names were fully spelled out. McAndrew said he could not discuss what "NM" may mean or stand for.

The family also drove a second vehicle from Texas to Delaware in February 2013, and according to court papers the keys to that car, a silver Honda Civic, were recovered from David Matusiewicz.

Inside that car, which had been parked at a home in Maryland on the day of the shooting, investigators recovered a DPMS .223 rifle with scope inside a black rifle case, a Smith & Wesson .357 revolver, a Glock 19 9mm semiautomatic handgun, numerous rounds of ammunition, numerous magazines for firearms, a green metal ammunition case, a shovel and several red gas cans.

A closer look at the Matusiewicz family history and what sparked the tragedy at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11. (2/24/13)

While David and Thomas Matusiewicz were at the courthouse, Lenore Matusiewicz was at the Maryland home where the car was parked on Feb. 11, 2013. Gonzalez was in Texas.

In court papers, defense attorneys have argued that the indictments against the family should be tossed out because the government is essentially trying to criminalize the free speech of family members who were expressing their opinions about Belford in the years and months before her death.

Prosecutors responded that the statements by members of the Matusiewicz family were not protected speech because they were clearly defamatory – accusing Belford of unsubstantiated child abuse – and were also evidence of their criminal intent to harass and stalk Belford, ultimately resulting in her death.

“Speech is not protected by the First Amendment when it is the very vehicle of the crime itself,” wrote prosecutors.

Prosecutors charge the Matusiewicz family wanted to put Belford in fear for her life and succeeded in doing so. To back up their charge, the government then quotes from e-mail conversations between Belford and her attorney.

In November 2011, after David’s parental rights were terminated and Belford received what prosecutors described as “an intimidating and harassing letter” from Lenore Matusiewicz, Belford wrote: “David and his family like to see my [sic] suffer, especially David ... He plays dirty and tries to obtain his target, regardless of what it takes.”

“David has nothing to lose at this point, he has lost everything. He may allow me to survive to suffer. I may survive long enough to watch the girls be harmed. I may even go missing ... BTW: If I go ‘missing’ – call the police,” she wrote.

Belford told her attorney that she had already taken out a life insurance policy, was working on finalizing her will and planned to buy a gun as soon as she had the money.

One of the reasons that Belford apparently feared for her life is that she felt David Matusiewicz had threatened her life previously. In the recent court filing, prosecutors include a redacted version of a letter David Matusiewicz wrote to Judge Sleet before the 2009 kidnapping sentencing.

Matusiewicz acknowledged he made a “wrong” decision in kidnapping his three children and taking them to Central America, but he also still blamed Belford.

“She was an expert at manipulating people and even had me arrested by telling the police I was having a nervous breakdown and had threatened to kill her,” he wrote.

Prosecutors also include excerpts from a separate letter to Sleet, written around the same time, by Lenore Matusiewicz who maintained that Belford was a threat to the children. She described Belford as “the next Andrea Yates, Susan Smith [two women who had mental issues and killed their children]... she can snap at any time.”

In the Nov. 2011 email exchange, Belford then expresses concern for attorneys, experts and judicial officers that had been involved in the bitter custody battle saying they all “may become a mis-directed target of their anger.”

She concludes by noting, “Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him.”

Coons Visits Closed I-495 Bridge

By Melissa Nann Burke

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

WILMINGTON – In a visit to the shutdown I-495 bridge Friday morning, U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Delaware, commended Transportation Secretary Shailen Bhatt for the “prompt and effective and responsible action” he and his engineers took to tackle the problem causing the structure to lean.

Following the declaration of a limited state of emergency by Gov. Jack Markell on Thursday, federal officials approved \$2 million in emergency-relief funds to assist with traffic control and preliminary engineering at the site.

“Much more will likely be needed in federal resources, and I’m committed to working with the rest of Delaware’s congressional delegation to make sure those resources are available,” Coons, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said.

Bhatt said the \$2 million is a great help, but “just the first step in a long process.”

“It’s a big deal when the feds step in and bring a checkbook because that allows us to worry about one less thing, and we have a lot to worry about right now,” Bhatt said.

Discovery of the tilt in the bridge in the area of Christiana Avenue forced a full shutdown of I-495 at the bridge Monday evening, disrupting traffic across the region. An average 90,000 vehicles a day cross the bridge.

The highway is closed between Terminal Avenue and 12th Street, and motorists are advised to use I-95 and I-295 as alternates.

The state Department of Transportation’s investigations have focused heavily on a contractor’s stockpile of dirt stretching the length of a football field just to the east of the affected piers. The bridge is leaning in that direction by as much as 4 degrees out of vertical alignment.

This week, excavations revealed that steel piles in the bridge’s foundation are deformed and displaced sideways, creating cracks across the width of at least two concrete footings.

Experts say the movement observed of steel piles is consistent with a force caused by seismic activity, or the massive load of dirt compressing soils on the east side of the leaning piers.

A dirt hauler, Keogh Contracting Co., has been working to remove the material since Monday. DelDOT also has hired a contractor to step up the pace of removal, in addition to DelDOT crews who have pitched in.

“We’ve been working around the clock. We’re going to continue to work around the clock,” Bhatt said Friday.

Contractors are continuing to excavate other footings to determine the extent of the damage, he said.

Coons took the opportunity to emphasize the need for Congress to restore funding to the federal Highway Trust Fund to help tackle the backload of transportation and port infrastructure improvements needed nationwide.

“There are tens of billions of dollars of repairs that need to be made all over this country. Those repairs would put Americans to work, which would strengthen our economy and grow our community and improve the safety of our highways and bridges,” Coons said.

“This is just another area where partisan differences in our Congress are preventing us from coming together as they should.”

Officials say the federal emergency-relief dollars that would go to the I-495 bridge are maintained in fund separate from the Highway Trust Fund, which is expected to exhaust its reserves this summer without congressional action.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS

Bridge Closure Cause To Rethink Roads

By John Sweeney

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Last week Delaware closed a bridge and tumbled into a public relations disaster.

Suddenly, a bridge many of us use every day was termed a crucial “East Coast span” and people throughout the country were reading about Delaware’s mishap. Google Maps even “disappeared” a section of I-495 from its system, thus, giving headline writers a chance to have some fun with a ghost bridge. They joked, but we felt our heads hurt.

Right now, as we think about how we will get to work on Monday morning or home from the beach Sunday night, that bridge closing is putting pressure on the state.

Thousands of people are plotting how to avoid Delaware. They don’t want to pass through, stop by or shop here. The folks who use the state’s highways to ship goods are looking for alternative routes. The businesses that produce products in Delaware are trying to make up time and cut the added expenses of slow traffic and stalled highways. Delaware commuters, stuck behind long lines of cars, worry about getting to work on time while their bosses are counting the minutes, then the hours of lost productivity. Even those who make our summers special – the people behind the Greek, Italian and Firefly festivals – are worrying about the effect tilting columns will have their fun, games and music.

The truth is, we don’t know.

We don’t know the cause of the tilting. We don’t know how the bridge will be fixed or how long it will take. And we don’t know whether any of those who are staying away will ever come back.

People follow habits. If a Pennsylvania driver decides it’s not worth traveling along those crowded alternate routes to save a little on sales tax, maybe he’ll get used to staying home.

Roads do matter, it seems.

The thought must have popped into the minds of many in the General Assembly that a week ago Gov. Markell’s plea for a tax increase was all but dead. Judging by public comments, a good number of Delawareans thought the governor had his nerve asking for a 10-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax increase when everything was working fine and dandy.

Of course, the damage to the columns of the I-495 bridge probably would have happened with or without the tax. However, now a lot of people are thinking our roads are a trifle more important than we supposed.

We think of roads in personal terms, that is, when we pay any attention at all to them. They are only important when we need them to get from one place to another. As a Carnegie Endowment report put it a couple of years ago: “The relationship between the locations of things drives demand for transportation.” Thus, if someone wants to move goods on a truck from the Port of Wilmington to Baltimore, then the highway span over the Christina River is mighty important. If a closed bridge drives road-choking traffic onto a street I normally use, then reopening the bridge matters a lot more than I ever would have dreamed.

If the relationships between those things change, then the demand for that road and all that goes with it changes too. Right now that ghost span is killing northern New Castle County. Yet there are Delawareans in Sussex County who don't give a hoot about I-495, open or shut.

We expect the government to honor our demand for transportation between the places we want to go to, like our home and the store. But there is no end to the creation of new places we want to go to, so the government always lags behind our demand for quick-moving, convenient, uncrowded roadways.

All of which brings us back to Gov. Markell's tax. He wanted to fix and update and expand the system. He asked for a lot of money, more than anyone wanted to spend.

A week ago we could dismiss the idea because keeping that tax money in our pockets made more sense than a threat to the roads we couldn't see.

We know roads are concrete and asphalt. Yet we don't notice them until they break or get too crowded.

If on normal days, we fail to see the physical deterioration, how can we notice when trouble develops with the true purpose of our roads – transmission lines.

Their construction is based on laws of physics, chemistry and geology. Their usefulness is based on how they allow us to move and the role they play in how our economy operates. We understand why they are useful when we can drive to work or to the store. We don't always understand their importance as value chains. For example, how long does it take a truck carrying grapes from Chile to go from Point A to Point B? How much does it cost in time and fuel? At what point will the cost force the shipper to look for another venue?

Roads and bridges age. The Interstate Highway System was officially declared completed in 1991. That means the newest part of the interstate is 23 years old. Other parts – the ones around here – are considerably older.

They were not built for the constant pounding of trucks and SUVs.

The builders of the highway system also assumed they had found a way to pay for its upkeep. Taxes on gasoline would be funneled back into the system. That way the users of the roads would pay. Yet neither Congress nor the General Assembly would dare raise the tax per gallon.

The builders didn't consider human nature or our political system. They didn't factor in the core belief of most Americans that they can get something without paying for it. Roads, we assume, pay for themselves.

Nor do any of us understand why we thrill at building a new highway, but shrink from modernizing old ones. Roads are supposed to live forever.

We also are a victim of our success. We drive fewer miles these days. That means we buy less gasoline and pay less in taxes. We also have cars with better gas mileage. So, again, we don't buy as much as gasoline and pay fewer taxes.

Yet our demand that roads not have holes and stay open to traffic all day and all night comes with a price. And that maintenance price – in material, supplies and labor – goes up each year.

Most people would say that at some point something would have to give. Not us. We don't have to reconcile the impossible. We can have it all and not pay the full price.

Until something really goes wrong.

Will the closing of I-495 do anything to revive the governor's tax plan? That will be interesting to watch.

The governor says that the federal government will pay 90 percent of the repair cost for the bridge. The federal government is having its own money problems when it comes to roads. So at some point, we will have to pay a share of that 90 percent.

More immediately, the important question is: 90 percent of what? We don't know how much the repair will cost. So that tiny little 10 percent may end up costing Delawareans a lot.

At that point, the I-495 bridge closing will be more than a public relations disaster.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

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TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Biden Pledges \$48M In Aid To Ukraine

By Ferdous Al-Faruque

[The Hill](#), June 8, 2014

The U.S. is giving an additional \$48 million to the new Ukrainian government to bolster its economy, the White House announced Saturday.

The additional funds will help fight corruption, bolster energy security and strengthen its State Border Guard Service.

Vice President **Biden** announced the pledge during a trip to Kiev for the inauguration of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

"Pending consultation with the U.S. Congress, this assistance will follow the \$1 billion loan guarantee signed on April 14, a \$50 million crisis-response package announced by Vice President **Biden** on April 21, and \$23 million in security assistance announced to date," the administration said in a statement. "When added to previously budgeted funds, the United States is providing over \$184 million in assistance to Ukraine this year in addition to the loan guarantee."

Ukraine is still in a state of civil war as pro-Russian militias in the east are fighting to break away from the country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered increased security along the Ukrainian border Saturday after Porochenko's swearing-in.

Besides Ukraine, the U.S. is also giving similar aid to other pro-Western countries along Russia's borders, including \$8 million to Moldova and \$5 million to Georgia.

The announcement comes a day after President Obama pressed Putin to recognize the new Ukrainian government.

'USA' Chants Welcome Biden To Ukraine

By Rachel Huggins

[The Hill](#), June 8, 2014

Vice President **Biden** and U.S. officials attending inaugural events honoring Ukraine's new leader were warmly greeted as they walked the streets of Kiev.

After Petro Poroshenko was sworn into office on Saturday, **Biden** and Sen. McCain (R-Ariz.) ditched the presidential motorcade and opted to walk to the new president's reception when crowds lined the streets cheering, "thank you" and "USA."

Members of the delegation include: Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt, Daniel B. Baer, ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Biden greeted everyone he encountered as he and other presidential delegation members walked the red carpet leading to the ceremony.

"How are you? You're a handsome boy. I'd like to borrow that tie," **Biden** told a young boy, according to a White House pool report. He also said hello to several officials and introduced McCain, saying, "You know my friend the senator."

Poroshenko and **Biden** spoke for a few minutes at the reception.

"Mr. President, congratulations," **Biden** said before posing for photos. McCain embraced the chocolate tycoon-turned president with a hug.

"It's wonderful to stand with you," Murphy told the new president.

Complex Times For VP's Son To Work At Ukraine Firm

By Stephen Braun

[Associated Press](#), June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON — Vice President Joe **Biden**'s visit Saturday to support Ukraine's fragile democracy came soon after his youngest son was hired by a private Ukrainian company that promotes energy independence from Moscow.

Yet that company leases natural gas fields in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea and is owned by a former government minister with ties to Ukraine's ousted pro-Russian president.

The hiring of Hunter **Biden**, 44, by Burisma Holdings Limited in April was approved by the company's owner, a former senior minister and political ally of Viktor Yanukovich, the exiled Ukrainian president. Yanukovich fled to Russia in February after protests erupted over his efforts to establish closer economic ties with Moscow.

Hunter **Biden**'s employment means he will be working as a director and top lawyer for a Ukrainian energy company during the period when his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence the policies of Ukraine's new government, especially on energy issues.

