

National

Working While Homeless: A Tough Job For Thousands Of Californians

By David Wagner

Weekend Edition Sunday, · One of the first steps to helping people out of homelessness is getting them a steady job. But what about the thousands of homeless Californians who are already working?

Pinning down exactly how many Californians are working while homeless is not easy. Many try to hide it. But recent estimates suggest that it's not uncommon.

A [2017 survey](#) of the homeless population in San Francisco found 13 percent of respondents reporting part or full-time employment. That's in a city with an estimated 7,499 people experiencing homelessness.

This year, an estimated 10 percent of the 4,990 people living unsheltered in San Diego [said they were currently working](#).

Los Angeles County has more than 50,000 residents who are homeless. Eight percent of adults surveyed in 2017 said they were working to some degree, mostly in part-time, seasonal or temporary work. Among homeless adults with children, 27 percent said they were working either part or full-time.

'You don't have a place to go'

That includes parents like Nereida, a single mother of two young daughters who works full time at a Los Angeles optometrist's office.

"I do pre-testing," said Nereida, who asked that her last name not be used in this story. "I take measurements of [patients'] eyes. After that, the doctor sees them."

Nereida hasn't told her boss that she doesn't have a stable place to live. She said she would be embarrassed. And she wonders if she would be treated differently.

"I don't want him to have a different view of me, and to think that [it] is going to affect my work life," she said.

Six days a week, she finishes her shift with a few appointment reminder calls. Then she turns off the display lights in the eyeglass cases. She sets the alarm, locks the doors and walks out to her car.

Some weeks, that's where she spends the night.

"There's been several times where I just slept in my car," she said. "I parked close to the gym, because that's where I get ready in the mornings."

Nereida moved to the Los Angeles area almost a year ago. She's been able to rent rooms for a few months here and there. Lately, she's been staying with a friend. Someone has always been willing to let her kids spend the night. But she never thought finding a place of her own would be this hard.

She admits her credit score is bad. Between car payments, gas and childcare costs, Nereida hasn't been able to save for a security deposit, plus first and last month's rent.

At \$17 an hour, she earns more than minimum wage. But even if she did manage to find an apartment, the city's median rent for a two-bedroom — [estimated at \\$1,752](#) by listings website Apartment List — would claim more than half of her income.

"You have to really focus on work when you're at work, and try to put on a face that everything's OK," Nereida said. "Once you're done, you break down. Because you don't have a place to go."

Homeless employees lack legal protections at work

Workers have protections on the job when it comes to factors like race and gender. But Jessica Bartholow, a policy advocate with [the Western Center on Law and Poverty](#), said, "There are no laws in California that protect you from being discriminated against based on your housing status."

Bartholow was one of the advocates pushing for [a 2012 California bill](#) that would have banned discrimination against homeless employees. Had it passed, California would have joined Rhode Island in defining homelessness as a protected class in the workplace.

The bill faced opposition from groups like the California

Chamber of Commerce and it died in committee.

Bartholow looks at California's housing crisis today and wonders why legislators haven't reconsidered it.

"If we know that income is one of the best ways out of poverty, why wouldn't it be a best policy practice to make sure that people who are homeless and working are not at risk of losing their jobs or having reduced hours?" she asked.

How employers can help

Some employers have succeeded at helping their workers pull themselves out of homelessness.

"We don't have the solution of being able to solve everything with money," said [Kim Wyard, CEO of the Northeast Valley Health Corporation](#).

"We're not a food bank. And we're not a housing organization. But we can certainly help make those connections," she said.

Wyard's organization provides health services to people who are low-income or homeless. It already has strong connections with the Los Angeles homeless support system.

So when one or more of her own employees have fallen into homelessness, Wyard said those connections were a huge help. Calls to a group that provides housing for homeless families, [LA Family Housing](#), recently helped

one employee and her family get back on their feet.

Wyard's advice to other employers worried about homelessness in their workforce is to know who to call for help.

"I think that it may take a little bit of digging to put a homeless resource list together for your staff," she said. "But those resources are there."

Of course, for that approach to work, employees would need to feel comfortable telling their bosses about their situation.

Nereida, the optometrist's assistant, said her employer treats her well and pays her fairly.

But she said when she looks for housing assistance, she feels people's image of homelessness works against her. She describes herself as a soccer mom, and she looks the part.

"I've gotten comments like, 'Sorry, but if I looked at you, I wouldn't assume that you're homeless,'" Nereida said.

"Do I have to have ripped clothes? Dirty clothes? I have a job. So I can't come to work unpresentable or unprofessional."

Nereida is not sure how long her current housing situation at a friend's place will last. Her biggest fear is that she'll end up back in her car. But this time, with her

kids in the back seat.

The Flight Of The Condors, And Their Audience

By Stina Sieg

Weekend Edition Sunday, · It would normally be easy to miss the dirt road jutting north from a tiny highway near the Arizona-Utah border. But not today, with the long line of cars rumbling toward lonely, rosy cliffs, and an encampment of bird watchers forming under them.

They're all here for four birds.

With a wingspan that can stretch 10 feet, California condors are some of the largest birds in North America. They're also some of the rarest. After the population plunged to just 22 in 1982, all were taken into captivity for safe keeping and breeding.

Once a year, just a few are released into the wild in Northern Arizona. Others are released in California and in Mexico.

Chris Parish stands with a microphone in front of the growing crowd.

"This is phenomenal!" he says, his voice carried by solar-powered speakers. "I think there are more vehicles here than we had people in some of the early releases."

Parish is with the Peregrine Fund, which has been reintroducing California condors to Arizona for more

than 20 years, with the help of various organizations and state and federal agencies. This time, 750 condor groupies have come to watch, with their folding chairs and binoculars, umbrellas and dogs.

Brigitte Le Vea takes a turn squinting through a high-powered spotting scope.

"Oh my God! Oh my God!" she says, looking toward the top of the Vermilion Cliffs. "This is bananas!"

She can see a pen housing four young, soon-to-be released birds. A handful of older condors, released years ago, are nearby, some circling and others sitting on the rocks, unfurling their big, black wings.

"This is really, really, really special," she says, on the verge of tears. "I've been trying so hard all season to see a damn condor, and I'm finally here, and I'm so excited about it."

Le Vea is choked up, even though she and the rest of the group are a half a mile away and a thousand feet below the birds. With their naked, pink necks, these scavengers sometimes get called ugly. But here, people like Lee Ann McAda use a different word. Charismatic.

"Oh my God, how could they not be?" she says. "It's like, you look at those wings up there and you look at those heads and how they soar, how could you not think that they're charismatic? They're gorgeous."

And worth her seven-hour drive from Grand Junction, Colo., all for something that could last two minutes or all day.

When the pen is opened for the first time, you never know how long the condors will wait to take their first free flight high over the desert.

Finally, biologists start a countdown.

"Five! Four! Three! Two! One!" the crowd chants

Then Tim Hauck, a biologist on the ground, radios to a biologist on the cliffs.

It takes a moment for to open the pen's door. But then, a burst.

"Holy cow!" Hauck says. "It never happens this fast!"

Three condors fly out almost immediately, massive wings flapping against the sky. It's instant, elating gratification.

And for Ron Brown, a park ranger at the Grand Canyon, it's deeply personal.

"I was in the hospital three weeks ago with a pretty major heart attack," he says. "This is my first big thing was to come here, because I knew that this just makes you feel alive."

His late wife Pat, thought so, too. Brown says the last time she was here, she was sick and probably didn't

weight a hundred pounds. But she was glowing. Brown says that's the effect these birds — and the effort to save them — have on people.

"This kind of thing is human beings trying our best to say, "Together, we can do this," he says.

Soon, the fourth and final condor flies free. Thanks to interventions like this one, there are now nearly 500 California condors in the wild.

Kavanaugh's Temperament

Weekend Edition Sunday, · Lawfare blog Executive Editor Susan Hennessey tells NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro about what Brett Kavanaugh's demeanor during his testimony might tell us about his ability to be a Supreme Court justice.

A High Schooler Reacts To Kavanaugh And Ford Hearings

Weekend Edition Sunday · NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro talks to 17-year-old Jessica Melnik about what it's been like to follow the Ford-Kavanaugh hearings as a high school student.

Men Respond To Kavanaugh

By Emily Sullivan

Weekend Edition Sunday, · As Brett Kavanaugh's fate on the Supreme Court hangs in the balance, many men are wondering how a national emphasis on sexual assault will affect their lives.

A Look At Ballot Measures Around The Country

Weekend Edition Sunday · With the midterm elections right around the corner, NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro talks with *Governing* magazine's Alan Greenblatt to preview initiatives that are popping up on ballots across the country.

Race, Gender And Sexual Harassment

Weekend Edition Sunday · NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro speaks to Kimberlé Crenshaw about the role of race and gender in the Ford-Kavanaugh hearings and how it compares to Anita Hill's testimony. Crenshaw helped Hill's legal team.

Molly Ringwald On '80s Movies And Sexual Assault

Weekend Edition Sunday · Molly Ringwald, 1980s movie darling, discusses the impact of the era's pop culture concerning Brett Kavanaugh's alleged assault of Christine Blasey Ford with NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro.

Matt Damon Is A Sniffing, Shouting Brett Kavanaugh On 'SNL' Season Premiere

By James Doubek

NPR.org, September 30, 2018 · *Saturday Night Live* kicked off its 44th season in a sketch many of us expected in some form or another: a send-up of the emotionally charged hearings into the sexual assault allegations against Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh.

The show skipped any impression of accuser Christine Blasey Ford's testimony, starting the scene just before Kavanaugh's entrance.

"We've heard from the alleged victim, but now it's time to hear from the hero, Judge Brett Kavanaugh," says Sen. Chuck Grassley, played by cast member Alex Moffat.

In walks a shouting, sniffing Judge Brett Kavanaugh, in an appearance by Matt Damon.

"I'm gonna start at an 11, I'ma take it to about a 15 real quick!" he yells.

He talks a lot about beer. "I'm usually an optimist, I'm a keg is half-full kind of guy," he says.

Echoing the real Kavanaugh's statement that "you'll never get me to quit," Damon's judge notes, "I'm not backing down ... I don't know the meaning of the word stop."

Aidy Bryant played Rachel Mitchell, the Arizona prosecutor brought in to question Ford, who says, "I'm here mostly for Twitter."

Later on in the scene, Kate McKinnon, who can do a [good impression](#) of [pretty much anybody](#), channeled the indignation of Sen. Lindsey Graham, who lashed out on Thursday at Democrats.

"You put this man on the Supreme Court now," McKinnon's Graham says. "No vote, no discussion. You give him a damn robe and you let him do whatever the hell he wants. Because this right now, this is my audition for Mr. Trump's Cabinet. And also for a regional production of *The Crucible*."

Weekend Update had its usual digs at the week in politics, beginning with the Ford and Kavanaugh appearances. "A classic debate of she said, he yelled," as Colin Jost described it.

Kate McKinnon was back (again!) as Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, giving her take on Kavanaugh and his calendars. Today on Ginsburg's agenda: "Don't die."

Kanye West was the night's musical guest. He performed three times, the first of which was ... in a costume of a [bottle of Perrier](#).

He ended the show with a song performed wearing a Make America Great Again hat. West is a [noted fan of President Trump](#).

The show is back live next week with host [Awkwafina](#) and musical guest [Travis Scott](#).

Anti-Kavanaugh Protesters Press Maine Senator Who Holds Key Vote

By Steve Mistler

All Things Considered, · In Sen. Susan Collins' (R-Maine) home state, some are protesting and many are reaching out via phone and email to share their views. She could be a key vote for or against the Kavanaugh nomination.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Maine Republican Senator Susan Collins is among a handful of centrist senators who could determine whether Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh is confirmed. Collins says she's undecided. And, in her home state, Collins' constituents have been demonstrating and flooding her offices with emails and phone calls. And, this week, the interest in her decision grew even more intense, if that's possible. Steve Mistler from Maine Public Radio has this report.

STEVE MISTLER, BYLINE: In some ways, the senior Senator Collins's Portland office on Friday was like so many others over the past several weeks. A throng of anti-Kavanaugh protesters, about 200 in all, spilled into the street outside. But this, in the immediate aftermath of the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, was different. Sarah Skillin Woodard took the bullhorn to express

frustration that Ford's heart-wrenching testimony may not have been enough to persuade Collins to oppose Kavanaugh.

SARAH SKILLIN WOODARD: I am shaking mad. I am furious. How many of you are furious?

UNIDENTIFIED PROTESTERS: (Cheering)

MISTLER: Woodard leads a progressive group that recruits and trains women candidates, but she wasn't the only one with strong reactions to the hearing. The topic and Collins' pending decision on Kavanaugh dominated Maine Public Radio's daily talk show program on Friday.

(SOUNDBITE OF MONTAGE)

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON #1: I don't know - it just - I just feel like it stood out there, and it was so threatening to me. And she was - she rocked my world.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON #2: Senator Collins votes with courage. She takes her job seriously.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON #3: It's shameful. I'm expecting a lot more from her.

MISTLER: Reactions to the hearings and expectations for Collins carried into today. Collins had announced Friday that she supports a last-minute move by the Senate to request a limited FBI investigation into Ford's allegations. But that provided small comfort to Dulcie Whitman, who

was shopping today on Main Street in Brunswick. Whitman has never voted for Collins, but she's previously been content with the belief that Maine's senior senator at least considers both sides of an issue before voting. Now, Whitman hopes Collins will consider how a yes vote on Kavanaugh will affect her if she seeks re-election in 2020, and, if she doesn't, how it will affect her political legacy.

DULCIE WHITMAN: I guess I'm hoping that she can hear that her voting yes not only is going to have an effect on individuals, but I'm hoping she hears it's going to have an effect on her politically.

JOHN KISTENMACHER: She's done a better job than 90 percent of the other senators, so I'm very happy with that.

MISTLER: John Kistenmacher has long supported Collins even though he says he's more conservative than she is.

KISTENMACHER: I mean, she doesn't always vote the way I want her to, but I think she votes the way Maine wants her to, which is what her job is.

MISTLER: But for Collins, divining Mainers' wishes has never been more difficult, the pressure on her rarely so intense or sustained.

For NPR News, I'm Steve Mistler in Portland, Maine.

EPA To Dissolve Office Of Science Advisor

By Dan Boyce

All Things Considered, As part of a broader reorganization, the EPA will eliminate the science advisor role created to counsel acting EPA Administrator, Andrew Wheeler. Critics fear the move is a further demotion of scientific research.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is moving to dissolve its Office of the Science Adviser. That is the direct scientific adviser to acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. The EPA describes the move as an effort to streamline the agency, but critics call it another move by the Trump administration to diminish the role of science in decision making. Dan Boyce has the story.

DAN BOYCE, BYLINE: This past summer, Andrew Wheeler took over at the EPA after the resignation of embattled administrator Scott Pruitt. And Wheeler - he's familiar with the EPA. He started his career with the agency in the early '90s.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ANDREW WHEELER: I do understand firsthand the stress that goes along with a change in management or a change in a reorganization.

BOYCE: That's Wheeler addressing EPA employees back in July. After his first stint at the EPA, he worked as an adviser to Senator Jim Inhofe, one of the biggest climate change skeptics on Capitol Hill. Then Wheeler worked as a lobbyist where one of his major clients was a coal company. Still, he told the assembled EPA staff he brings a passion for helping the environment.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

WHEELER: We must be able to speak with one voice and clearly explain to the American people the relevant environmental and health risks that they face.

BOYCE: But to Michael Halpern, the plan to remove the post of top science adviser is a step away from that pledge. He's with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

MICHAEL HALPERN: I mean, yeah. I mean, this is a colossally bad idea.

BOYCE: Now, the EPA did not respond to requests for an interview. In a statement, the agency describes it more as a bureaucratic reorganization combining this Office of Science Adviser with the Office of Science Policy. But Halpern says what that does is it moves the agency's top science advocates several rungs down the chain of command, and the EPA administrator should have

immediate access to those advisers.