There's no indication that Hunter **Biden**, his father or Burisma is crossing any legal or ethical lines, although ethics experts appear divided over the implications of Hunter **Biden**'s new job.

American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House.

"The primary problem here is the fact that Hunter **Biden** has set up a financial arrangement with someone who might have business pending before this administration," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert with Public Citizen, a Washington-based government reform organization.

Joe **Biden** led the U.S. delegation at Saturday's inauguration of Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, and announced \$48 million in additional aid for the Kiev government. **Biden** met Poroshenko and said "there is a window for peace and you know as well as anyone that it will not stay open indefinitely ... America is with you."

Ukraine is an important natural-gas and petroleum-liquids transit country. Two major pipeline systems carry Russian gas through Ukraine to Western Europe.

Burisma is headed by Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who held senior posts over natural resources, environment and defense in Ukraine. The company has aggressively bought up Ukrainian oil and natural gas leases and companies.

Hunter **Biden**'s new company says it aims to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

As a Burisma director and the company's top lawyer, the younger **Biden** has yet to take any public actions on behalf of the company.

But the timing of his hiring is politically awkward for the administration's efforts to shore up Ukraine's pro-Western government, and poses potential complications from Burisma's growing energy interests and the background of Hunter **Biden**'s new boss, Zlochevskyi.

At least two oil and natural gas fields leased by subsidiaries of Burisma are in Ukrainian territories where pro-Russian sentiments remain strong, according to government and media releases, independent energy maps and Burisma's website.

One is in the breakaway Russian-backed state of Crimea; the other is in the eastern Ukrainian Kharkiv region. Instability there could force the younger **Biden**'s new company to coordinate with pro-Russian separatists whom the U.S. considers illegitimate.

White House officials declined to comment on Hunter **Biden**'s association with Burisma and the company's holdings in Crimea and east Ukraine.

The vice president's spokeswoman, Kendra Barkoff, previously said that **Biden**'s son is a private citizen and a lawyer, and that Joe **Biden** "does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company."

Presidents and vice presidents have long been vexed by relatives rewarded for family ties.

Political loan troubles shadowed Vice President Richard Nixon's brother, Donald, during the 1960 election, and President Jimmy Carter's brother, Billy, who accepted a \$220,000 stipend in 1981 from Libya's Moammar Gadhafi.

In recent years, several Bush and Clinton relatives were caught in a string of murky financial and political dealings.

But “unless there’s solid evidence that Hunter **Biden** got his job to influence American foreign policy, there’s no clear line that’s been crossed,” said Melanie Sloan, executive director of the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

A former Washington lobbyist, the vice president’s son is effectively exempt from most rules that would require him to describe publicly the legal work he does on behalf of Burisma.

Hunter **Biden** will not lobby for the company, said Lawrence Pacheco, an official with FTI Consulting, a Washington government affairs company recently hired by Burisma.

Pacheco did not say whether **Biden** might oversee or advise on any future Burisma lobbying strategy in the U.S. Pacheco said the company “does not take positions on political matters.”

But **Biden**’s company may have to deal with Ukrainian enclaves that the U.S. does not recognize diplomatically or are threatened by instability.

One Burisma subsidiary, KrymTopEnergoServis, operates natural gas fields and has headquarters in the Crimea, which seceded from Ukraine this year and now aligns with Russia.

A second subsidiary, Esco-Pivnich, produces oil and natural gas just west of Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city, which was the site of several protests and borders on separatist-controlled provinces. The company’s website confirms that Burisma operates oil and natural gas sites in Crimea and east Ukraine, as well as elsewhere in Ukraine.

“While he’s just at the beginning of his involvement with this company, Ukraine is volatile right now and there are all sorts of problems that might crop up down the line,” said Bill Allison, the editorial director of the Sunlight Foundation, a nonpartisan watchdog group.

Pacheco said the company’s western and eastern operations have been unaffected by Ukraine’s unrest but that its Crimea subsidiary is not operating currently. He did not explain further, but confirmed KrymTopEnergoServis is based and leases gas deposits in Crimea.

Hunter **Biden**, Zlochevskyi and other company officials would not comment publicly, Pacheco said.

Hunter **Biden** is a managing director with Rosemont Seneca Partners, a private equity firm, and worked as a Washington lobbyist for seven years until his father was elected vice president. He lobbied primarily for colleges, hospitals and tech firms.

Pacheco said **Biden**’s son came to Burisma’s attention after he was introduced by Devon Archer, another new Burisma board member, to Alan Apter, Burisma’s board chairman. Archer works with Hunter **Biden** at Rosemont and was a top fundraiser for now-Secretary of State John Kerry when Kerry ran for president in 2004. Zlochevskyi approved **Biden**’s hiring, Pacheco said.

Zlochevskyi, 48, worked as minister of natural resources and environment under Yanukovych and most recently was deputy secretary of Ukraine’s national security and defense council, which advised Yanukovych on defense matters.

Zlochevskyi also served in the Ukrainian parliament from 2007 to 2011 as a member of the Party of Regions, the political party affiliated with Yanukovych and traditionally aligned with pro-Russian interests.

Zlochevskyi’s name is missing from Burisma’s web site, but financial documents in Cyprus as well as U.S. Securities and Exchange records show that he owns the bulk of Burisma’s shares. Zlochevskyi’s Cyprus-based Brociti Investments Limited controls Burisma.

Hunter **Biden** joined Burisma in April, the same month his father visited Kiev to show support for the new interim government.

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Ukraine Energy Firm Hiring Biden's Son Raises Ethical Concerns

[FOX News](#), June 8, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden's** visit Saturday to Ukraine in support of the country's new democratic government is renewing concerns about his youngest son being hired by a Ukraine company promoting energy independence from Moscow.

Hunter **Biden** will be working for the company while his father and others in the Obama administration attempt to influence energy policies and other issues of the new government, which is gripped in a struggle with Russia and pro-Russian separatists to control the county.

The company, Burisma Holdings Limited, says it wants to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas and oil, a goal that parallels U.S. efforts to aid Ukraine's energy industry.

The other major issues are Hunter **Biden's** new employer leases natural gas fields in Crimea, an eastern Ukraine peninsula being controlled by Russia in the country's months-long political upheaval. And the company is owned by a former Ukraine government minister, Nikolai Zlochevskyi, who has ties to the country's ousted pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich.

The 44-year-old **Biden** was hired in April and will be a director and lawyer for the company.

American conflict-of-interest laws and federal ethics rules essentially do not regulate the business activities of adult relatives of those who work in the White House, and there's no indication that the situation crosses legal or ethical lines.

But ethics experts appear divided over the implications.

"The primary problem here is the fact that Hunter **Biden** has set up a financial arrangement with someone who might have business pending before this administration," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert with Public Citizen, a Washington-based government reform organization.

Joe **Biden** led the U.S. delegation at Saturday's inauguration of Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, and announced \$48 million in additional aid for the Kiev government. **Biden** met Poroshenko and said "there is a window for peace and you know as well as anyone that it will not stay open indefinitely ... America is with you."

The Office of the Vice President said some of the money will help Ukraine "enhance its energy security."

Ukraine is an important natural-gas and petroleum-liquids transit country. Two major pipeline systems carry Russian gas through Ukraine to Western Europe.

At least two oil and natural gas fields leased by subsidiaries of Burisma are in Ukrainian territories where pro-Russian sentiments remain strong, according to government and media releases, independent energy maps and Burisma's website.

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The Associated Press contributed to this report.

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Starting Out Behind

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

Today's young people, ages 18 to 24, should have been the lucky ones. They were preteens or teenagers when the recession hit in late 2007, with high school and college still ahead. Unlike those who had to enter the work force in the depths of the downturn, they had time, or so it seemed, to wait out the weak economy.

But that's not how things have worked out. While the worst is over, economic conditions are still subpar, damaging the immediate job prospects and long-term living standards of young adults starting out now.

In recent years, the economy has grown annually at 2 percent or so. That's too slow to make up the current shortfall of nearly seven million jobs, let alone to absorb new graduates or push up wages in jobs that do exist.

To make matters worse, the economy contracted at an annual rate of 1 percent in the first quarter of 2014. A rebound is expected, but there is little in the economic data or current policy to suggest that an upsurge will be sustained; over all, economic growth is likely to settle at 2 percent to 2.5 percent.

For young people, these conditions will only deepen a long trend of increasing economic hardship. Census data that compares today's 18-to-24-year-olds with the same age group in 1970 and in 1990 show more poverty among young adults over time, as well as lower income and less independence. But young people today are appreciably worse off than those in previous generations.

In 1970, for example, 13.9 percent of people ages 18 to 24 were in poverty. In 1990, 15.9 percent were poor; in 2012, the last year of available data, 20.4 percent were poor, or 6.1 million people. That data excludes students living in dorms, as well as most students who live with their parents or receive cash support from them. For young people who are on their own, either living alone or with housemates or spouses, median household income, recently \$30,604, is nearly \$4,600 less than in 1970 and virtually unchanged since 1990, adjusted for inflation.

Lack of opportunity and lack of resources mean a smaller share of young high school and college graduates are relocating, traditionally a way up a career ladder. In 1970, nearly 40 percent of young

people had moved in the prior year; in 1990, it was nearly 32 percent; in 2013, it was only 21.6 percent. Not surprisingly, the share of young adults living with their parents is 55.3 percent, compared with 47.3 percent in 1970 and 52.8 percent in 1990.

Young people are clearly banking on a college education to improve their prospects — 41 percent of 18-to-24-year-olds were recently enrolled in college, a higher share than in previous generations. But the unemployment rate of college graduates ages 21 to 24 remains high at an average of 8.5 percent over the past year. Underemployment — which includes those who are officially unemployed, those who want to work but haven't looked recently for a job and those stuck in part-time jobs — is 16.8 percent.

Equally worrisome, 44 percent of young college graduates in 2012 were working in jobs that didn't require a college degree (versus 38 percent before the recession in 2007), according to data from researchers at the Federal Reserve. In 2000, half of college-educated workers in jobs that didn't require a degree were in generally well-paid professions, working as electricians, for example, or dental hygienists. Now they are more likely to be waiters, bartenders or cashiers.

College-educated workers still earn much more than less-educated ones, but landing a good job at rising pay is made even more difficult as each new group of graduates joins a backlog of unemployed and underemployed college and high school graduates, dating back to the class of 2008.

Over the last six years, one of the economy's biggest problems has been faulty fiscal policy, with the federal government underestimating the need for economic aid or withholding and reducing help prematurely. Another drag has been lack of business investment, even as financial markets have prospered with the help of loose monetary policy.

The result has been an economy where young people starting out are at risk of prolonged underachievement. It is possible to defuse that risk, but not without responsive policy and robust investment.

Detroit's Fight Against Blight

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

At one level, a new report about blight in Detroit can be seen as a cartographic inventory of the abandoned homes, vacant lots and rundown industrial sites that have spread through the once-thriving Motor City like a metastasized cancer. But there is another way to look at this important document: as the starting point for fresh conversation about what needs to be done to stabilize and revive Detroit and other declining cities around the country.

The report, which is based on an ambitious building-by-building census conducted by paid surveyors and volunteers, shows that 78,506 buildings, or 30 percent of the city's structures, are dilapidated or at risk of becoming so. An additional 114,000 parcels of land are empty. The Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, which the Obama administration commissioned to produce this report, estimates that it would cost \$850 million to demolish blighted homes and commercial buildings in neighborhoods and up to \$1 billion more to deal with large industrial sites.

At its peak in 1950, Detroit was home to 1.85 million people; it now has 700,000 residents. The city shrank as global economic forces undermined its industrial base; corrupt and inept local government officials squandered its wealth; and many residents and businesses fled to the suburbs. It also suffered because a succession of state and federal officials neglected the problems of urban areas.

Given the depths of the decline, reviving Detroit will take many years. City officials have already budgeted about \$456 million for removing blight, with much of that money coming from Detroit's bankruptcy plan, which has to be approved by a federal judge. That money should allow the city to do a

lot, but the state of Michigan, the federal government, foundations and others will need to chip in. The report makes a good case that the city should first address blight in neighborhoods that are on the cusp of losing many or most of their residents and where public intervention has the best chance of raising property values and attracting more investment. It also rightly calls on the city to reform its property tax, which is so high that more than half of property owners don't pay the tax. Since the 2008 financial crisis, more than 60,000 properties have been foreclosed for delinquent tax payments; the report notes that 118,000 more are subject to foreclosure or on the way to being foreclosed because their owners haven't paid taxes. Given those bleak numbers, the city might actually collect more revenue by lowering its property tax rate.

But the report provides few recommendations for what the city should do after it demolishes dilapidated homes and cleans vacant lots. It suggests that some lots could be sold to the owners of adjacent properties, while others could be turned into green open spaces. These are fine ideas but seem small-bore compared with the scope of the devastation. The city is very spread out, and must deal with the fact that there is vastly more land than there is demand for housing or commercial properties.

Any comprehensive plan to address that will need the help of the state and the federal government. Some solutions could include shrinking the size of the city — by, for example, turning some lightly populated areas into parks or farms, or ceding management of some areas to the county or state government. In downtown and midtown areas that are already attracting new businesses and residents, greater investment in public services like police, schools and parks could have a significant economic multiplier effect. Detroit Future City, a nonprofit project, has a plan that would focus resources on residential and commercial clusters to demonstrate that change is possible.

Dilapidated buildings and vacant lots are symptoms of larger economic and social problems. Reviving urban neighborhoods will take more than wrecking balls and dump trucks.

The Fixer Offense In Soccer

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

The passionate rivalries of World Cup soccer will soon be enthralling sports fans across the globe, along with throngs of fanatic gamblers placing untold millions in bets.

As the opening matches in Brazil on June 12 draw near, there are rising doubts that FIFA, soccer's world governing body, has enough security and personnel to protect the quadrennial competition from the threat of match fixing that has been bedeviling the sport.