HALPERN: Science advice is important both for long-term policy decisions and for reacting during a crisis.

BOYCE: A crisis like Hurricane Florence, recently causing the release of toxic coal ash in North Carolina.

STAN MEIBURG: We interacted with the science advisory position all the time.

BOYCE: That's Stan Meiburg, acting deputy EPA administrator during the final years of the Obama administration. He believes in the importance of the science adviser but says, in some ways, this reorganization appears to be an understandable response for an EPA working with reduced staff under President Trump.

MEIBURG: And, in this particular case, I think it has gotten more attention because of some of the concerns about the administration's use of science.

BOYCE: Both the Trump administration broadly and the EPA have been notably dismissive of scientific advice. Under Administrator Pruitt, the EPA restricted the types of scientific studies it recognizes. And Pruitt also appointed several scientists who work for industries the EPA regulates. Meiburg worries about the signal this latest reorganization sends because there are a lot of pressures acting on an EPA administrator when it comes to crafting policy.

MEIBURG: Lawsuits, demands and deadlines in the statutes, pressures from state, from industry, from nongovernmental organizations.

BOYCE: Meiburg says it's important science remains one of those pressures, too.

Dan Boyce, NPR News.

'Rising Out Of Hatred': Former White Nationalist On Unlearning His Beliefs

All Things Considered, · Derek Black was an avowed white nationalist until his identity was discovered by classmates in college and he began the long journey towards repudiating his beliefs. NPR's Michel Martin talks with Black and reporter Eli Saslow about the new book *Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist*.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

If there's such a thing as a white nationalist prodigy, Derek Black might have been it. He was born to it, son of Don Black, the founder of the racist website Stormfront, the godson of former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke. He was deeply immersed through his homeschooling and his parents' activities into the philosophies of white supremacy. But the young Derek added his own touches, using tools like a daily radio show and rhetoric that avoided harsh racial slurs in favor of junk science and white grievance, all of that in an effort to win the hearts and minds of white Americans.

That is, until he enrolled at New College of Florida in 2010, when the worldview he had built up over a lifetime began to unravel. And, with the prodding of a

surprisingly diverse group of friends, he began the painful process toward unlearning his beliefs. Washington Post reporter Eli Saslow has written a book about that journey. It's called "Rising Out Of Hatred: The Awakening Of A Former White Nationalist." He's with us now from the NPR bureau in New York.

Eli, welcome. Thanks for joining us.

ELI SASLOW: Thanks for having me.

MARTIN: And Derek Black is also with us from New York.

Derek, thank you so much for joining us as well.

DEREK BLACK: Yeah. Thanks for having me.

MARTIN: So I think a lot of people will find your story fascinating, but to you, it was all normal growing up, right? I mean, there was nothing you found strange about it?

BLACK: Yeah. It was very normal in the fact that it was what brought the family together. And we were a very close family and loved each other deeply and did a lot of stuff together. And the fact that we were all bound together by doing, you know, a political sort of thing felt extremely normal and did not feel at all unusual or incorrect.

MARTIN: So were you taught to be afraid of people who are different than you? Or was it more that we're just

better than these people, and they need to leave?

BLACK: I'm not totally sure it was either. Like, that's complicated, really, because in the house, everybody would talk about the fact that, you know, we don't want anyone to have a worse life. We don't want to dominate anyone. It's just that everybody would be so much happier if they all had their own governments and their own nations and their own spaces. And there's a real strong sense that white people and probably East Asian people are just the most creative and the smartest.

But, you know, that's just an unfortunate fact of history, and that's just an unfortunate fact that people don't want to deal with. And that didn't feel like hate to me. Like, that felt like we were being misconstrued and misunderstood when people would say it was hate because that didn't sound like it.

MARTIN: So let's fast forward, though, and compress a lot here and say - you know, when did the cracks in that worldview start?

BLACK: Yeah. I think going to that college is also a sign of how confident we all were and that my family was in my conviction, my ability to think independently and to be curious. And I did not go there expecting to have my worldview challenged because I was quite confident that it was factually correct and that the arguments against it were ones that I had already heard and I had already figured out were wrong.

And there wasn't any one point at the college where I realized, oh, this is wrong. It was a long, slow engagement, both with the people who this belief system says shouldn't be in the country trying to wrestle with the fact that I'm friends with you. I don't quite see how I can reconcile saying in the long run you don't belong here. And then, bit by bit, having the evidence for it - all the stuff that sounds scientific and sounds factual - realizing that those things, one by one, weren't correct and we were abusing statistics. Like, that worked in concert over - what, two and a half years.

MARTIN: So, Eli, let's bring you into this conversation. Initially, when you reached out to Derek, and you wanted to talk to him about his story, he said, no. I want to disappear (laughter). I don't want to be part of this. I don't - well, how did you persuade him to - or how did it happen that he then decided that he did want to talk?

SASLOW: Yeah. I mean, when I first learned about Derek, he was sort of in hiding from his past. I mean, he changed his name at that point. He'd moved to a different part in the country, and he'd been very intentional about people not finding him. I think, for Derek, the thing that mostly did the persuading was our national rhetoric and our national politics. I mean, when I first reached out to Derek, and he said he was not interested, over the course of the next year, all of these talking points from his past and many of the talking points that he had worked to spread over the radio every day or during speeches - all of these seeds that he'd

planted - they were growing all around him.

And he heard some of these very scary racist ideas surfaced in the presidential campaign in 2016 and in the rise of the far right in Europe and in the ways that the Black Lives Matter movement was talked about. And I think Derek on his own came to the conclusion that these were huge, powerful forces that needed to be confronted and reconciled with and that his silence, in some ways, was continuing to make him complicit.

MARTIN: So what's the takeaway, Derek? And, of course, Eli, I want to ask your take on that, too.

BLACK: Yeah. We absolutely do not have to accept society and the assumptions - the racist assumptions that people have. But they're also not going to go away. I think the disconcerting realization that I've had over these few years - I spent quite a few years trying to never talk about this again and thinking that the country was just going to fix itself and then realizing that that's not going to happen. It happens because we do stuff.

And I've been coming to the realization that it is harder to advocate for anti-racism than it is for white nationalisms. When you're saying that our society is fundamentally unjust, it is based on white supremacy, you're asking people to change and to do something and to sort of shoulder that burden. And that is a hard thing to ask of people, and it's a lot harder than telling them that things are fine and they don't need to do anything about it.

MARTIN: Eli, what's your takeaway from Derek's story?

SASLOW: I think, in addition to being - you know, to this book being the story of Derek's transformation, it's also the story of the people who he encountered who showed real, persistent courage to confront these very dangerous ideas.

MARTIN: Derek, before I let you go, can I ask you, what's your life now - to the degree that you feel comfortable saying?

BLACK: In my day to day life, I am a graduate student of history trying to pursue that and figure out how it integrates into my life. And before I met Eli, I wanted to never speak in front of anyone ever again. And I delved pretty deeply into history thinking that that could keep me away from talking about now and talking about our lives.

And since meeting Eli and these years of working with him to try to tell this story, I think I've come to realize that it's never that easy and that I have a responsibility to speak out about things that I have a weird platform to do. And sometimes that's not always pleasant. But I think it's important, and I'm still trying to figure out exactly how to do it.

MARTIN: And your parents?

BLACK: We have a relationship, and that's due in no small part to them. It was not always clear that we would

be able to talk, and a lot of love on their part went into realizing that it's more important that we be able to speak as a family than that that be cut off just because of beliefs. But there's a gulf there, and a lot of those conversations are about how I'm making the country worse by advocating anti-racism and that I'm going to doom America if I keep advocating this stuff.

MARTIN: What do you do for Thanksgiving?

BLACK: I think, like a lot of college students, you left home, and then you come back, and you're hanging out, listening to the family conversations, and you're - have a new mindset, and you say, oh. I never really heard it that way before I left home.

MARTIN: That was Derek Black. He's the subject of a new book by journalist Eli Saslow called "Rising Out Of Hatred: The Awakening Of A Former White Nationalist." They were both with us from New York.

Derek Black, Eli Saslow, thanks so much for talking to us.

BLACK: Thanks a lot.

SASLOW: Thanks for your time.

Barbershop: Kavanaugh Testimony Reactions

All Things Considered, · NPR's Michel Martin speaks to Deb Copaken, contributing writer for *The Atlantic*; Paul Butler, Georgetown University Law professor; and Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa, founder of the anti-abortion group *New Wave Feminists*.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Finally, today, we want to head into the Barbershop to talk a bit more about the remarkable events of this past week around Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court and all that led up to it. And that's because the Barbershop is just a place that we can dig a little deeper into the news and what's on people's minds. And we want to do that because it's obvious now that these events are having an impact way beyond the politics, although, of course, we can't forget the politics. One of the reasons we say that is that RAINN, an organization to address sexual violence, reported calls to their hotline were three times higher than usual on the day that Christine Blasey Ford and Brett Kavanaugh testified.

You may have read any number of deeply personal blog posts and think pieces about these events. Clearly,

people are feeling the need to share their stories, so we wanted to talk to a couple of people about their perspectives. To that end, we called Paul Butler. He's professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center. Joining us from New York is Deborah Copaken, a photographer and author of "The Red Book" and "Shutterbabe." And in Dallas, we have Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa, founder of the pro-life group called New Wave Feminists.

And before we start, I just wanted to say that nobody has been called here to represent anybody in particular but just to share their own reactions and thoughts about these proceedings this weekend. I'm going to start with Deborah because last week - and welcome, by the way. Thank you all so much for being here with us. Deborah, you published an article in The Atlantic titled "My Rapist Apologized." Can you just briefly tell us why you wrote this piece which was very deeply personal?

DEBORAH COPAKEN: Thanks, Michel. I wrote it in response to President Trump's tweet about how if Christine Blasey Ford had actually - if things had been as bad as she said, she would have gone to the police and told her parents. And having been acquaintance-raped myself back in 1988, I knew that this was not the case. In fact, I knew that this was not the case because I was raped on the eve of my graduation. And obviously, my parents were there the next day. But I did go and report this rape. And I reported to the university health services. And back then, there were two choices - stick around for

a year and have to deal with a trial where your sex life would be on trial, not your rapist, or say nothing.

MARTIN: But the other thing I found fascinating and moving about your piece, as did so many others, is that you confronted the person who did this years later, and he apologized.

COPAKEN: Well, actually - he did. And I confronted him, oddly, two days before President Trump's tweet, which was, you know, Tuesday or Wednesday before that. And I had just - I had read Kavanaugh's yearbook entry. And it so enraged me reading that that I just thought, enough of this bro culture. I'm about to have my 30th reunion for my college. I am - I had found this guy's email address a while back. And I said, I'm just going to write this letter. And I literally sat down, wrote a letter to my rapist, told him what he had done, explained to him what - how it had affected my life and had no idea what would happen in the interim. I just sent it out into the ether and, you know, shook as I pressed send.

And literally 20 minutes later, he called and said, I'm so sorry, I had no idea. And he was a blackout drunk, just like Kavanaugh. And he did get sober a year later, which is interesting because he said, I remember being at the party. And I remember waking up in your bed, but I do not remember anything else. And I said, well, you passed out in that bed. And I tried to move you, and you were dead weight. And I could not get you off that bed. And that has - that event has affected the rest of my life. And he just let me speak.

MARTIN: Wow. That's very powerful and intense. And I do need to say that Mr. Kavanaugh denies that he was a blackout drunk or - does not acknowledge that. So I will just say that in the interest of fairness. And Destiny, similarly, you posted about your experience with sexual assault on Facebook. And we don't have time to get into all the nuances of the point that you wanted to make, but as briefly as you can, talk about - it's a complicated story, but talk about what message you were hoping to impart by sharing your story.

DESTINY HERNDON-DE LA ROSA: Yeah. I felt like it was just really important. You know, we are having a national discussion. And it's something that, so often as a feminist, I want people to be talking about. What does consent look like? What is rape culture? You know, how do we dismantle this? And so because there is this national conversation going on, I decided to add my voice by telling this very personal, real, raw story about an assault that happened to me at 16 years old. And in the same way, something that changed the course of my life afterwards. And it was welcomed by so much support from so many people. It was overwhelming, and that part of it was wonderful.

But then I also noticed a few days later, it was being shared by people with this political lean to it. So whether they believed in Judge Kavanaugh's innocence or his guilt, you know, they would add their own little comment and then share this very raw part of me. And it

caused me to question whether or not it was the right time to put this out. And it also made me wonder how many other women might be experiencing that same thing, you know, exposing this very vulnerable part of themselves and then seeing it kind of used and almost weaponized for political means.

MARTIN: So, Paul Butler, we called you for a number of reasons. You're a former prosecutor. You teach at a law school. You teach criminal law. You're very aware and sensitive around these issues. What did this bring up for you? What would you like us to be thinking about when we talk about this?

PAUL BUTLER: So, first off, mad respect to these two women for sharing their stories. Full disclosure, I'm a black man. So concern about false accusations is in my DNA. So yeah, there needs to be due process and a presumption of innocence. But Dr. Ford was very credible. And Judge Kavanaugh lost me in two ways. First, with his obvious lies about things like the yearbook where he had all these misogynist comments about women at the hearing, said they didn't have anything to do with sex - please. And that beyond that was his belligerent, disrespectful attitude. He yelled at the Democrats, asked them questions back, sulked in silence. You're right. I used to be a prosecutor. If there was a witness who tried that in D.C. criminal court, he would be held in contempt and locked up. Judge Kavanaugh does not possess a judicial temperament, and neither does he respect the Senate's duty to advise and consent

on Supreme Court nominations.

MARTIN: But one of the reasons we also called you is that in a different context, we were talking about - admittedly, athletes and their - some foul things that they've said on social media when they were this age. And you said, you know what? I wouldn't want to be judged by things that I did when I was a teenager. Is that the same thing here?

BUTLER: We were talking earlier about a young man who made some vile, racist comments when he was 15 or 16. This is about a crime - attempted rape, assault - that Judge Kavanaugh is alleged to have committed. It's entirely proper for us to know whether someone is going to sit on the Supreme Court for 30 years with this kind of criminal background.

MARTIN: So, Destiny, let me go back to you because you identify as a pro-life feminist. And you've also written - and again, your piece was very nuanced. But you also talked about this kind of - that you feel like both head and heart should guide our reactions to this. What do you think should happen now based on your experience and the fact that you do identify as pro-life? And one would assume you'd have some interest in seeing a person with your views on the court.

HERNDON DE-LA ROSA: So I would say, as a pro-life feminist, it kind of puts me in this very unique position because I'm an independent. I don't belong to either political party. And I think even that alone has kind of

set me apart from a lot of what we're seeing kind of online and in social media, where the day these allegations came out in The Washington Post, so many people assumed guilt or innocence right there and have not really been able to step back from it and look at this critically. And throughout the hearings, you know, listening to Dr. Ford, she was incredibly believable.

And then listening to Judge Kavanaugh, there was so much in his testimony that I thought, if I was wrongfully accused, I would be equally as hysterical to some degree. And so I think that, yes, you know, I do understand the need for having a pro-life Supreme Court justice. But I would also argue that Dr. Ford said multiple times that's why she was trying to get these allegations out before it was narrowed down to Brett Kavanaugh because there are other justices out there. And I think that's when it convinced me, at least personally, that this was not politically motivated for her.

Now, I do believe it was very much politically motivated and is being politically weaponized, you know, by many of the other senators that we saw at the hearing. They, you know, made a point to grandstand. And one of the people who really stood out to me was Senator Flake and the fact that, you know, to a lot of people, he seemed very wishy washy. But I think he was one of the only ones who gave a human response and not a politician response. And he called for humility. And he saw, you know, people as they were, and that this was a horrible instance that everyone wishes could have been

avoided and could have been dealt with confidentially.

MARTIN: So, Deb, what about you? What do you hope happens now as we think about this and as we think about how this whole situation here has affected us?