The results of an estimated 680 global matches from 2008 to 2011 — including some World Cup qualifying matches — were found to be suspicious, according to Europol, the European Union's police agency, which counted more than 400 officials, players and criminals involved in match fixing.

The agency increasingly has its eye on gambling syndicates that exploit the vast and largely unregulated Asian gambling markets, where an estimated hundreds of billions of dollars in bets are wagered each year.

According to an investigative report by Declan Hill and Jeré Longman of The Times, fixers have found teams and referees from impoverished countries to be particularly vulnerable to bribery. FIFA promises that the Brazil matches will have tighter security and more rigorous screening of referees and players. But gambling on global soccer is booming, and the syndicates are experienced at beating the game with protection muscle, locker-room infiltrators and businessmen capitalizing on fixes.

FIFA already has a backlog of 90 cases of suspected fixing it deems worthy of investigation, but it has had only six investigators responsible for assorted security needs. The investigators have no

subpoena or criminal law authority in an area that needs a considerably larger staff devoted full time to investigations.

“There are no checks and balances and no oversight,” Terry Steans, a former FIFA investigator, warned after a notorious exhibition match four years ago in South Africa in which a syndicate fixer later bragged he paid \$60,000 to a referee to influence the score.

Global gambling is so frenzied and lucrative that fixers have even staged a tournament in a largely empty stadium devoid of television coverage, all the easier to guide bribed referees and players to the desired result — with no shortage of electronic bettors ready to be fleeced.

No games are watched as intently as World Cup games. FIFA owes it to the world to strengthen its watch so soccer fans can cheer without any doubts.

Pot Rules

By Maureen Dowd

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WASHINGTON — IN the last chapter, I covered how not to get high. In this one, I will cover how to get high.

After my admission that I did a foolish thing in Denver — failing to realize that consuming a single square, about a quarter, of a pot candy bar was dicey for an edibles virgin — many in the pot industry upbraided me for doing a foolish thing.

But some in Mary Jane world have contacted me to say that my dysphoria (i.e., bummer) is happening more and more in Colorado.

Justin Hartfield is the California founder of Marijuana.com and Weedmaps.com (a sort of Yelp for pot), and an entrepreneur involved in some of the nation’s top marijuana-technology companies. As The Wall Street Journal noted in a profile last March, the 30-year-old former high school pot dealer wants to be “the Philip Morris of pot.”

“Your experience points out a significant need for standardized dosing, testing and labeling,” he told me, recalling a similar vertiginous paranoia spiral when he and his wife split a pot brownie in Amsterdam in 2008.

On Friday, Marijuana.com launched an ongoing guide to “the best practices towards both consumption and sale of edibles.” It urged every dispensary in Colorado and throughout America to follow Amsterdam’s lead and put up signs warning about the dangers of oversampling psychotropic treats. (Other websites, from Vice to Vox, also weighed in with helpful safety tips on edibles.)

Hartfield said Weedmaps is providing pamphlets, posters and video to dispensaries and users, including an “Edibles Education” pamphlet with headings like “Start Small,” “Wait” because edibles take two hours or longer to take effect, “Don’t Mix” with alcohol or other substances, and keep “Out of Reach” of children.

“Edibles are not the best delivery device in general for marijuana because it’s notoriously hard to control the titration in your stomach,” Hartfield said. “When you smoke it’s so easy. You have a hit, it affects you immediately. Then you can decide to take another if you want to get higher. With edibles, it hits your stomach all at once, and holy Nelly!”

Some Colorado pots are nervous about stories like that of the Longmont mother who found her 2-year-old daughter eating a pot cookie in front of their apartment building and the two 10-year-olds in Greeley who were caught selling and swapping pot purloined from relatives. (Not to mention the new

British study suggesting there may be a correlation between smoking cannabis and a temporary change in the size and shape of sperm.)

“It’s kind of shocking in a way that the states that approved it have not had more oversight and consumer information,” said Dr. Jerome Groopman of Harvard Medical School, who favors legalization. “The horse is out of the barn, so to speak, and there’s a responsibility to consumers and particularly young people. THC is a serious substance. It has increased by 5 to 15 times in today’s plants compared to the 1960s. It’s a long time since Upton Sinclair. Now consumers have to know: Is it pure? What is the concentration? What are the hazards?”

On Wednesday, the state task force met to forge a rule denoting 10 milligrams as a serving, so that the dosage is clearly demarcated. And on Friday, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed legislation proposing a banking solution for the mainly cash pot business, but the Federal Reserve will need to sign off on it.

Because the Colorado law was approved by referendum, it’s like a Wild West statute, where things are getting filled in underneath, with a haphazard application of the regulatory process.

“One major reason I got involved in the movement was so that consumers could have basic access to information about the products they’re consuming, which was totally impossible under the prohibition that created the black market,” said Tom Angell, the founder and chairman of Marijuana Majority. “So it’s particularly disappointing to see that some companies in the legal marijuana industry — which our years of advocacy allowed to exist — are falling short of those principles. It seems basic labeling and consumer information hasn’t been a chief priority, but hopefully now it’s starting to change.”

He wants budtenders behind the counter to be trained so they can give customized guidance to customers of varying tolerance levels.

As the black market comes into the light, the hang-loose community can be uptight about any moves to regulate or put contours around the sale of pot to better protect neophytes, teenagers and children. Perhaps because they have spent so much time fighting to move past the old “Reefer Madness” caricature, the reefer crowd gets mad at the suggestion of any regulation, no matter how small or helpful. The clubby community that long existed in the shadows can have a countercultural reaction to rules.

Also, as one Colorado political aide pointed out: “There’s so much money involved. This is a group of people who probably never thought about money, and now a lot of people just have dollar signs in their eyes.”

Laughing, he noted, “The weirdest thing in the world is to hear from an angry pothead who finishes a tirade about rules with ‘dude.’ “

Obama On Obama On Climate

By Thomas L. Friedman

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WHEN it comes to dealing with the world’s climate and energy challenges I have a simple rule: change America, change the world.

If America raises its clean energy standards, not only will others follow — others who have hid behind our inaction — we’ll also stimulate our industry to invent more of the clean air, clean power and energy efficiency systems, and move them down the cost curve faster, so U.S. companies will be leaders in this next great global industry and American consumers will be the first to benefit. That is why the new Environmental Protection Agency rules President Obama proposed last week to curb carbon emissions from power plants are so pivotal. You can’t make power systems greener without making them smarter — smarter materials, software or design. One new ruling will not change the world — and we have to be

careful that this one doesn't replace our addiction to coal with an addiction to natural gas alone. But coming at a time when clean energy technologies are becoming more competitive, and when awareness of climate change is becoming more pervasive, this E.P.A. ruling should give a real boost to clean power and efficiency innovation and make our country more resilient, healthy, secure — and respected.

Several weeks ago, as he was drawing up these new emission rules, I interviewed President Obama in the White House library about climate and energy. Following are highlights. (The interview is also featured in the final episode of Showtime's climate series, "Years of Living Dangerously" airing on Monday.)

For starters, Obama is aware that we can't just keep burning oil, coal and gas until they run out. As the International Energy Agency warned, "no more than one-third of proven reserves of fossil fuels can be consumed prior to 2050" — unless carbon capture and storage technology is widely deployed — otherwise we'll bust through the limit of a 2 degree Celsius rise in average temperature that climate scientists believe will unleash truly disruptive ice melt, sea level rise and weather extremes. The rest has to stay in the ground, and we need to steadily find cleaner alternatives and more energy efficiency. I asked Obama if he agreed with that analysis.

"Science is science," he said. "And there is no doubt that if we burned all the fossil fuel that's in the ground right now that the planet's going to get too hot and the consequences could be dire."

So we can't burn it all?

"We're not going to be able to burn it all. Over the course of the next several decades, we're going to have to build a ramp from how we currently use energy to where we need to use energy. And we're not going to suddenly turn off a switch and suddenly we're no longer using fossil fuels, but we have to use this time wisely, so that you have a tapering off of fossil fuels replaced by clean energy sources that are not releasing carbon. ... But I very much believe in keeping that 2 [degree] Celsius target as a goal."

If that is so, your environmental supporters wonder why you keep touting how much we're still exploring for oil, coal and natural gas?

"We have got to meet folks where they are," said Obama. "We've gone through, obviously, in the last five years, a tough economic crisis. ... I don't always lead with the climate change issue because if you right now are worried about whether you've got a job or if you can pay the bills, the first thing you want to hear is how do I meet the immediate problem? One of the hardest things in politics is getting a democracy to deal with something now where the payoff is long term or the price of inaction is decades away. What we've tried to do is continually find ways in which we can make progress, recognizing that we're not immediately going to get people to abandon the old gas-guzzler" [because] "they can't afford an electric car."

Every morning you get a security briefing from the intelligence community on global threats; do you now also get the same on environmental threats?

"I do," said Obama. Science adviser "John Holdren typically makes presentations when there are new findings," and his reports show that environmental stresses are now impacting both foreign and domestic policy. For instance, wildfires are now "consuming a larger and larger portion of the Department of Interior budget. And if we continue to fund fighting fires the same way we've done in the past, all the money for everything else — for conservation, for maintenance of forests — all that money gets used up."

But the area he's just as worried about, said Obama, "is how climate change could end up having profound national security implications in poorer countries. We're obviously concerned about drought in California or hurricanes and floods along our coastlines and the possibility of more powerful storms or more severe droughts. All of those things are bread-and-butter issues that touch on American families.

But when you start seeing how these shifts can displace people — entire countries can be finding themselves unable to feed themselves and the potential incidence of conflict that arises out of that — that gets your attention. There's a reason why the quadrennial defense review — [which] the secretary of defense and the Joints Chiefs of Staff work on — identified climate change as one of our most significant national security problems. It's not just the actual disasters that might arise, it is the accumulating stresses that are placed on a lot of different countries and the possibility of war, conflict, refugees, displacement that arise from a changing climate."

Syria couldn't manage a four-year drought when it had a government, and that drought helped fuel the uprising there, because the government did nothing for the people. Imagine what will happen if they have another prolonged drought and they've destroyed half their country?

"Which gives you a sense of what happens in a lot of these countries that are just barely hanging on," said Obama. "They don't have a lot of margin for error, and that has national security implications. When people are hungry, when people are displaced, when there are a lot of young people, particularly young men, who are drifting without prospects for the future, the fertility of the soil for terrorism ends up being significant. And it can have an impact on us."

What is the one thing you would still like to see us do to address climate change? Said Obama: put a price on carbon.

The way we've solved previous problems, like acid rain, he noted, "was that we said: 'We're going to charge you if you're releasing this stuff into the atmosphere, but we're going to let you figure out — with the marketplace and with the technology' " how best to mitigate it. But "you can't keep dumping it out in the atmosphere and making everybody else pay for it. So if there's one thing I would like to see, it'd be for us to be able to price the cost of carbon emissions. ... We've obviously seen resistance from the Republican side of the aisle on that. And out of fairness, there's some Democrats who've been concerned about it as well, because regionally they're very reliant on heavy industry and old-power plants. ... I still believe, though, that the more we can show the price of inaction — that billions and potentially trillions of dollars are going to be lost because we do not do something about it — ultimately leads us to be able to say, 'Let's go ahead and help the marketplace discourage this kind of activity.' "

Where does natural gas fit in?

After all, it can be a blessing and a curse. Natural gas emits only half the carbon dioxide of coal when burned, but if methane leaks when oil companies extract it from the ground in a sloppy manner — methane is far more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide — it can wipe out all the advantages of natural gas over coal.

Natural gas, the president said, "is a useful bridge" to span "where we are right now and where we hope to be — where we've got entirely clean energy economies based around the world." Environmentalists, he added, "are right, though, to be concerned if it's done badly, then you end up having methane gas emitted. And we know how to do it properly. But right now what we've got to do is make sure that there are industry standards that everybody is observing." That doesn't "necessarily mean that it has to be a national law," he said. "You could have a series of states working together — and, hopefully, industry working together — to make sure that the extraction of natural gas is done safely."

Do you ever want to just go off on the climate deniers in Congress?

"Yeah, absolutely," the president said with a laugh. "Look, it's frustrating when the science is in front of us. ... We can argue about how. But let's not argue about what's going on. The science is compelling. ... The baseline fact of climate change is not something we can afford to deny. And if you profess leadership in this country at this moment in our history, then you've got to recognize this is going to be

one of the most significant long-term challenges, if not the most significant long-term challenge, that this country faces and that the planet faces. The good news is that the public may get out ahead of some of their politicians” — as people start to see the cost of cleaning up for hurricanes like Sandy or the drought in California — and when “those start multiplying, then people start thinking, ‘You know what? We’re going to reward politicians who talk to us honestly and seriously about this problem.’ “

The president added: “The person who I consider to be the greatest president of all time, Abraham Lincoln, was pretty consistent in saying, ‘With public opinion there’s nothing I cannot do, and without public opinion there’s nothing I can get done,’ and so part of my job over these next two and a half years and beyond is trying to shift public opinion. And the way to shift public opinion is to really focus in on the fact that if we do nothing our kids are going to be worse off.”

The trick, I argued, is to find that fine line between making people feel the problem is urgent, but not insoluble so they just say: If the end is nigh, let’s party.

“The most important thing is to guard against cynicism,” responded the president. “I want to make sure that everybody who’s been watching this program or listening to this interview doesn’t start concluding that, well, we’re all doomed, there’s nothing we can do about it. There’s a lot we can do about it. It’s not going to happen as fast or as smoothly or as elegantly as we like, but, if we are persistent, we will make progress.”

There Is No Alternative

By Ross Douthat

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

IF the excerpts currently circulating in the press are any indication, Hillary Clinton’s latest memoir will resemble pretty much every recent political memoir from a potential presidential candidate: That is, it will be chloroform in print.

Which no doubt troubles its “author” not at all. Clinton has every incentive to bore us, sedate us, lull us to sleep — to hit the snooze button, in effect, for as long as our politics makes possible. She is the rare presidential hopeful who has nothing whatsoever to gain from making news. Leading the Democratic presidential field by a Secretariat-esque margin; leading every potential Republican candidate by around 10 points; running far ahead of President Obama’s job approval numbers ... if she had her way, all the months from here till 2016 would be consumed by devouring time without anything altering her current image.

And her desire converges almost perfectly with the interests of her party, even if not every liberal quite realizes it yet. That’s because Clinton’s iconic status is, increasingly, the only clear advantage the Democratic Party has. If her position is weakened, diminished or challenged, the entire coalition risks collapse.

Liberals don’t see this clearly yet because they tend to regard the Obama coalition as a left-of-center mirror-image of Nixon’s and Reagan’s conservative majority — a natural, settled and, thanks to demographic trends, growing presidential majority (if not a congressional one) that should deliver the White House to their party reliably for cycles to come.

Because of this confidence, many Democratic partisans assume that 2016 will inevitably be better for their party than the looming midterms, and many analysts assume that the Republican Party is a long, long way from mounting a substantive challenge to liberalism. My friends on the left have an extensive list of things that the right simply “must” do before the G.O.P. can be relevant at the presidential level again (crush the Tea Party, then move left on immigration, then move left on everything else ...), and they

express a certain condescension toward the recent stirrings of conservative policy innovation: Nice effort, but you'll have to move a lot further in our direction if you expect to win the White House back.

But there's a big flaw in their historical analogy. Political skill builds majorities, but popular policy successes cement them — and that is what has consistently eluded Obama. He resembles Reagan when it comes to electoral-majority building, but he's a Reagan without the economic boom, without the foreign policy achievements and without the high approval ratings.

As Ramesh Ponnuru writes in the latest issue of *National Review*, while “the Democrats of the 1980s had to respond to a country that was largely happy with Republican governance and to specific conservative policy successes,” today's electorate “is persistently unhappy” with the direction of the country, and “liberal policy successes are too hard to detect to be the basis for concessions” by the right. And liberalism's current forward-looking agenda, such as it is — immigration reform, climate-change regulations, some jaw-jaw about inequality — doesn't really align with those unhappy voters' immediate priorities.

Which means that Obama's coalition, while real enough, may not be durable — and that a Republican comeback at the presidential level might be more likely than many Democrats currently assume.

Especially since the liberal coalition's extraordinary diversity also offers many potential lines of fracture. To invoke an example from this year's grim centennial, the post-Obama Democratic Party could well be the Austro-Hungarian empire of presidential majorities: a sprawling, ramshackle and heterogeneous arrangement, one major crisis away from dissolution.

But this is where Hillary Clinton comes in. If her party is Austria-Hungary, she might be its Franz Josef — the beloved emperor whose imperial persona (“coffered up,” the novelist Joseph Roth wrote, “in an icy and everlasting old age, like armour made of an awe-inspiring crystal”), as much as any specific political strategy, helped keep dissolution from the empire's door.

I really have no idea what proposals Clinton will run on, what arguments she'll make. But as with Franz Josef, it's not her policies that make her formidable; it's the multitudes that “Hillary” the brand and icon now contains. Academic liberalism and waitress-mom populism and Davos/Wall Street/Bloomberg centrism. Female empowerment and stand-by-your-man martyrdom. The old Clintonian bond with minority voters and her own 2008 primary-trail identification with Scots-Irish whites. And then the great trifecta: continuity with the Obama present, a restoration of the more prosperous Clintonian past and (as the first ... female ... president) a new “yes we can” progressive future.

Like the penultimate Hapsburg emperor with his motley empire, then, she has the potential to embody a political coalition — its identities and self-conceptions, its nostalgias and aspirations — in ways that might just keep the whole thing hanging together.

But without her, the deluge.

Dear Millennials, We're Sorry

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

AMONG Americans age 40 and older, there's a pastime more popular than football, Candy Crush or HBO.

It's bashing millennials.

Oh, the hours of fun we have, marveling at their self-fascination and gaping at their sense of entitlement! It's been an especially spirited romp lately, as a new batch of them graduate from college

and gambol toward our cubicles, prompting us to wonder afresh about the havoc they'll wreak on our world.

We have a hell of a lot of nerve, considering the havoc we've wrought on theirs.

For decades they'll be saddled with our effluvium: a monstrous debt, an epidemic of obesity, Adam Sandler movies. In their lifetimes the Atlantic will possibly swallow Miami Beach (I foresee a "Golden Girls" sequel with dinghies and life preservers) and the footwear for Anchorage in February may be flip-flops. At least everyone will be saving on heating bills.

The Obama administration did unveil a bold climate-change measure last week. Or, rather, it signaled its intent to act: We'll have to wait and see whether Congress figures out a way to foil the president or the courts gum things up. The plan as it stands would cut carbon pollution from American power plants 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030.

But that may be too little, too late, according to an assessment last year by John Podesta, now a counselor to President Obama, in an interview with Harper's Magazine before he joined the White House staff in late 2013.

In the interview, excerpts from which were released only last week, Podesta apparently reviewed what had been proposed and actually done in terms of carbon emissions and the like.

"But 50 years from now, is that going to seem like enough?" he said. "I think the answer to that is going to be no." And that's chilling, given the stakes. As the title of a book by Al Gore observed, the earth itself is in the balance.

The country's slowness to deal with swelling seas and melting glaciers is just one manifestation of our myopia, just one metaphor for our failure to reckon with the future that we're visiting upon today's children, who get more lip service than legislation from us.

"If you're going along with the status quo, it should be a crime to say that you care about our children and grandchildren, because you're not putting your money where your mouth is," Bob Kerrey, a Democrat who governed Nebraska for four years and represented that state in the Senate for another 12, told me recently.

This subject haunts him more and more. "If we're trying to figure out how to advance the next generation's future, we need to be spending more on the next generation, and we're spending it on yesterday's generation," said Kerrey, 70. "I am not the future. My 12-year-old son is. But if you look at the spending, you'd think I'm the future."

Kerrey is referring mostly to Social Security and Medicare, which, along with Medicaid, are the so-called entitlements that claim a larger and larger share of the federal budget.

He's fixated on those sorts of numbers: According to the Congressional Budget Office, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid totaled 6.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 1990. By 2010, they were 10 percent. And by 2038, such spending may represent 14.3 percent. It's hard to see how that leaves much money for discretionary spending on infrastructure, on education, on research, on a range of investments that safeguard or improve the America that today's young people will inherit.

And there's too little money for that even now. Talk to physicians and other scientists who have long depended on research grants from the National Institutes of Health to keep the United States at the forefront of invention and innovation and they'll tell you how thoroughly that spigot has closed over the last 10 years. They're defeated, despondent.

The Urban Institute released a report in 2012 that looked at figures from 2008 for the combined local, state and federal spending that directly benefited Americans 65 and older versus spending that went to Americans under 19; the per capita discrepancy was \$26,355 versus \$11,822. Julia Isaacs, a senior

fellow at the institute, told me that while data for subsequent years hadn't been analyzed yet, it wouldn't show a significant change in that gap.

Isaacs also drew attention to a follow-up report released by the institute last year. It projected federal spending in 2023 and envisioned that entitlement payments to older Americans would rise to 46 percent of the budget from 40 percent now. Interest payments on the debt would be another 14 percent. That would leave well under 50 percent for everything else, including the military.

She noted that the population was aging. Meanwhile, there's a resistance to tax increases. "That makes me very worried that children will be squeezed out," Isaacs said.

"I'm glad that my parents are living longer," she added. "But it's creating this budgetary math problem that we're unwilling to look at."

That unwillingness includes the predictable pushback from many members of Congress, from voters and from various advocacy groups when proposals are made to limit the growth of Social Security by, say, fiddling with cost-of-living adjustments. Older Americans, who would be instantly affected by such a change, turn out more reliably on Election Day than any other age group. Lawmakers are loath to cross them.

Younger voters need to assert themselves. Perhaps they're poised to do just that. A recent poll by ABC News and The Washington Post showed a significant rise — to 66 percent now from 53 percent two months ago — of voters between the ages of 18 and 39 who said they definitely planned to vote in November.

In Washington last week, hundreds of concerned young leaders gathered for an inaugural Millennial Week conference, devoted to youth-oriented policy discussions. And I've noticed more bulletins and agitating from organizations like Generation Opportunity, which crunched May's employment figures to confirm a much higher rate of joblessness among Americans ages 18 to 29 than among the whole population.

We millennial bashers of course have our stock responses to that. We quibble with the college majors that millennials choose. We question their willingness to hunt for work outside their comfort zones.

We conveniently overlook how much more they've had to pay for college than we did, the loans they've racked up and the fact that nothing explains their employment difficulties better than a generally crummy economy, which certainly isn't their fault.

They get our derision when they deserve our compassion and a political selflessness we've been unable to muster. While we're at it, we might even want to murmur an apology.

Madam Secretary Made A Difference

By Nicholas Kristof

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

WHEN politicians have trouble spinning their own glories, that's a problem.

So it was bizarre that Hillary Rodham Clinton, asked at a forum in April about her legacy at the State Department, had trouble articulating it. That feeds into a narrative — awaiting her memoir on Tuesday — that she may have been glamorous as secretary of state but didn't actually accomplish much.

In fact, that's dead wrong, for Clinton achieved a great deal and left a hefty legacy — just not the traditional kind. She didn't craft a coalition of allies, like James Baker, one of the most admired secretaries of state. She didn't seal a landmark peace agreement, nor is there a recognizable "Hillary Clinton doctrine."

No, her legacy is different.

For starters, Clinton recognized that our future will be more about Asia than Europe, and she pushed hard to rebalance our relations. She didn't fully deliver on this "pivot" — generally she was more successful at shaping agendas than delivering on them — but the basic instinct to turn our ship of state to face our Pacific future was sound and overdue.

More fundamentally, Clinton vastly expanded the diplomatic agenda. Diplomats historically focused on "hard" issues, like trade or blowing up stuff, and so it may seem weird and "soft" to fret about women's rights or economic development.

Yet Clinton understood that impact and leverage in 21st-century diplomacy often come by addressing poverty, the environment, education and family planning.

It's not that Clinton was a softie. She was often more hawkish than the White House, favoring the surge in Afghanistan (a mistake, I believe) and the arming of moderate Syrian rebel groups (a good call, but one vetoed by President Obama).

Yet she grew truly animated when discussing the new diplomatic agenda. A couple of times I moderated panels during the United Nations General Assembly in which she talked passionately — and bewilderingly, for some of the audience — about civil society, women leaders and agricultural investments.

Pinstriped foreign and prime ministers looked on, happy to be considered important enough to be invited. They listened with increasingly furrowed brows, as if absorbing an alien language, as Clinton brightly spoke about topics such as "the business case for focusing on gender in agricultural development."

Clinton was relentless about using the spotlight that accompanied her to highlight those who needed it more. At one global forum, she went out of her way to praise Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning entrepreneur of microfinance, who was being persecuted by the Bangladesh prime minister. On trips, she found time to visit shelters for victims of human trafficking or aid groups doing groundbreaking work.

She may hide it, but Clinton is a policy nerd. Ask about microfinance, and she'll talk your ear off. Mention early childhood interventions, and she will gush about obscure details of a home visitation experiment in Elmira, N.Y., that dramatically improved child outcomes.

The kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls in April was the kind of issue Clinton was out front of. She understood that educating girls isn't a frilly "soft" issue, but a way to transform a country to make it less hospitable to extremists. No one argued more presciently that women's rights are security issues.

"Those who argue that her championing of outreach to women and girls and her elevation of development was not serious miss a central reality of international politics in this century," notes Nicholas Burns, who was undersecretary of state in the George W. Bush presidency. "These issues are now mainstream globally."

"I disagree very strongly with those who charge that Hillary Clinton was not successful," adds Burns, who is now at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "A fair-minded view is that she was, in fact, highly effective."

Clinton was pioneering not only in the way she expanded the diplomatic agenda, but also in the tools she forged to promote it. She pushed government-to-people relations and people-to-people ties.

Some of this was pioneered in the George W. Bush administration, but Clinton greatly escalated public diplomacy with a rush into social media.

"She was very clear about it: This is the 21st century, and we're fools if we don't use it," recalls Michael McFaul, who became ambassador to Russia in this time. McFaul then had no idea what a tweet

was, and there was strong resistance from senior diplomats. “I said the boss wants to do this,” McFaul recalls, and he ultimately became a champion tweeter.

Today it’s routine to use social media in multiple languages to communicate American diplomatic messages to the world.

So, sure, critics are right that Hillary Rodham Clinton never achieved the kind of landmark peace agreement that would make the first sentence of her obituary. But give her credit: She expanded the diplomatic agenda and adopted new tools to promote it — a truly important legacy.

And, anyway, she may have grander dreams about how her obituary should begin.

The Ghosts In The Machine

By Timothy H. Evans

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A SURPRISING number of knife attacks on and by teenagers have appeared in the national news in recent weeks, but in terms of sheer tragic weirdness, nothing can match the case of two 12-year-old Wisconsin girls who stabbed a classmate 19 times, nearly killing her — and then said they did it to appease someone called “Slenderman.”

Slenderman is not, in fact, a man, but an Internet meme, an urban legend for the digital age, a fictitious figure — tall, thin, faceless and dressed in a black suit — who appears in homemade “found” videos on YouTube, in Photoshopped pictures and on blogs describing alleged sightings around the country.

Although Slenderman has been around since 2009, the stabbing case has brought the phenomenon, most popular among teenagers, into the harsh glare of the media spotlight, with worried parents and pundits wringing their hands about the dangers of modern technology.

But they shouldn’t worry: Slenderman is a largely harmless fixation of teen pop culture who fits firmly within America’s long tradition of horror folklore.

The girls apparently became obsessed with Slenderman from reading about him on the website Creepypasta, a collection of fan-submitted horror microfiction. He’s just one of many characters popular on the site, alongside “Jeff the Killer,” vampires, zombies and aliens — and Creepypasta is just one of thousands of similar fan fiction sites.