COPAKEN: Well, I was very moved by the women yelling into the elevator. And I was moved by Flake's response to that, whether or not that was his response to those women yelling in the elevator or not. But I am heartened by the fact that we're going to actually have an FBI investigation, albeit a foreshortened one. But I do think we need to hear from Mark Judge. And I do think we need to hear from the other women. And I do think we need to find out just a little bit more than we did in those hearings.

You know, listening to Dr. Ford, I believed her a hundred percent. Listening to Kavanaugh, I believe that he didn't think that he had done anything wrong. Now, those two things can hold true at the same time. So we need to get to a much deeper understanding of what happened. And in fact, one of the things I think we keep forgetting here is that, whether or not this thing happened back in the day, this man is being judged on his character as well. And Fox did a really interesting chart of all the times that he obfuscated every time he was asked a question. And I think that is one of the more pertinent questions we need to be asking is, how much has he lied?

MARTIN: All right, Deb. We have to leave it there for now. There's obviously so much more to talk about. I'm

sorry we don't have a chance to only - just scratched the surface here. That's Deb Copaken, Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa and Paul Butler. And thank you all so much for being with us.

Backlash Over White Hip-Hop Curator At National Museum Of African American History

By Rodney Carmichael

All Things Considered, · A debate was sparked on Twitter when someone pointed out that the curator of the hip-hop archive at the National Museum of African American History and Culture is white.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Every now and again, we like to check in on controversies playing out on social media - not because they represent some careful scholarly debate, but rather because these controversies seemed to tap into wells of sentiment that exist but don't find expression anywhere else. So we wanted to talk about a debate that started with this tweet. Quote, "there is a white woman curating the hip-hop part of the NMAAHC Smithsonian" - lots of exclamation marks - who let this expletive happen," unquote.

Now, NMAAHC is the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, which opened with great fanfare in 2016 and has been wildly popular since. The hip-hop exhibit has been part of the museum since the

outset. The reference is to curator Timothy Anne Burnside. And that tweet was met with many impassioned responses, both defending the curator's credentials and commitment but also those supporting the critique. And that sparked a much larger debate about who should have access to black spaces.

We're going to go to NPR's hip-hop writer, Rodney Carmichael, to pick it up from there. Rodney, thanks so much for joining us.

RODNEY CARMICHAEL, BYLINE: Thanks for having me, Michel.

MARTIN: Outline the debate a little bit more if you would about what it is that people are saying.

CARMICHAEL: Well, you know, like you said, when this conversation started a week ago, there were a lot of really high-profile personalities on black Twitter, ranging from rap artists to academics that, you know, Timothy Anne Burnside has worked with. And they all immediately came to her defense, vouching for her credibility as a curator. But then the defenders got called out, and it became this really heated conversation that hinged on race and class and how these distinctions really kind of play into who creates culture versus who gets to curate it, especially in America's ivory towers.

MARTIN: So tell me a little bit more about her qualifications, if you would.

CARMICHAEL: Well, you know, she has a graduate degree in museum studies. She's been a curator with the Smithsonian for nearly 15 years, from what I understand. And she also launched the Smithsonian's hip-hop collecting initiative a whole decade before the National Museum of African-American History and Culture even opened. So, you know, that's time served cultivating the relationships that are really necessary to build the kind of archive that the museum can boast of now.

MARTIN: The critics are really aiming their fire at the museum, it seems to me, that they seem to be saying that African-Americans don't have access to that many positions of this type, and therefore, this highly sought-after position should go to a - an African-American. That seems to be the gist of the argument, if I have that right. What is the museum saying about that?

CARMICHAEL: Will, the museum - I did reach out to them, actually, last week, as well as Timothy. And, you know, they declined my interview request, but they did issue a longer statement. It said, in part, that she is part of a larger curatorial team in terms of the hip-hop archive and that Dr. Dwanalyn Reece, who is African-American, leads that effort. And the statement also talked about the museum being dedicated to telling the American story through an African-American lens but also recognizing that there is a serious lack of diversity in the museum field, which they are not only aware of, but, you know, attempting to work toward fixing as well.

MARTIN: Let me ask you this. Is this something about hip-hop? For example, if she were curating a different exhibit, like blacks in classical music, for example, would this have evoked the same reaction?

CARMICHAEL: I think this is the big difference. A lot of other exhibits focus on history. And while there's obviously a very strong history to hip-hop culture, it's a culture that is still very much alive and breathing right now. You know, and in this age, where appropriation is a constant debate, there's just a lot of sensitivity around authenticity and who gets to hold the keys to our cultural narrative of, who gets to tell our story. And, you know, I think that doesn't necessarily negate the contributions that people of all colors, you know, including white people, have made to hip-hop. I mean, there have been people in key positions that have made things happen. You can go all the way back to Rick Rubin, who started Def Jam.

But, you know, there's this access problem that so much of hip-hop is about - has been about leveling the playing field socioeconomically and being more inclusive in that way. And, you know, when hip-hop comes into these academic spaces, now that it is invited here into these upper echelons, there is worry, I think, of something being sacrificed in terms of what the culture means and represents for people who have been living it from the beginning.

MARTIN: That was NPR's Rodney Carmichael. Rodney,

thank you.

CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Michel.

Kavanaugh As A Justice

All Things Considered, · Brett Kavanaugh displayed partisan passion in testimony Thursday. NPR's Michel Martin interviews court watcher David A. Kaplan about what a Justice Kavanaugh could mean for the work of the Supreme Court.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

While the hearing this week was meant to investigate Judge Kavanaugh's conduct in high school, it also opened the door to other questions about his impartiality on the bench and his potential impact on the image of the court. That's because he was combative with Democratic senators and made this starkly partisan statement.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

BRETT KAVANAUGH: This whole two-week effort has been a calculated and orchestrated political hit fueled with apparent pent-up anger about President Trump and the 2016 election, fear that has been unfairly stoked about my judicial record, revenge on behalf of the Clintons and millions of dollars in money from outside left-wing opposition groups.

MARTIN: While this comment might not seem startling

from someone who helped investigate Bill Clinton and later worked in the Bush White House as Kavanaugh did, the partisan tone was seen as a departure for a federal judge, which Mr. Kavanaugh is now. We wanted to talk more about this, so we called David A. Kaplan once again. He's author of the recent book "The Most Dangerous Branch: Inside The Supreme Court's Assault On The Constitution."

Welcome back, Mr. Kaplan. Thanks so much for joining us once again.

DAVID A. KAPLAN: Good to be with you again.

MARTIN: Well, I don't think it was a surprise to anybody that Judge Kavanaugh was angry and emotional, but his comments were very partisan, and he made statements that weren't supported by any facts that - at least, that he was able to cite. So what did you make of that?

KAPLAN: I understood that he believed in order to keep his nomination live, he had one key person to please, and that was the president of the United States. So, in that sense, he did what he had to do. But, that said, some of his comments were so over-the-top. The comment about the Clintons, while no doubt a result of 20 years of simmering rage over how Kavanaugh thinks he was mistreated in perception of him writing the Starr Report, there's something to be said for appearing to have judicial temperament even in a political setting like your confirmation hearing.

MARTIN: A law professor at Yale, Judith Resnik, told The New York Times that because of his tone this week, his ascent to the court could leave it under a cloud of politics and scandal for decades. I mean, she was not the only person expressing that perspective, so I wanted to ask, you know, first about what it is exactly that you think harmed him and, secondly, do you think that his comments could damage the reputation of the court in some way?

KAPLAN: I don't think it particularly damages the reputation of the court. I think this whole circus damages the reputation of the court. It makes it look politicized. But, as I've argued in the book, I think the court's politicization responsibility lies first with the court itself because it gets involved in so many political and social issues. But the court can do its job, and this will be forgotten, at least in the sense that the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill battle from 30 years ago didn't significantly interfere with the court's ability, the court's prestige and credibility. And whatever else one may think of Justice Thomas, when I interviewed a majority of the justices for this book and asked about Anita Hill, I didn't get the sense for any of them that there was damage that was front and center on their minds.