Slenderman is usually shown as a shadowy figure (sometimes sprouting tentacles), momentarily glimpsed in the background of altered photographs or videos, intruding on scenes of everyday life: parties, hikes in the woods or children playing. His mix of specifics (height, dress) and ambiguity is a common notion in American horror folklore.

Indeed, Slenderman’s creator, Eric Knudsen (who goes by the web handle “Victor Surge”), says he invented the character as an explicit “attempt to cooperatively create new folklore” by mixing stock horror tropes with the generative power of the Internet.

Mr. Knudsen had a lot to draw on. Legends of the supernatural, paranormal and horrific have existed in oral culture for a very long time. Many urban legends have a horror component. Almost everyone has heard, and probably told, stories about ghosts, haunted places (houses, bridges, cemeteries), the “Vanishing Hitchhiker,” the teenage couple making out in a car when the radio flashes a story about an escaped serial killer. That Slenderman has proliferated online is new in terms of the medium, but not the message.

Nor is it new for someone to act on his or her relationship to horror folklore. In 1929 Nancy Bowen, a woman living near Buffalo, became convinced, through a Ouija board, that her dead husband had been killed by another woman. A few days later, Bowen killed her.

More prosaically, consider the “Bloody Mary” ritual carried on (usually) by preteenage girls, who recite “Bloody Mary” into a darkened bathroom mirror, half-expecting to see a monstrous image, or groups of high school students “legend tripping” to a local haunted house.

That said, we also have to recognize how Slenderman, as an Internet phenomenon, differs from past horror folklore. The web takes oral traditions — jokes, rumors, legends — and transmits them with a speed that far surpasses the word-of-mouth circulation of most pre-Internet folklore. Dead-celebrity jokes and 9/11 conspiracy theories go viral within hours.

In the past, Slenderman might have remained localized, a regional legend about a haunted neighborhood in Northern California or suburban Virginia. Instead, he is everywhere, at the same time.

And it makes sense that Slenderman appears predominantly in photos and film, rather than text. As digital cameras and home-editing programs proliferate, Internet memes are becoming increasingly visual — think LOLcats and “Thanks Obama,” among countless others. As a visual meme, Slenderman is at once more accessible and more frightening, in ways that oral memes can’t replicate.

Moreover, the Internet has become a melting pot where long-held distinctions among folklore, mass culture and literary or high culture break down. The stories of H. P. Lovecraft, a once obscure early 20th-century horror writer, have gained immense mainstream currency thanks to the web, where people who may never have read the books still revel in breaking apart the complex and immense world of Lovecraft’s extraterrestrial monster Cthulhu, for visual fodder for everything from toys, games and fan fiction to YouTube films and even erotica.

In that regard Slenderman, who is both a very specific character and an infinitely pliable meme, is like Cthulhu, without the literary origins.

As a folklorist, I can’t comment on what may have motivated those two girls in Wisconsin. I’ll leave that to the psychologists. But I can say that we’ve seen this pattern before, especially when it comes to technology, pop culture and violence: killings said to be inspired by Dungeons & Dragons games or heavy metal in the 1980s, or Ouija boards long before that. Sometimes these are real but isolated incidents; often they are rumors, themselves a part of the folklore.

Internet horror memes are no more likely to motivate violence or insanity than any other aspect of contemporary culture. But like other examples of the folklore of horror and the supernatural, they can lead us to question distinctions between “everyday life” and the unreal or the numinous — distinctions that may be made even more ambiguous by the bewildering variety of alternative realities found online.

Timothy H. Evans is an associate professor of folk studies and anthropology at Western Kentucky University.

The Biology Of Risk

By John Coates

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

SIX years after the financial meltdown there is once again talk about market bubbles. Are stocks succumbing to exuberance? Is real estate? We thought we had exorcised these demons. It is therefore with something close to despair that we ask: What is it about risk taking that so eludes our understanding, and our control?

Part of the problem is that we tend to view financial risk taking as a purely intellectual activity. But this view is incomplete. Risk is more than an intellectual puzzle — it is a profoundly physical experience, and it involves your body. Risk by its very nature threatens to hurt you, so when confronted by it your body and brain, under the influence of the stress response, unite as a single functioning unit. This occurs in athletes and soldiers, and it occurs as well in traders and people investing from home. The state of your body predicts your appetite for financial risk just as it predicts an athlete's performance.

If we understand how a person's body influences risk taking, we can learn how to better manage risk takers. We can also recognize that mistakes governments have made have contributed to excessive risk taking.

Consider the most important risk manager of them all — the Federal Reserve. Over the past 20 years, the Fed has pioneered a new technique of influencing Wall Street. Where before the Fed shrouded its activities in secrecy, it now informs the street in as clear terms as possible of what it intends to do with short-term interest rates, and when. Janet L. Yellen, the chairwoman of the Fed, declared this new transparency, called forward guidance, a revolution; Ben S. Bernanke, her predecessor, claimed it reduced uncertainty and calmed the markets. But does it really calm the markets? Or has eliminating uncertainty in policy spread complacency among the financial community and actually helped inflate market bubbles?

We get a fascinating answer to these questions if we turn from economics and look into the biology of risk taking.

ONE biological mechanism, the stress response, exerts an especially powerful influence on risk taking. We live with stress daily, especially at work, yet few people truly understand what it is. Most of us tend to believe that stress is largely a psychological phenomenon, a state of being upset because something nasty has happened. But if you want to understand stress you must disabuse yourself of that view. The stress response is largely physical: It is your body priming itself for impending movement.

As such, most stress is not, well, stressful. For example, when you walk to the coffee room at work, your muscles need fuel, so the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol recruit glucose from your liver and muscles; you need oxygen to burn this fuel, so your breathing increases ever so slightly; and you need to deliver this fuel and oxygen to cells throughout your body, so your heart gently speeds up and blood pressure increases. This suite of physical reactions forms the core of the stress response, and, as you can see, there is nothing nasty about it at all.

Far from it. Many forms of stress, like playing sports, trading the markets, even watching an action movie, are highly enjoyable. In moderate amounts, we get a rush from stress, we thrive on risk taking. In fact, the stress response is such a healthy part of our lives that we should stop calling it stress at all and call it, say, the challenge response.

This mechanism hums along, anticipating challenges, keeping us alive, and it usually does so without breaking the surface of consciousness. We take in information nonstop and our brain silently, behind the scenes, figures out what movement might be needed and then prepares our body. Many neuroscientists now believe our brain is designed primarily to plan and execute movement, that every piece of information we take in, every thought we think, comes coupled with some pattern of physical arousal. We do not process information as a computer does, dispassionately; we react to it physically. For humans, there is no pure thought of the kind glorified by Plato, Descartes and classical economics.

Our challenge response, and especially its main hormone cortisol (produced by the adrenal glands) is particularly active when we are exposed to novelty and uncertainty. If a person is subjected to something mildly unpleasant, like bursts of white noise, but these are delivered at regular intervals, they

may leave cortisol levels unaffected. But if the timing of the noise changes and it is delivered randomly, meaning it cannot be predicted, then cortisol levels rise significantly.

Uncertainty over the timing of something unpleasant often causes a greater challenge response than the unpleasant thing itself. Sometimes it is more stressful not knowing when or if you are going to be fired than actually being fired. Why? Because the challenge response, like any good defense mechanism, anticipates; it is a metabolic preparation for the unknown.

You may now have an inkling of just how central this biology is to the financial world. Traders are immersed in novelty and uncertainty the moment they step onto a trading floor. Here they encounter an information-rich environment like none other. Every event in the world, every piece of news, flows nonstop onto the floor, showing up on news feeds and market prices, blinking and disappearing. News by its very nature is novel, adds volatility to the market and puts us into a state of vigilance and arousal.

I observed this remarkable call and echo between news and body when, after running a trading desk on Wall Street for 13 years, I returned to the University of Cambridge and began researching the neuroscience of trading.

In one of my studies, conducted with 17 traders on a trading floor in London, we found that their cortisol levels rose 68 percent over an eight-day period as volatility increased. Subsequent, as yet unpublished, studies suggest to us that this cortisol response to volatility is common in the financial community. A question then arose: Does this cortisol response affect a person's risk taking? In a follow-up study, my colleagues from the department of medicine pharmacologically raised the cortisol levels of a group of 36 volunteers by a similar 69 percent over eight days. We gauged their risk appetite by means of a computerized gambling task. The results, published recently in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed that the volunteers' appetite for risk fell 44 percent.

Most models in economics and finance assume that risk preferences are a stable trait, much like your height. But this assumption, as our studies suggest, is misleading. Humans are designed with shifting risk preferences. They are an integral part of our response to stress, or challenge.

When opportunities abound, a potent cocktail of dopamine — a neurotransmitter operating along the pleasure pathways of the brain — and testosterone encourages us to expand our risk taking, a physical transformation I refer to as "the hour between dog and wolf." One such opportunity is a brief spike in market volatility, for this presents a chance to make money. But if volatility rises for a long period, the prolonged uncertainty leads us to subconsciously conclude that we no longer understand what is happening and then cortisol scales back our risk taking. In this way our risk taking calibrates to the amount of uncertainty and threat in the environment.

Under conditions of extreme volatility, such as a crisis, traders, investors and indeed whole companies can freeze up in risk aversion, and this helps push a bear market into a crash. Unfortunately, this risk aversion occurs at just the wrong time, for these crises are precisely when markets offer the most attractive opportunities, and when the economy most needs people to take risks. The real challenge for Wall Street, I now believe, is not so much fear and greed as it is these silent and large shifts in risk appetite.

I consult regularly with risk managers who must grapple with unstable risk taking throughout their organizations. Most of them are not aware that the source of the problem lurks deep in our bodies. Their attempts to manage risk are therefore comparable to firefighters' spraying water at the tips of flames.

THE Fed, however, through its control of policy uncertainty, has in its hands a powerful tool for influencing risk takers. But by trying to be more transparent, it has relinquished this control.

Forward guidance was introduced in the early 2000s. But the process of making monetary policy more transparent was in fact begun by Alan Greenspan back in the early 1990s. Before that time the Fed, especially under Paul A. Volcker, operated in secrecy. Fed chairmen did not announce rate changes, and they felt no need to explain themselves, leaving Wall Street highly uncertain about what was coming next. Furthermore, changes in interest rates were highly volatile: When Mr. Volcker raised rates, he might first raise them, cut them a few weeks later, and then raise again, so the tightening proceeded in a zigzag. Traders were put on edge, vigilant, never complacent about their positions so long as Mr. Volcker lurked in the shadows. Street wisdom has it that you don't fight the Fed, and no one tangled with that bruiser.

Under Mr. Greenspan, the Fed became less intimidating and more transparent. Beginning in 1994 the Fed committed to changing fed funds only at its scheduled meetings (except in emergencies); it announced these changes at fixed times; and it communicated its easing or tightening bias. Mr. Greenspan notoriously spoke in riddles, but his actions had no such ambiguity. Mr. Bernanke reduced uncertainty even further: Forward guidance detailed the Fed's plans.

Under both chairmen fed funds became far less erratic. Whereas Mr. Volcker changed rates in a volatile fashion, up one week down the next, Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke raised them in regular steps. Between 2004 and 2006, rates rose .25 percent at every Fed meeting, without fail... tick, tick, tick. As a result of this more gradualist Fed, volatility in fed funds fell after 1994 by as much as 60 percent.

In a speech to the Cato Institute in 2007, Mr. Bernanke claimed that minimizing uncertainty in policy ensured that asset prices would respond "in ways that further the central bank's policy objectives." But evidence suggests that quite the opposite has occurred.

Cycles of bubble and crash have always existed, but in the 20 years after 1994, they became more severe and longer lasting than in the previous 20 years. For example, the bear markets following the Nifty Fifty crash in the mid-70s and Black Monday of 1987 had an average loss of about 40 percent and lasted 240 days; while the dot-com and credit crises lost on average about 52 percent and lasted over 430 days. Moreover, if you rank the largest one-day percentage moves in the market over this 40-year period, 76 percent of the largest gains and losses occurred after 1994.

I suspect the trends in fed funds and stocks were related. As uncertainty in fed funds declined, one of the most powerful brakes on excessive risk taking in stocks was released.

During their tenures, in response to surging stock and housing markets, both Mr. Greenspan and Mr. Bernanke embarked on campaigns of tightening, but the metronome-like ticking of their rate increases was so soothing it failed to dampen exuberance.

There are times when the Fed does need to calm the markets. After the credit crisis, it did just that. But when the economy and market are strong, as they were during the dot-com and housing bubbles, what, pray tell, is the point of calming the markets? Of raising rates in a predictable fashion? If you think the markets are complacent, then unnerve them. Over the past 20 years the Fed may have perfected the art of reassuring the markets, but it has lost the power to scare. And that means stock markets more easily overshoot, and then collapse.

The Fed could dampen this cycle. It has, in interest rate policy, not one tool but two: the level of rates and the uncertainty of rates. Given the sensitivity of risk preferences to uncertainty, the Fed could use policy uncertainty and a higher volatility of funds to selectively target risk taking in the financial community. People running factories or coffee shops or drilling wells might not even notice. And that means the Fed could keep the level of rates lower than otherwise to stimulate the economy.

It may seem counterintuitive to use uncertainty to quell volatility. But a small amount of uncertainty surrounding short-term interest rates may act much like a vaccine immunizing the stock market against

bubbles. More generally, if we view humans as embodied brains instead of disembodied minds, we can see that the risk-taking pathologies found in traders also lead chief executives, trial lawyers, oil executives and others to swing from excessive and ill-conceived risks to petrified risk aversion. It will also teach us to manage these risk takers, much as sport physiologists manage athletes, to stabilize their risk taking and to lower stress.

And that possibility opens up exciting vistas of human performance.

John Coates is a research fellow at Cambridge who traded derivatives for Goldman Sachs and ran a desk for Deutsche Bank. He is the author of "The Hour Between Dog and Wolf: How Risk Taking Transforms Us, Body and Mind."