MARTIN: Since Judge Kavanaugh revealed his partisan allegiances so openly, do you expect him to be under pressure to recuse himself from many matters if he is confirmed - matters involving campaign finance or matters where the parties have opposing points of view?

KAPLAN: Yes. I think he is more likely to be the subject of recusal motions and pressure. But the unique thing about recusal before the Supreme Court is that you can't substitute in somebody else. And the tradition of the court has been to let each justice to decide. So while I think that pressure might exist, my hunch would be that Kavanaugh, like other justices, will be loathe to step outside of cases based so far just on the notion that he's now so biased that he can't sit.

MARTIN: This particular outburst aside, what has been his record on the time he's been on the bench? Do you think that he's displayed excessive partisanship?

KAPLAN: No. I think you can judge him guilty, if you will, of being conservative. But the idea that he has an ideological axe to grind on campaign finance, executive power - I think it's pretty hard to take a whole lot away from that. By and large, Kavanaugh's reputation within the profession and within the academy is as being a first-rate judge.

MARTIN: That's David A. Kaplan, former legal affairs editor at Newsweek. His book, "The Most Dangerous Branch: Inside The Supreme Court's Assault On The Constitution," came out earlier this year.

Mr. Kaplan, thanks so much for joining us once again.

KAPLAN: Thank you. A pleasure to join you again.

World

Macedonians Vote On A Name Change

By Joanna Kakissis

Weekend Edition Sunday, · The people of Macedonia will be asked on Sunday if they agree to change the name of their country — in order to end a decades-long dispute with Greece.

Update On Deported Honduran Father

Weekend Edition Sunday · NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro speaks with journalist James Fredrick and "John," who fled from Honduras to the United States with his daughter. John was deported, but his daughter remains in the U.S.

The Challenges Of Responding To Tsunami And Earthquake In Indonesia

*Weekend Edition Sunday · NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro
speaks with Associated Press reporter Margie Mason
about the death toll and damage from an earthquake and
tsunami that hit Indonesia.*

Germany's Far-Right AfD Party Now Polls Second

By Simon Schütz

NPR.org, September 30, 2018 · German parliamentary debates tend to be well-tempered, often dreary affairs. But a recent session showed just how tense the climate in Germany's parliament, the Bundestag, has become.

Earlier this month, Alexander Gauland, a lawmaker with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party in the lower house of parliament, lambasted German Chancellor Angela Merkel's migration policies. A verbal pile-on ensued. Senior Social Democratic politician Martin Schulz accused the AfD legislator of being a "right-wing radical" and using "tactics of fascism."

Eventually, the 94 AfD members of parliament walked out, saying that comparisons to the Nazis and other insults were "unacceptable."

In last September's elections, the AfD became the first far-right party to win seats in the Bundestag in more than half a century, becoming the official opposition to Merkel's ruling "grand coalition" of conservatives and social democrats. Although — or precisely because — the AfD is treated as a pariah in the legislature, its support is growing among German voters.

The AfD was listed as the country's second most popular

party [in a recent poll](#), with 18 percent support, beating the mainstream Social Democratic Party into third place, albeit by just a single point.

It is the latest sign that many citizens are drawn to a populist movement that is reshaping politics in Germany, a trend that's playing out in Europe and elsewhere. AfD politicians are regularly accused of extremism and don't shy from the type of nationalist rhetoric that mainstream German politicians largely have shunned since World War II. After launching in 2013, Alternative for Germany has grown powerful by focusing especially on the public's fears and frustrations over the country taking in record numbers of migrants and refugees in recent years.

"Political helplessness"

AfD's spokesman Jörg Meuthen believes his party is in touch with German society: "On the crucial issues of our time, the views of the majority of the population coincide with ours. That drives these people to us," he tells NPR.

Accusations that the party's members are right-wing radicals or a danger to democracy are "an expression of political helplessness" by mainstream politicians, he says.

Meuthen, an economist who also serves as a German member of European Parliament, insists the party's leaders "completely reject any form of right-wing radicalism."

But various current and former AfD politicians have been

criticized for anything from stoking prejudiced views of ethnic and religious minorities to trivializing the Holocaust. The party rejects such accusations.

In recent protest rallies in the eastern city of Chemnitz, members of the AfD marched alongside leading figures of the anti-migrant group PEGIDA and neo-Nazi activists. Some of the protesters performed Nazi salutes — which are illegal in Germany — and shouted “foreigners out!”

Most Germans reject it

Many are alarmed by the far right’s rise in Germany, a country that has fought to stamp out extremism and remnants of Nazi thinking. Some experts warn against drawing too much comparison to the 1930s Weimar period that led to Adolf Hitler’s rise, but they recognize certain parallels.

“What is interesting is that the dominant right wing of the AfD tries to copy the agitation, the ideology, the rhetoric of the fascists of the Weimar Republic, but they encounter their limits,” says Hajo Funke, a political scientist at Free University of Berlin.

Earlier this month, a survey found that [79 percent of Germans](#) believe right-wing extremism is a danger to democracy. “And big majorities do want that Germany offers [a] place to war refugees,” Funke adds, as [another recent study shows](#).

So, how has the AfD managed to garner so much support for its "alternative" for the country?

According to Werner Weidenfeld, a political scientist at the University of Munich, the party appeals to a variety of sectors. "The AfD supporters are not all right-wing radicals," he says. There is a range of backers, including "disappointed middle-class" citizens and "some right-wing extremists."

He thinks the AfD's success reflects people's longing for simple solutions to complex issues, like security and artificial intelligence. "We live in an age of complexity," he says, "while at the same time nobody explains the complex connections. So there is confusion, and people become incredibly insecure. They are frustrated, afraid and want a simple answer."

Weidenfeld says Germany's mainstream parties do not provide these answers, so "many of today's AfD voters stayed home on election days. Now they have found a way of expressing their fear and frustration — by voting for the AfD."

"Democracy is not threatened today, but it might be the day after tomorrow," Weidenfeld says. The traditional parties have to "regain the trust of citizens."

Media scientist [Jo Grobel](#) argues that AfD politicians are careful to remain vague on almost all other topics but the refugee issue. That attracts people with widely differing views, who feel unrepresented by established

parties, around a single topic.

A record of [more than 1 million asylum-seekers](#) came to Europe in 2015, largely from war-torn countries like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Many conservatives in Germany, and outside the country, have criticized Merkel for letting so many migrants enter.

"So there is a valve for the frustration and anger over the prevailing political style," Grobel says. As long as the party focuses on migration without straying into other areas, it can harness Germans' "shared anger."

There is also a realization in Germany of bigger trends: Europe's establishment politicians still win elections, but right-wing populists have made considerable gains — with a laser focus on immigration — in countries like [Italy](#) and [Sweden](#). That momentum has grabbed the attention of American white nationalist figures as well.

"There is no singular explanation for the strengthening of the extreme right — it is a worldwide phenomenon," says Konstantin von Notz, a German parliamentarian from the opposition Green Party. "The far right and autocrats have an international network and see themselves as a movement. This threatens the Western-type democracies massively, whose freedoms we have taken for granted for decades."

Facebook smart

Another driver is the AfD's social media expertise.

Political consultant [Martin Fuchs](#) says, unlike traditional parties, the populist right-wing party was founded in the age of Facebook. "It consequently built its party structures along the network and uses it better than any other party," he says, "both in terms of connecting [supporters] to the party, as well as the implementation [of its political agenda] with emotional content, escalating scandals, focusing on one topic and managing its community." Fuchs says the party uses the online social network so successfully, it no longer needs the mainstream media to reach and mobilize supporters.

The government is aware it needs to improve its appeal to citizens. "The public perception of the government needs a lot of improvement," says [Johannes Kahrs](#), a member of parliament for the Social Democrats, a partner in the ruling coalition. "Trust calms, a lack of trust gives a boost to the extremists."

He says to combat the appeal of the AfD, traditional parties "need [to offer] guidance and we need to solve problems." But he insists politicians should not adopt far-right positions: "There should be no attempt to overtake the far right on the right." There has to be a clear limit to what is acceptable in German politics and society, Kahrs says.

#NotHim: In Brazil, Women Protest Far-Right Brazil Presidential Candidate

By Philip Reeves

All Things Considered, · Brazilian women took to the streets on Saturday to protest against the far-right presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro. With the vote little more than a week away, women are protesting against what they say are his misogynistic, homophobic and racist views.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Now to Brazil, where tens of thousands of women are demonstrating on the streets today. Their message is summed up by their Internet hashtag - #nohim. Him refers to a presidential candidate from the far-right who is leading the polls ahead of next month's elections in Brazil. He is viewed by his opponents as dangerously autocratic and divisive and has a reputation for misogyny. We're joined by NPR's Philip Reeves, who's in Rio de Janeiro at one of the largest demonstrations. Philip, welcome. Thanks for joining us.

PHILIP REEVES, BYLINE: You're welcome.

MARTIN: Who is this candidate, and why do so many women say they are worried that he might become

president?

REEVES: He is Jair Bolsonaro. He's been a congressman for many years. He's a retired army captain. He's ahead in the polls, as you said. He has a record that he's been trying to distance himself from of making offensive remarks about women, about black Brazilians, about homosexuals, LGBT. But this crowd, very large crowd indeed that is here, have not forgotten or forgiven those remarks, which is one reason why they're here - the main reason why they're here. Three weeks ago, he made international headlines - so some people may well have heard of him in this context - when he was stabbed at a rally by a man who appeared to have mental issues. And he's been in hospital for the last three weeks recovering from what were pretty serious wounds until today. And during that time, he has crept up in the polls somewhat.

MARTIN: Tell us a little bit about what you're seeing at that demonstration in Rio.

REEVES: Oh, it's a really big crowd. I mean, it's huge. I couldn't possibly estimate the numbers. It's well into five figures, which is tens of thousands. I'm reading reports that there's a crowd of similar size in Brazil's biggest city, Sao Paulo. And there have been other demonstrations against Bolsonaro like this in cities across the country. The people here include many women.

It's a very diverse crowd - young and old. And there are men here, too - many men and children, too. They seem to come from very different social contexts, social

backgrounds, but they united by the slogan which is on their T-shirts and their headbands, on their - on the stickers on their clothes and the flags and the placards that they're waving which is #nohim. It's a festive mood. There's lot of chanting and singing. But underlying that festivity is a very serious message, which is a message saying, we do not want this man to be our president.

MARTIN: How widespread do you think the opposition among women is, and is it significant enough to stop him from being elected?

REEVES: Well, I can only go by what the polls say, and we all know what the limitations of polling is, having had the experience of watching other elections in other parts of the world unravel on the basis of predictions. But here, the polls show that he has a high rejection rate, a really high rejection rate among women who say they're going to vote but say they would never vote for him. It's over 50 percent. That said, though, he does have support from some women. He has about 20 percent who say they'll vote for him. And they've been holding counter-demonstrations today which are much smaller. The issues that draw them to him seem to be frustration about the economy here, which has seen the worst recession in history, about corruption and the establishment, which has been massive. And, of course, about violent crime. That's probably their principal concern.

MARTIN: And Philip, we only have a couple of seconds left, but the election is on October 7. But will that be

decisive?

REEVES: No, probably not. The signs are that it will go to a second round. And the big issue is whether Bolsonaro can win that.

MARTIN: That's...

REEVES: And it's not clear he will.

MARTIN: All right. Sorry to interrupt. That's NPR's Philip Reeves in Rio de Janeiro. Philip, thanks so much.

REEVES: You're welcome.

Earthquake Devastates Indonesian Island

All Things Considered, · A massive earthquake and tsunami struck the Indonesian island of Sulawesi on Friday, killing hundreds of people. Yenni Suryani of the Catholic Relief Services updates NPR's Michel Martin on rescue efforts.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

In Indonesia, rescue efforts are underway after a massive earthquake and tsunami hit the island of Sulawesi on Friday. Hundreds of people have been reported dead, and many more are missing after waves almost 20 feet high destroyed buildings and swept away cars. Rescue workers fear the death toll could rise since some areas remain inaccessible. Yenni Suryani is the Indonesian country manager for Catholic Relief Services. She's been aiding in those rescue efforts, and she's with us now from Jakarta.

Yenni Suryani, thank you so much for speaking with us.

YENNI SURYANI: Thank you.

MARTIN: Can you just give us a sense of what it is like there? Just tell us what you see or what you know.

SURYANI: So far, we see the damage and the impact of

the disaster is quite devastating. But the government's boats from the central government and also the local government has deployed military personnel, police personnel and their humanitarian agencies to the target area. Although the challenge now is the transportation to that area because it's hard to reach, and some roads leading to that cities are so damaged. There's still many people declared missing, and the search and rescue mission is priority right now.

MARTIN: Have there been any aftershocks reported?

SURYANI: Yes. The earthquake aftershocks have been reported for more than 100 aftershocks so far. But the National Agency for Disaster Management did not issue any tsunami warning because the level and the scale of the aftershocks is small, and tsunami was not the concern at this time.

MARTIN: So you were telling us that a lot of resources from in country are being deployed there. Do you have any sense of what the priority is right now? What do you need?

SURYANI: The priority now for the government and for the united workers is search and rescue to save lives. And once our team is on the ground, we can see more identified needs there. But, in my experience, you will need all the relief items like tarps and shelters. And also food will be needed by the community.

MARTIN: At this point, do you have any sense of how

the international community is responding to this so far?

SURYANI: I understand that the - this disaster has attracted international community. However, since the government has not yet declared whether this is national disaster that will be open for international agencies to support, we are still in the stage of needs assessment. If the government needs our help, needs international help, they will ask, and we'll be ready to fill the gap.

MARTIN: That is Yenni Suryani at Catholic Relief Services.

Thank you so much for speaking with us.

SURYANI: Thank you so much.

U.S. Closes Consulate In Basra, Citing Iran-Backed Violence

By Noor Wazwaz

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · The State Department is temporarily closing the U.S. Consulate in the southern Iraqi city of Basra and evacuating all diplomats stationed there, following a [rocket attack](#) early Friday morning.

Although there were no casualties, concerns back in Washington grew. The decision comes out of concern for the safety of U.S. personnel stationed in that Iraqi city near the border with Iran.

In a [statement](#) released Friday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cited "repeated incidents of fire" from Iranian-backed militias.

"I have made clear that Iran should understand that the United States will respond promptly and appropriately to any such attacks," Pompeo said.

He blamed the security threat specifically on Iran, its elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Quds Force and militias under the control of Qassem Suleimani, the commander of the Quds Force.

The Basra airport was also the target of an attack earlier this month. NPR's Jane Arraf [reported](#) that according to Iraqi security officials, the attacks didn't land on the U.S. Embassy or Consulate compounds. There were no

injuries or serious damage, but the White House, [in a statement](#), called them "life-threatening attacks" against its diplomatic missions.

"Iran did not act to stop these attacks by its proxies in Iraq, which it has supported with funding, training and weapons," the White House said.

Basra hosts one of three U.S. diplomatic missions in Iraq. It is the country's oil capital and main port but has been battered by successive wars and neglect for decades. After the U.S. invasion in 2003, Basra fell under militia control and as a result, there was rampant corruption.

Hundreds of anti-government protests have descended on the city since the beginning of July.

Arraf [reported](#) that protesters are demanding much needed government services, and a water crisis has pushed them to the edge.

Nasser Jabar, one of the protesters, told Arraf, "We are tired of their killing. We are tired of their corruption. All the parties in the government now — they are corrupted, all of them."

"We want to change them," he added.

[Earlier this month](#), protesters turned their rage on neighboring Iran, blaming its outsize influence on Iraq's political affairs for their misery. They stormed the Iranian Consulate and set it on fire, causing significant damage.

Pompeo [tweeted](#) Tuesday that militias supported by Iran had launched the attacks, warning, "We'll hold Iran's regime accountable for any attack on our personnel or facilities, and respond swiftly and decisively in defense of American lives."