Best Of Both Worlds? Northeast Cut Emissions And Enjoyed Growth

By Hannah Fairfield

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

Some critics of the Environmental Protection Agency's new requirements for power plants argue that forcing emissions reduction will curtail economic growth. But the recent experience of states that already cap carbon emissions reveals that emissions and economic growth are no longer tightly tied together.

One of the ways that states will be able to meet the new E.P.A. standards is by joining a Northeastern cap-and-trade program known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which first put in a carbon cap in 2009. In a cap-and-trade system, the government places a ceiling on total carbon emissions and issues permits for those emissions, which companies can buy and sell from one another.

The nine states already in the program — Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont — have substantially reduced their carbon emissions in recent years. At the same time, those states have had stronger economic growth than the rest of the country.

Historically, the demand for electricity was closely tied to growth in the economy; only recently have the two decoupled.

These nine states had large emissions drops even before the program began in 2009, in part because the recession and warmer winters lowered the demand for power. The states also began switching to natural gas power, retiring coal units, and adding wind and solar energy generation. As the economy recovered, participation in the program spurred the states to find ways to meet the increasing demand for power without driving up emissions.

Since 2009, the nine states have cut their emissions by 18 percent, while their economies grew by 9.2 percent. By comparison, emissions in the other 41 states fell by 4 percent, while their economies grew by 8.8 percent.

The states in the program "were able to reduce emissions faster and more efficiently than was previously assumed," said Peter Shattuck, director of market initiatives at ENE, a research and advocacy group based in Boston. "It was encouraging to see how quickly they hit the targets."

Capping carbon emissions could still slow economic growth, and it is possible that the nine states that joined the cap-and-trade program would have had even better economic growth without the program. These states have more nuclear and natural-gas energy in their portfolios than do many other states; other states that depend primarily on coal power may not be able to reduce emissions as swiftly.

But the results in the nine states suggest that the effect of the cap-and-trade program on growth was, at most, modest. The sharp cut in emissions in the Northeast did not prevent the economy there from doing just as well as elsewhere.

Joining the Northeast cap-and-trade program, or another similar program in California that began in 2013, is one of many ways states can reach the new goals the E.P.A. has set. Other options include taking a series of individual steps — such as upgrading older power plants and expanding nuclear, wind and solar power generation — without a statewide cap. The states themselves will decide exactly how they will meet the goals set for them.

Economists have long praised cap-and-trade programs, compared with detailed mandates from regulators, because they create a market in which businesses are responsible for finding the cheapest way to comply with the regulation. Businesses that devise less expensive ways to reduce pollution can sell their permits to those that cannot change their habits so easily.

The administration of President George H.W. Bush began the original cap-and-trade program in the United States, for emissions related to acid rain. It is considered a major success, with sharp reductions in acid rain at little economic cost.

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How To Beat Malaria, Once And For All

By François H. Nosten

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

MAE SOT, Thailand — MALARIA is a seasonal disease; with tropical rains come the fevers. In the news media, malaria is also seasonal. Every spring around World Malaria Day we hear about its devastating effects, including deaths in the hundreds of thousands. This year the reports were encouraging: Infections have been reduced and many lives saved. In May, researchers reported in *Science* that yet another potential malaria vaccine may be around the corner. Malaria seems to be on the retreat.

But is it really?

Malaria is caused by a tiny parasite, transported by a particular type of mosquito from person to person. Preventing mosquito bites by using insect repellents or nets and clothing treated with insecticides can reduce malaria in some areas. And if people are infected, drugs can be used to kill the parasites in their blood.

But the mosquitoes are constantly adapting and becoming resistant to the chemicals, while at the same time the parasites are adapting and becoming resistant to the drugs. So the fight against malaria is really a race against time in which we try to develop new treatments before they become ineffective, causing millions to die.

I have been working on the Thai-Myanmar border for 30 years. Once, in the early '90s, we faced the prospect of untreatable malaria. The number of people infected with the parasite (*Plasmodium falciparum* in this case) had been in decline, but the drug we were using — mefloquine, brand name Lariam — was becoming less effective and more patients were dying.

I remember a young Buddhist monk who was carried to our bamboo clinic two weeks after taking Lariam. His blood was still full of parasites. Lying in his saffron robe, he was unconscious, burning up and agitated by frequent convulsions. We tried in vain to save his life.

Then we heard about artesunate, a drug that comes from the *Artemisia annua* plant in China and was just becoming available. Preliminary studies indicated that it was very safe and was killing the malaria parasite extremely rapidly. But it was also quickly eliminated from the body, requiring too many

days of treatment to be practical. We reasoned that combining this new drug with the more long-lasting mefloquine could be the answer.

Indeed it was. In 1994, after large studies confirmed the safety and the efficacy of this new treatment, this first artemisinin-based combination therapy, or ACT, was deployed in all the refugee camps. The number of new cases, and lives lost, declined sharply.

By the end of the 1990s, there was strong evidence that ACTs worked, but the World Health Organization was slow to recommend the treatments in other parts of the world, particularly in Africa, where malaria was on the rampage. Thousands of people died in the 2000-01 malaria epidemic in Burundi largely because they received ineffective drugs. Despite this, in 2002 an adviser for U.S.A.I.D. declared that ACTs were “not ready for prime time.” Only after The Lancet published a virulent attack in 2004 accusing the W.H.O. of medical malpractice did it effectively make ACTs the standard worldwide.

But history repeats itself. While malaria rates went down again as a result of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and widespread deployment of ACTs, the parasite adapted its genetic machinery to resist these powerful medicines and is now preparing for a devastating return.

Today, the artemisinins in ACTs are taking longer to kill parasites in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar. Recently, a young patient in our clinic tested positive for malaria for more than seven days after starting treatment (instead of the usual two), and when we sampled her blood after six days of treatment, the parasite was still healthy. If *P. falciparum* becomes totally resistant, then the ACTs would become ineffective and all investments in their development and distribution would be lost, with dire consequences.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been spent on fighting malaria. Late last year, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria allocated \$100 million to tackle artemisinin resistance in the Mekong region where I work. But all this well-intentioned money keeps us only a step ahead of the parasites. We have to keep coming up with new combinations of drugs before our patients taking the old ones start dying. And bed nets, on which at least \$20 million will be spent, aren't always effective here in Southeast Asia, where many mosquitoes that carry the parasite bite outside and early in the evening. Of course, an effective vaccine could save us but, despite the frequent announcements that we're close to developing one, it has never materialized because we do not fully understand the underlying biology.

We have to accept that these strategies of control are failing and instead start figuring out how to eliminate the parasite altogether, as we have in Europe, Russia and North America.

In pilot studies in Cambodia, Vietnam and here on the Thai-Myanmar border, we have begun testing one approach to rapid elimination. Doing surveys of the population, we discovered that in some communities, many villagers — sometimes more than half — carry malaria parasites in their blood but are not ill and therefore are not treated. Because these “healthy” carriers have only a small number of parasites in their blood, they are difficult to detect with conventional tests. So eliminating the parasites may require treating everybody in the village, an approach that is used for other parasitic diseases, like river blindness and filariasis. Because *P. falciparum* infects only humans, if we can treat entire populations, we should be able to eliminate this parasite from certain regions.

Giving medicines to large numbers of villagers in remote areas who are not ill is not an easy task. It cannot work without the trust and participation of the local population. And we would need to hit whole regions at once. Even then we don't know that it would work; the effectiveness, feasibility and economics of mass treatment are still being studied. But what else can we do to stop the seemingly inevitable spread of drug-resistant malaria across Asia to Africa, and the enormous consequent death toll?

Some funding bodies — like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Wellcome Trust and Britain's Department for International Development, which also support our research unit — are moving in this direction already. But for now, governments and medical organizations need more evidence, and they need leadership from the W.H.O.

For years, the fight against malaria in tropical countries has been compromised by politics. Here on the front line, our work is more difficult because of the bureaucracy, the inertia and sometimes the incompetence of the people in control. Money and its corruptive power are flying around. And the more money we throw at malaria, the bigger the problems get. We have the science to defeat malaria. We just have to act, before it defeats us.

François H. Nosten is a professor of tropical medicine at the University of Oxford and the director of the Shoklo Malaria Research Unit.

A View From Gitmo

By Ramzi Kassem

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba — THE week's national debate around the exchange of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl for five Afghans imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay found me at the American base in Cuba for meetings with my clients. Here, too, the swap is the talk of the town — among prisoners, among guards and between the two groups.

Some Guantánamo prison guards voiced anger at the news of how their fellow soldier, Sergeant Bergdahl, had been liberated. In their view, he was a deserter, unworthy of the sustained media interest his release had garnered, especially compared to the dearth of attention paid to the sacrifice of those killed and wounded in the Afghan conflict.

But to the emaciated man sitting across a rickety table from me in an orange jumpsuit, chained to the floor inside a dilapidated shack, that furious reaction was baffling. My client, Moath al-Alwi, wondered aloud "why those people are not simply happy that this American soldier will soon be reunited with his family." He reflected that the critics have probably "never tasted this sort of ordeal themselves."

In contrast to the guards, Mr. Alwi and many of his fellow prisoners empathized with Sergeant Bergdahl and his family. After all, they only wanted the same for themselves: to see their loved ones after long years in captivity.

My students and I have been representing Guantánamo inmates for most of the last decade. Mr. Alwi was on one of the first planes to shuttle so-called enemy combatants to the prison in early 2002.

A Yemeni citizen raised in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Alwi traveled to Afghanistan in early 2001 to teach the Quran and live in a society that appeared from afar to honor Islamic ideals. He was 24 when he fled the conflict there, was seized by the authorities in Pakistan and likely sold into American captivity for a bounty.

At a 2008 hearing, having given Mr. Alwi only three weeks to review a lengthy dossier compiled by the United States government over seven years and consisting largely of uncorroborated and self-incriminating statements that we argued were extracted under coercive circumstances, a federal judge ruled his detention justified. A court of appeals found that the judge's "haste" was "hard to understand," but upheld the decision.

To protest the injustice of his open-ended imprisonment without fair process, Mr. Alwi has been on hunger strike since February 2013. Every day, Guantánamo personnel strap him in a chair with restraints and force-feed him, in an effort to break his will.

Mr. Alwi never fought against the United States and has not been found guilty of any crime.

The political controversy over whether the prisoner exchange was conducted legally is even less comprehensible to the inmates at Guantánamo than the guards' anger. To their mind, before debating the finer point of whether the transfer of the five Afghans adhered to the law, the American public should ask if the detention and abuse at Guantánamo Bay of hundreds — without charge, fair process or the protections of the Geneva Conventions — were lawful in the first place.

From where Mr. Alwi sits, the talking point of legality is almost amusingly quaint. Guantánamo remains at its core a lawless place, and this release in seeming contravention of a solitary statute appears par for the course. In the absurd history of the detention camp, it is not uncommon for inmates among the handful who have been convicted by the military commissions to be the ones who are released. Questionable though their legitimacy and fairness may be, the military commissions can at least determine a finite term for internment at Guantánamo, one that the American government has chosen to honor so far.

So the release of the five Afghans, including, by some accounts, known figures in the Taliban, fits a larger pattern in which the many dozens of inmates not accused of any crime and, in fact, cleared for release by successive American administrations languish for years on end. For many, the difference between liberation and limbo has nothing to do with justice or legality, but just the luck of what nationality a prisoner happens to hold. Because no Guantánamo inmate has been repatriated to Yemen in years, Mr. Alwi said that some inmates are considering relinquishing their Yemeni citizenship in the hope that it might facilitate their resettlement elsewhere.

The furor over the Sergeant Bergdahl affair has simply reinforced a commonly held view among the inmates that the prospects for release from Guantánamo are tied far less to court decisions, threat assessments and the determinations of the military review board, and far more to the politics of the moment. "It is all political," Mr. Alwi said. "It is all theater, it is all a game."

Guantánamo has indeed become a sideshow of the American political spectacle, a drama in which the vast majority of the camp's inmates are held hostage to our partisan politics. If the current upheaval around Sergeant Bergdahl's release proves anything, it is that President Obama is capable of pushing past the congressional histrionics that, until recently, he has pointed to as cover for his failure to shutter the infamous prison.

Ending indefinite detention at Guantánamo Bay, in the face of opposition from his political adversaries and reluctance from some officials within his administration, requires fortitude of Mr. Obama. What is needed now is decisive action to resettle and repatriate as many inmates as possible and give fair trials to any that remain. Only by doing so can America end this grim farce.

Ramzi Kassem is an associate professor of law at the City University of New York who directs the Immigrant and Non-Citizen Rights Clinic, which represents prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and elsewhere.

Stop Holding Us Back

By Robert Balfanz

[New York Times](#), June 8, 2014

The Great Divide is a series about inequality.

This month, more than three million high school students will receive their diplomas. At more than 80 percent, America's graduation rate is at a record high. More kids are going to college, too. But one-third of the nation's African-American and Latino young men will not graduate.

In an era when there is virtually no legal work for dropouts, these young men face a bleak future. It is not news that the students who don't make it out of high school largely come from our poorest neighborhoods, but the degree to which they are hyper-concentrated in a small set of schools is alarming. In fact, according to new research I conducted with my colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, half of the African-American boys who veer off the path to high school graduation do so in just 660 of more than 12,600 regular and vocational high schools.

These 660 schools are typically big high schools that teach only poor kids of color. They are concentrated in 15 states. Many are in major cities, but others are in smaller, decaying industrial cities or in the South, especially in Georgia, Florida and North Carolina.

This seemingly intractable problem is a national tragedy, but there is a solution. In the high schools where most of the young men are derailed, the number of ninth-grade boys who desperately need better schooling and extra support is typically between 50 and 100. Keeping many or even most of those boys on track in each entering ninth-grade class in 660 schools does not seem impossible.

If we know where to focus our efforts, we can put strategies in place that have shown promise, particularly over the last few years. While early childhood is critical, the most treacherous time for young African-American and Latino men is from ages 11 to 21. At the very moment they are the most developmentally vulnerable, the response from schools, foster care, the health system and child protective services gets weaker, while the response from the justice system is harsher. Their family responsibilities grow, and their neighborhoods turn meaner. Their middle and high school experience becomes make or break.

But the secondary schools these students attend are not specifically designed for them. It is not unusual for up to half the students to miss a month or more of school, and often more students are suspended in a year than graduate. In a 22-school sample that we studied closely, nearly all ninth-grade students were either too old for their grades, had repeated ninth grade, needed special education, were chronically absent or had academic skills at the seventh grade level or below. The norm in this environment is to fail classes and then repeat ninth grade. But most students do no better the second time around. Either they drop out then or they may briefly transfer to another school before dropping out later. This is a highly predictable, almost mechanical course, which is why we call those schools dropout factories.

We have also learned that most students who eventually drop out can be identified as early as the sixth grade by their attendance, behavior and course performance, according to studies by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins, where I am the director, and the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. Using those indicators, it is possible to identify by the middle of ninth grade virtually everyone who will drop out. These young men are waving their hands early and often to say they need help, but our educational and student-support systems aren't organized to recognize and respond to their distress signals.

In 2008, my colleagues and I decided to focus on those struggling sixth and ninth graders. What if we reorganized entire schools with teams of teachers who shared a common group of students? What if we added more time for English and math and offered coaching for teachers and principals? What if we welcomed students to school, called them if they didn't show up and helped with homework? What if we used an early warning system that identified struggling students based on their poor attendance, behavior and course performance and then worked to get each student back on track?

To try to provide all that, we developed Diplomas Now, a partnership of three national nonprofits, which works with more than 30,000 students in 40 of the toughest middle and high schools in 14 big

cities. (Although I am focusing here on boys, because they have lower graduation rates than girls, the program is coed.)

To evaluate our progress, MDRC, a social policy research organization, is conducting a randomized field trial. Initial indications are positive. In the 2012-13 school year, the program achieved a 41 percent reduction in chronically absent students, a 70 percent reduction in suspended students, a 69 percent reduction in students failing English and a 52 percent reduction in students failing math.

This is not an anomalous result. A recent study of public schools in Chicago shows that getting students back on track in the ninth grade leads to higher graduation rates and that African-American males in particular experience the greatest benefits when schools are reorganized to focus on ninth grade.

What do we need to do on a national scale? First, high-poverty secondary schools need to be redesigned with the special problems of their students in mind, with a focus on freshman year. In practice, this means starting new schools and transforming existing ones.

Second, early warning systems need to be instituted so that teachers and other committed adults can step in at the first sign a student is in trouble, whether it's cutting class, mouthing off or floundering in English or math.

Third, we should employ additional adults to support students who need daily nagging and nurturing to succeed, especially during the key transitional years in sixth and ninth grades.

We also need the larger community, including local businesses and faith-based organizations, to mentor students by showing them how to set goals, apply to college and acquire workplace skills.

This sounds expensive, but it does not have to be, particularly if we stop wasting money on failed strategies like holding kids back in high school. Asking struggling students to repeat a grade under the same circumstances almost guarantees the same result.

We are already paying a lot for failure. On average, holding a student back costs \$11,000. The 660 high schools that produce half of African-American male dropouts spend more than \$500 million a year to retain more than 46,000 boys and girls in ninth grade.

There is an unexpected path forward, the outlines of which are in view. We can provide our most vulnerable children with a better chance for adult success. They deserve no less.

Robert Balfanz is a research professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Education and the director of the Everyone Graduates Center.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Biz Group Sets Goal Of 5,000 New City Residents

By Yann Ranaivo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

The organization that promotes business in Wilmington wants to attract 5,000 new residents to the city during the next five years.

But city leaders and people who sell and manage properties in Wilmington say the city has some major humps to get over if it wants to see a major turnaround in residency anytime soon.

The New Castle County Chamber of Commerce plans to host a session at the World Cafe Live at the Queen on June 25 during which it will invite people with a vested interest in the city to take part in discussions to boost city residency.

Chamber President Mark Kleinschmidt said similar sessions will occur quarterly for the remainder of this year. He said there are developments occurring in the city, such as a proposal to establish a creative district near the downtown, that an infusion of new residents would complement well.

"Every new resident to the city represents new revenue to the city," he said.

A big jump in residents would bring a new level of vibrancy to the city because of the increased visits to shops and restaurants, among other things, Kleinschmidt said.

"It would create more of a sense of community. You're going to see more participation in the existing events that are there," he said. "That will also bring other people to Wilmington."

Kleinschmidt knows seeing 5,000 people move into the city during the next few years is an ambitious goal.

"You have to have a target," he said. "It may be a lofty goal, but again you need to have a goal to go for. Say we only got 3,000. I'll take that big three."

Alan Emsley, who sells and rents homes throughout the city and county, said one of the biggest deterrents he deals with when trying to attract tenants to his Wilmington properties is crime.

"The first thing you got to do is quit shooting people," Emsley said. "Wilmington has a lot of very positive things, and I really like Wilmington. But the overriding thing is people are constantly shooting other people, and they don't seem to be able to do anything about it. It overshadows everything else."

Violent crime in the city has been among the nation's highest for the last several years.

In 2012, the last year for which statistics are available, FBI data shows Wilmington was the third most violent of about 450 cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000. That year Wilmington was eighth most violent among all cities in America with more than 50,000 people, including being more violent than the four giants within 120 miles – Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York and Washington, D.C.

The city's poor public safety reputation didn't get any help in 2013 when Wilmington saw a record year in violence with 127 shootings.

Emsley said he knows most of the shootings are between criminals, but innocent bystanders sometimes get caught in the middle of the struggle. He referred to an incident in the city last month during which a woman who was sitting on her porch with her grandson was hit by stray bullets.

"Mayor [Jim] Baker used to say it's one criminal shooting another criminal. There's probably a lot of truth to that," Emsley said, "but some also don't shoot too good and innocent people get hit."

"If the perception is that it's not safe in Wilmington, the end result is people moving out. You might be that person sitting on the porch, and instead of getting wounded, you might get killed."

Mayor Dennis P. Williams, who recently appointed a new police chief, has said improving the relationship between the force and the neighborhoods will be key to addressing crime because it would allow some residents to feel more comfortable about speaking with officers when incidents occur later.

Councilwoman Loretta Walsh, a member of the council's Public Safety Committee, said she thinks neighborhood cooperation can make the difference in serious crimes being solved. She said it could also deter future crimes because it would send a "message that Wilmington is no longer open for crime business."

Others involved in the local real estate market, including Emsley, said some city policies don't seem friendly to growth.

Bob Weir, CEO of the New Castle County Board of Realtors, said city departments such as Public Works, Real Estate and Housing and License and Inspections could be merged because utilities, trash collections and building code inspections all ultimately tie back to real estate.

The extra money generated from merging some operations could be used to knock down houses that have been deemed obsolete, Weir said. The city could then reserve the empty lots for future development, Weir said.

"Now 10 or 15 years down the road, you have a site where you can build a competitive housing marketplace," he said.

Emsley voiced displeasure at an upcoming 5 percent increase in the city's property taxes and a red lights camera program, which he argues is more geared at generating money than improving traffic safety.

Earlier this year, The News Journal collected data on local taxes and fees to compare the costs of living in Wilmington and surrounding cities. A Wilmington homeowner living in a house assessed at \$100,000 with a combined household income of \$100,000 pays an average of \$5,937 a year in local taxes and water and sewer fees. That same homeowner would pay an average of \$3,757 in New Castle, \$3,400 in Newark and \$3,763 in Bear.

"If you can afford to live somewhere else, why wouldn't you do that?" Emsley said. "To get people to move to the city, you got to make it so there are advantages."

Wilmington does offer advantages, but they have been undersold, Walsh said.

Walsh touted the city's parks system and entertainment venues such as the DuPont Theatre, World Cafe Live, Grand Opera House and the Delaware Art Museum. She said city living also brings residents close to dining venues, which said lowers the need to drive a car.

"For a city our size, it's insane the amount of amenities we have," she said.

But Walsh said crime needs to be handled.

"We have to get a real handle on our neighborhoods where we have very decent people living in them," she said. "Until we get a handle on that, we won't be able to sell the city as a whole."

Five Running To Be Next Dover Mayor

By Jon Offredo

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Voters at polls in Dover will have five candidates to choose from in the scheduled June 17 non-partisan mayoral special election.

The election to fill former Dover mayor Carleton Carey's seat comes after city council pressured Carey to step down following allegations he violated employment and affirmative action policies and abused his authority by influencing the appointment of a deputy police chief. The election is to fill the spot for the remainder of the term. It expires next May.

Dover's mayor is a full-time position and mainly plays the role as economic cheerleader for the city, as well as overseeing Dover's police department.

The common theme among the five candidates was a desire to drive economic development to the city and bring in new revenue through business growth. The candidates will be at a question and answer session at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Mount Zion AME Church on North Queen Street.

"A lot of people have written us off," said former council president and councilman Robin Christiansen. "Commercial spaces remain empty and homes are still unsold."

Christiansen said his prior experience with the city, working with the Delaware Economic Development Office and the larger employers in town puts him in the perfect place to drive the city forward.

Other candidates, like Chevis Anderson, say what the city needs is a new look at how things are done. Anderson, a recent graduate of Delaware State University and licensed banker, said he wants to bring a new perspective. Anderson ran for the Capital School District school board in 2010.

"The city needs a fresh breath of air," he said. "It's been such a long time since we had some different ideas and different opinions and a whole different perspective."

Longtime businessman and state board of education member Jeff Reed said he'd bring a businessman's perspective to the city. The city needs to do some serious and out-of-the box thinking about how they are going to raise revenue, he said

The city council recently staved off a potential 7-cent hike to property taxes by dipping into its electric fund reserves to plug a \$2.2 million deficit in the general fund. The city has also toyed with the idea of the mayor's role being either part-time or full-time.

Reed said he would want it to be a full-time position.

Councilman David Anderson is the only current council member running for mayor.

Anderson said he wants to focus on economic development that would benefit local businesses and communities.

"We have to grow our way out of the economic problems," he said. One of the ways he'd do that is to ensure that small businesses in the community have all the tools they need to function.

If elected, he says he will reach out to the community more and find out what the exact needs are in relation to the police department.

For James Webster, who ran for council in the mid-2000s, the mayoral position is one that has to bring economic development to the city. New projects coming to the city, like Calpine Corporation's power plant site, are good starts, but with the coming departure of K-mart there are still prime spots that need to be worked on.

One of the things he said he wants to do is get the state more involved with its capital financially, especially in terms of payment in lieu of taxes.

"It's a squeaky wheel that gets the grease," he said. "So I think we're going to have to be squeaky a bit and make a little noise."

FBI Declines To Provide Status On Shooting Suspect

By William H. McMichael

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

The FBI on Saturday declined to provide any information on the man who officials said fired shots in a Wilmington Veterans Affairs Medical Center parking lot the day before, including where he is being held, whether any charges have been filed and any other details related to the case.

The suspect, described by VA officials as a 40-to-50-year-old male, brandished an unidentified firearm and fired shots in the medical center's west parking lot at about 3:15 p.m. Friday, officials said.

VA Police apprehended the man after what witnesses described as two shots fired. The suspect was said to have sustained minor injuries during the apprehension and was being treated at the center's Emergency Department. The VA said it couldn't provide more information as the case had been turned over to the FBI.

For now, the FBI isn't saying anything.

"That may change Monday," Amy Thoreson of the FBI's Baltimore office said Saturday afternoon. She said she was "unable to comment further at this time."

The News Journal asked the FBI which agency is holding the suspect; where the suspect is being held; the suspect's name, age and hometown; whether any charges have been filed; and for any other pertinent details.

State Police received a report of shots fired at about 3:30 p.m. Friday, but their services were not required, spokesman Sgt. Paul Shavack said. As the hospital is federal property, State Police do not have jurisdiction there and do not respond unless requested to assist.

Court Papers Show Matusiewicz 'Hit List'

By Sean O'Sullivan

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Just over a year before her death, Christine Belford warned about the Matusiewicz family's potential to violently lash out, specifically mentioning the man who would later shoot her to death at the New Castle County Courthouse: estranged father-in-law Thomas Matusiewicz.

"Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him," she wrote in an email to her attorney in November 2011.

Belford also predicted that after David Matusiewicz lost his parental rights to the three children they had together, family members might strike out in a rage at everyone involved in the process, including their own attorneys.

Those fears also apparently proved correct. According to court papers filed last month, investigators recovered what appeared to be a hit list from the vehicle Tom Matusiewicz was driving on Feb. 11, 2013.

"The first name on the list was Belford's," according to federal prosecutors, in court papers.

The other dozen or so names on the list are all blanked out in the court filing but prosecutors state in a brief that the names include "lawyers, judges and witnesses involved in David and Lenore Matustiewicz's prior kidnapping cases, as well as prior Family Court custody and termination of parental rights proceedings."

The judge who oversaw the federal kidnapping and bank fraud case against David Matusiewicz, and sentenced him to four years in prison in 2009, was Chief U.S. District Court Judge Gregory M. Sleet.

The News Journal has learned, through interviews with sources who have firsthand knowledge, that Sleet and at least one of Matusiewicz's lawyers are on the list.

Sleet is now presiding over the conspiracy and interstate cyber stalking trial against David Matusiewicz, his mother Lenore and his sister Amy Gonzalez, where if convicted the three each face up to life in prison.

Asked if Sleet was on the list, Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward McAndrew responded that he could not speak to the issue "at this time."

Federal Public Defender Edson Bostic, who is representing David Matusiewicz, declined comment. Jeremy H.G. Ibrahim, who is representing Amy Gonzalez said he was still reviewing government documents.

Kenneth C. Edelin Jr., who is representing Lenore Matusiewicz, could not be reached for comment.

Sleet's appearance on the list might bring about a motion to have him recuse himself from the case, legal experts say.

In the past several weeks, Sleet denied a defense motion to have the case moved from Delaware and set the case for a 30-35 day trial in March 2015.

Widener Law Professor Emeritus Tom Reed said that "if I were defense counsel I would need to have a conference with that judge" on the apparent hit list.

Reed said defense attorneys generally don't like to file motions to remove a judge from a case, but in a case like this one "it is really worth discussing."

But he added that if such a discussion, or motion to have Sleet step aside, takes place, "it is not open-and-shut."

Judges can sit on cases where they might be peripherally involved, Reed said. And while prosecutors charge there was an orchestrated conspiracy between the surviving members of the Matusiewicz family and Tom Matusiewicz, the defendants have maintained that they had no knowledge of Tom Matusiewicz's violent plans for Feb. 11, 2013.

In interviews and videos posted online before her arrest, Lenore Matusiewicz maintained that her husband acted erratically and irrationally due to a brain tumor.

McAndrew did not want to discuss the list of names, or even address if prosecutors believe that the title of the handwritten document – "HL" – stands for hit list. He said the document has not yet been entered as evidence in the case and was included in a recent court filing for the limited purpose of addressing legal arguments filed by the defense.

The names on the list have been redacted because prosecutors do not believe there is a reason to make them public at this early stage of the case, McAndrew added.

However, an attorney who represented a member of the Matusiewicz family confirmed that shortly after the shooting he was contacted by the FBI and was warned that his name was on what appeared to be a hit list and that he should take appropriate measures to protect his safety.

He did not want his name used.

According to court documents, the "HL" document was a page from a red spiral bound notebook that was found in the white Honda SUV that Thomas Matusiewicz used to drive David Matusiewicz to the courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013, where he was set to attend a child support hearing with Christine Belford.

A video that was obtained by The News Journal in 2013 shows father and son getting out of the SUV together and walking to the New Castle County Courthouse shortly before Tom Matusiewicz shot and killed Belford along with her friend Laura "Beth" Mulford. Tom Matusiewicz then exchanged gunfire with Capitol Police before taking his own life.

Surveillance footage shows David and Thomas Matusiewicz entering and leaving the parking garage before the shootings at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11, 2013.

The SUV was parked across King Street from the courthouse in the garage underneath the Renaissance Centre. According to the recent court filing, other items recovered in the SUV included: a computer, a photo of one of Belford's children and the note "please copy & send to Dave! :) Love you all!!!! Remember shhhhhhhh!!! LOL" and a black duffel bag in the hatch-back area containing a bullet proof vest, ammunition, an electric shock device, knives, plastic zip restraints and the red notebook.

Inside the notebook were handwritten notes about David's criminal kidnapping case; his Family Court case with Belford; phone numbers and addresses of people associated with Belford; real estate listing documents for Belford's home with notes indicating which rooms were occupied by the children and the "HL" list of a dozen or so names.

On the list, Belford was identified by the code "WB," which prosecutors wrote, "stood for a derogatory name that the defendants and Thomas Matusiewicz used for her."

"WB" is believed to stand for "whore bitch."

"WB/NM" is circled on the list along with two other names that are blanked out. While Belford was identified by code, other names were fully spelled out. McAndrew said he could not discuss what "NM" may mean or stand for.

The family also drove a second vehicle from Texas to Delaware in February 2013, and according to court papers the keys to that car, a silver Honda Civic, were recovered from David Matusiewicz.

Inside that car, which had been parked at a home in Maryland on the day of the shooting, investigators recovered a DPMS .223 rifle with scope inside a black rifle case, a Smith & Wesson .357 revolver, a Glock 19 9mm semiautomatic handgun, numerous rounds of ammunition, numerous magazines for firearms, a green metal ammunition case, a shovel and several red gas cans.

A closer look at the Matusiewicz family history and what sparked the tragedy at the New Castle County Courthouse on Feb. 11. (2/24/13)

While David and Thomas Matusiewicz were at the courthouse, Lenore Matusiewicz was at the Maryland home where the car was parked on Feb. 11, 2013. Gonzalez was in Texas.

In court papers, defense attorneys have argued that the indictments against the family should be tossed out because the government is essentially trying to criminalize the free speech of family members who were expressing their opinions about Belford in the years and months before her death.

Prosecutors responded that the statements by members of the Matusiewicz family were not protected speech because they were clearly defamatory – accusing Belford of unsubstantiated child abuse – and were also evidence of their criminal intent to harass and stalk Belford, ultimately resulting in her death.

“Speech is not protected by the First Amendment when it is the very vehicle of the crime itself,” wrote prosecutors.

Prosecutors charge the Matusiewicz family wanted to put Belford in fear for her life and succeeded in doing so. To back up their charge, the government then quotes from e-mail conversations between Belford and her attorney.

In November 2011, after David’s parental rights were terminated and Belford received what prosecutors described as “an intimidating and harassing letter” from Lenore Matusiewicz, Belford wrote: “David and his family like to see my [sic] suffer, especially David ... He plays dirty and tries to obtain his target, regardless of what it takes.”

“David has nothing to lose at this point, he has lost everything. He may allow me to survive to suffer. I may survive long enough to watch the girls be harmed. I may even go missing ... BTW: If I go ‘missing’ – call the police,” she wrote.

Belford told her attorney that she had already taken out a life insurance policy, was working on finalizing her will and planned to buy a gun as soon as she had the money.

One of the reasons that Belford apparently feared for her life is that she felt David Matusiewicz had threatened her life previously. In the recent court filing, prosecutors include a redacted version of a letter David Matusiewicz wrote to Judge Sleet before the 2009 kidnapping sentencing.

Matusiewicz acknowledged he made a “wrong” decision in kidnapping his three children and taking them to Central America, but he also still blamed Belford.

“She was an expert at manipulating people and even had me arrested by telling the police I was having a nervous breakdown and had threatened to kill her,” he wrote.

Prosecutors also include excerpts from a separate letter to Sleet, written around the same time, by Lenore Matusiewicz who maintained that Belford was a threat to the children. She described Belford as “the next Andrea Yates, Susan Smith [two women who had mental issues and killed their children]... she can snap at any time.”

In the Nov. 2011 email exchange, Belford then expresses concern for attorneys, experts and judicial officers that had been involved in the bitter custody battle saying they all “may become a mis-directed target of their anger.”

She concludes by noting, “Tom is an excellent shot. I have seen him.”

Coons Visits Closed I-495 Bridge

By Melissa Nann Burke

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

WILMINGTON – In a visit to the shutdown I-495 bridge Friday morning, U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Delaware, commended Transportation Secretary Shailen Bhatt for the “prompt and effective and responsible action” he and his engineers took to tackle the problem causing the structure to lean.

Following the declaration of a limited state of emergency by Gov. Jack Markell on Thursday, federal officials approved \$2 million in emergency-relief funds to assist with traffic control and preliminary engineering at the site.

“Much more will likely be needed in federal resources, and I’m committed to working with the rest of Delaware’s congressional delegation to make sure those resources are available,” Coons, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said.

Bhatt said the \$2 million is a great help, but “just the first step in a long process.”

“It’s a big deal when the feds step in and bring a checkbook because that allows us to worry about one less thing, and we have a lot to worry about right now,” Bhatt said.

Discovery of the tilt in the bridge in the area of Christiana Avenue forced a full shutdown of I-495 at the bridge Monday evening, disrupting traffic across the region. An average 90,000 vehicles a day cross the bridge.

The highway is closed between Terminal Avenue and 12th Street, and motorists are advised to use I-95 and I-295 as alternates.

The state Department of Transportation’s investigations have focused heavily on a contractor’s stockpile of dirt stretching the length of a football field just to the east of the affected piers. The bridge is leaning in that direction by as much as 4 degrees out of vertical alignment.

This week, excavations revealed that steel piles in the bridge’s foundation are deformed and displaced sideways, creating cracks across the width of at least two concrete footings.

Experts say the movement observed of steel piles is consistent with a force caused by seismic activity, or the massive load of dirt compressing soils on the east side of the leaning piers.

A dirt hauler, Keogh Contracting Co., has been working to remove the material since Monday. DelDOT also has hired a contractor to step up the pace of removal, in addition to DelDOT crews who have pitched in.

“We’ve been working around the clock. We’re going to continue to work around the clock,” Bhatt said Friday.

Contractors are continuing to excavate other footings to determine the extent of the damage, he said.

Coons took the opportunity to emphasize the need for Congress to restore funding to the federal Highway Trust Fund to help tackle the backload of transportation and port infrastructure improvements needed nationwide.

“There are tens of billions of dollars of repairs that need to be made all over this country. Those repairs would put Americans to work, which would strengthen our economy and grow our community and improve the safety of our highways and bridges,” Coons said.

“This is just another area where partisan differences in our Congress are preventing us from coming together as they should.”

Officials say the federal emergency-relief dollars that would go to the I-495 bridge are maintained in fund separate from the Highway Trust Fund, which is expected to exhaust its reserves this summer without congressional action.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL EDITORIALS

Bridge Closure Cause To Rethink Roads

By John Sweeney

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), June 7, 2014

Last week Delaware closed a bridge and tumbled into a public relations disaster.

Suddenly, a bridge many of us use every day was termed a crucial “East Coast span” and people throughout the country were reading about Delaware’s mishap. Google Maps even “disappeared” a section of I-495 from its system, thus, giving headline writers a chance to have some fun with a ghost bridge. They joked, but we felt our heads hurt.

Right now, as we think about how we will get to work on Monday morning or home from the beach Sunday night, that bridge closing is putting pressure on the state.

Thousands of people are plotting how to avoid Delaware. They don’t want to pass through, stop by or shop here. The folks who use the state’s highways to ship goods are looking for alternative routes. The businesses that produce products in Delaware are trying to make up time and cut the added expenses of slow traffic and stalled highways. Delaware commuters, stuck behind long lines of cars, worry about getting to work on time while their bosses are counting the minutes, then the hours of lost productivity. Even those who make our summers special – the people behind the Greek, Italian and Firefly festivals – are worrying about the effect tilting columns will have their fun, games and music.

The truth is, we don’t know.

We don’t know the cause of the tilting. We don’t know how the bridge will be fixed or how long it will take. And we don’t know whether any of those who are staying away will ever come back.

People follow habits. If a Pennsylvania driver decides it’s not worth traveling along those crowded alternate routes to save a little on sales tax, maybe he’ll get used to staying home.

Roads do matter, it seems.

The thought must have popped into the minds of many in the General Assembly that a week ago Gov. Markell’s plea for a tax increase was all but dead. Judging by public comments, a good number of Delawareans thought the governor had his nerve asking for a 10-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax increase when everything was working fine and dandy.

Of course, the damage to the columns of the I-495 bridge probably would have happened with or without the tax. However, now a lot of people are thinking our roads are a trifle more important than we supposed.

We think of roads in personal terms, that is, when we pay any attention at all to them. They are only important when we need them to get from one place to another. As a Carnegie Endowment report put it a couple of years ago: “The relationship between the locations of things drives demand for transportation.”

Thus, if someone wants to move goods on a truck from the Port of Wilmington to Baltimore, then the highway span over the Christina River is mighty important. If a closed bridge drives road-choking traffic onto a street I normally use, then reopening the bridge matters a lot more than I ever would have dreamed.

If the relationships between those things change, then the demand for that road and all that goes with it changes too. Right now that ghost span is killing northern New Castle County. Yet there are Delawareans in Sussex County who don't give a hoot about I-495, open or shut.

We expect the government to honor our demand for transportation between the places we want to go to, like our home and the store. But there is no end to the creation of new places we want to go to, so the government always lags behind our demand for quick-moving, convenient, uncrowded roadways.

All of which brings us back to Gov. Markell's tax. He wanted to fix and update and expand the system. He asked for a lot of money, more than anyone wanted to spend.

A week ago we could dismiss the idea because keeping that tax money in our pockets made more sense than a threat to the roads we couldn't see.

We know roads are concrete and asphalt. Yet we don't notice them until they break or get too crowded.

If on normal days, we fail to see the physical deterioration, how can we notice when trouble develops with the true purpose of our roads – transmission lines.

Their construction is based on laws of physics, chemistry and geology. Their usefulness is based on how they allow us to move and the role they play in how our economy operates. We understand why they are useful when we can drive to work or to the store. We don't always understand their importance as value chains. For example, how long does it take a truck carrying grapes from Chile to go from Point A to Point B? How much does it cost in time and fuel? At what point will the cost force the shipper to look for another venue?

Roads and bridges age. The Interstate Highway System was officially declared completed in 1991. That means the newest part of the interstate is 23 years old. Other parts – the ones around here – are considerably older.

They were not built for the constant pounding of trucks and SUVs.

The builders of the highway system also assumed they had found a way to pay for its upkeep. Taxes on gasoline would be funneled back into the system. That way the users of the roads would pay. Yet neither Congress nor the General Assembly would dare raise the tax per gallon.

The builders didn't consider human nature or our political system. They didn't factor in the core belief of most Americans that they can get something without paying for it. Roads, we assume, pay for themselves.

Nor do any of us understand why we thrill at building a new highway, but shrink from modernizing old ones. Roads are supposed to live forever.

We also are a victim of our success. We drive fewer miles these days. That means we buy less gasoline and pay less in taxes. We also have cars with better gas mileage. So, again, we don't buy as much as gasoline and pay fewer taxes.

Yet our demand that roads not have holes and stay open to traffic all day and all night comes with a price. And that maintenance price – in material, supplies and labor – goes up each year.

Most people would say that at some point something would have to give. Not us. We don't have to reconcile the impossible. We can have it all and not pay the full price.

Until something really goes wrong.

Will the closing of I-495 do anything to revive the governor's tax plan? That will be interesting to watch.

The governor says that the federal government will pay 90 percent of the repair cost for the bridge. The federal government is having its own money problems when it comes to roads. So at some point, we will have to pay a share of that 90 percent.

More immediately, the important question is: 90 percent of what? We don't know how much the repair will cost. So that tiny little 10 percent may end up costing Delawareans a lot.

At that point, the I-495 bridge closing will be more than a public relations disaster.