"I have made clear that Iran should understand that the United States will respond promptly and appropriately to any such attacks," Pompeo added in the statement.

The decision comes at a particularly fraught time as tensions between Washington and Tehran have escalated during the Trump presidency.

In a speech addressing the United Nations General Assembly earlier this week, President Trump hammered Iran over its support for terrorism and aggression against U.S. allies in the Middle East.

"Iran's leaders sow chaos, death and destruction," Trump said.

"They do not respect their neighbors or borders, or the sovereign rights of nations. Instead, Iran's leaders plunder the nation's resources to enrich themselves and to spread mayhem across the Middle East and far beyond."

More Than 800 Confirmed Killed After Tsunami And Earthquake In Indonesia

By Noor Wazwaz

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · Updated at 5:49 a.m. ET
Sunday

The number of people confirmed killed after a tsunami and earthquake in Indonesia rose dramatically to 832 on Sunday, Indonesian authorities said.

Officials warned that the number of people killed could even reach into the thousands as rescuers reach more affected areas.

A 7.5 magnitude earthquake triggered an unexpected tsunami in the Indonesian island of Sulawesi Friday, leaving hospitals and rescuers struggling to respond.

Most of the confirmed deaths are from the city of Palu. But rescuers worry that they could find more victims of the disaster in the Donggala region, which is closer to the epicenter of the earthquake.

Indonesian disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said earlier that bodies of some victims were found trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings, adding that hundreds more were injured and many were missing, according to Reuters.

Authorities said that "tens to hundreds" of people were

by the ocean in the hard-hit city Palu for a beach festival when the tsunami struck on Friday just after [5:02 PM Western Indonesian Time](#).

"The tsunami didn't come by itself, it dragged cars, logs, houses, it hit everything on land," Nugroho told reporters.

Nugroho [tweeted](#) that Indonesia's military has been mobilized to assist search and rescue teams.

Yenni Suryani, Catholic Relief Services' country manager in Indonesia, said that this number "doesn't yet account for anyone who might have been swept to sea by the tsunami."

"I'm worried about people who might have been washed away," she added.

Nugrogo [tweeted](#) photos of local hospitals that are overflowing with the injured. Many people are being treated in makeshift medical tents set up out on the streets.

Multiple attempts have been made to reach out to Palu's main hospital, but it appears that its telephone lines may be disconnected.

Dramatic videos show rising waves smashing into buildings and people running away in fear.

Other footage has shown the aftermath: destroyed buildings and body bags lying in the street.

Several mosques, a shopping mall and many houses have collapsed, according to the CRS. The impact is significant, but the scope of the destruction is unclear because communications are down and emergency teams have not reached all affected areas.

Palu's airport also suffered damages, its runway badly cracked from the quake.

The Jakarta Post [reported](#) that one of the air traffic controllers, Anthonius Gunawan Agung, 21, died after he jumped off the traffic control tower when the earthquake hit the area.

His colleagues had evacuated the tower when they felt the trembling, but he stayed behind to ensure that an airplane safely took off, Air Nav Indonesia, the agency that oversees aircraft navigation, said in a statement.

Nugroho said that the casualties and the damage could be greater along the coastline 190 miles north of Palu in Donggala.

Communications "were totally crippled with no information" from Donggala, he added. More than 600,000 people live in Donggala and Palu.

NPR's Anthony Kuhn tells our Newscast unit that this is the most serious quake to hit Indonesia since August, when a series of tremors killed hundreds on Lombok Island.

Foreign Aid In The Trump Era

By Michele Kelemen

Weekend Edition Saturday, · President Trump used his speech at the U.N. Tuesday to threaten aid to countries not backing U.S. policies. The new tactic has aid groups concerned about humanitarian needs.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

President Trump wants to cut aid to countries that don't support U.S. policies. He made that clear again in his speech this week at the United Nations. The administration's already cutting aid to Palestinians to try to pressure them into negotiations with Israel. It's a big change from the previous administration, and groups working to address crises and alleviate poverty are worried. NPR's Michele Kelemen reports.

MICHELE KELEMEN, BYLINE: The International Committee for the Red Cross (ph) prides itself in its neutrality. Its president, Peter Maurer, made that clear in his talks on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

PETER MAURER: As a humanitarian organization, it is important that we are able to address needs of people,

and not either political or religious or any other preferences or allegiances with the one or the other donor country.

KELEMEN: At the U.N. Tuesday, President Trump said he's reviewing all aid to make sure it only goes to countries that agree with the U.S.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We are only going to give foreign aid to those who respect us and, frankly, are our friends.

KELEMEN: That speech and Trump's denunciation of globalism sparked a lot of concern among diplomats, though Maurer doesn't think the international system is falling apart over that.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

MAURER: I'm concerned about an overall atmosphere in many countries, which boils down to my way is the only way, to the extent that this reflects in many parts of the world an unwillingness to move together and to address some global issues together. That's of concern.

KELEMEN: There are many trouble spots that need a global response, including Syria, Yemen and Myanmar. The ICRC president is even more worried about what he calls forgotten conflicts in Africa. So I asked the new U.S. assistant secretary of state for Africa, Tibor Nagy, about

the possibility of U.S. aid cuts there. He says politics have never played a role in humanitarian aid and remembers well serving at the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia in the 1980s.

TIBOR NAGY: And Ethiopia, at that time, was a Marxist dictatorship. And when the famine hit, you know, President Reagan at the time says, a child knows no politics. A starving child absolutely does not know politics.

KELEMEN: That was Reagan. What about Trump?

NAGY: I am sure all U.S. presidents act in a manner of interest to humanitarian concerns.

KELEMEN: Nagy wouldn't say if the U.S. would cut any sort of assistance to countries that vote against U.S. interests in the U.N., as some Trump administration officials have suggested, nor would he comment on a Washington Post report that one official wants to cut aid to countries that have strong financial ties to China. That would mean many in Africa. Nagy says Africans want U.S. investment more than aid.

NAGY: What the African states are going to need more than anything else - and a number of the people I've had meetings with this week have just reinforced it - is going to be jobs, jobs, jobs - opportunities for all of these millions of young people.

KELEMEN: And after a week of meetings at the U.N., the assistant secretary of state said African leaders want to

work with the U.S. on that, even if President Trump is denouncing what he called the ideology of globalism. Michele Kelemen, NPR News, New York.

(SOUNDBITE OF JAZZ DIALOGUE AND PHILANTHROPE'S "KOPFSALAT")

What NAFTA Without Canada Would Mean

Weekend Edition Saturday, · NPR's Scott Simon asks Bruce Heyman, former U.S. ambassador to Canada, how a NAFTA replacement that excludes Canada would affect U.S.-Canada relations.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The North American Free Trade Agreement's governed how Canada, Mexico and the U.S. do business with each other since 1994 until now. Mexico and the U.S. struck a deal last month, but Canada and the U.S. have not been able to agree. There is a deadline tomorrow imposed by the Trump administration to renegotiate it. President Trump is threatening to push ahead with an agreement that excludes Canada - to say the least, a longtime U.S. ally and closest trading partner.

Bruce Heyman is a former U.S. ambassador to Canada. Mr. Ambassador, thanks so much for being with us.

BRUCE HEYMAN: Good morning, Scott.

SIMON: We expected the administration to publish a draft agreement last night. That didn't happen, and reports are because Mexico is pushing to include Canada. How do you read events now?

HEYMAN: Well, I think we're in a very intense period. The deadline in our lives - a deadline really forces outcomes. And in this particular case, the Canadians are really scrambling to try to become a part of the deal that the U.S. has already struck with Mexico. You know, the prime minister's been on the phone, not only with the president-elect of Mexico over the last few days, but also called all of his leading bankers in most of the financial institutions in Canada, and his negotiating team are on the hotline with - from Ottawa to Washington, having intense negotiations to try to finalize what they would characterize as a win-win-win deal for Canada, for Mexico and the United States.

SIMON: What does Canada want that, so far, the U.S. hasn't agreed to?

HEYMAN: So there are a couple of things. First of all, between the two countries, if we have a dispute and we disagree in a way something's handled in trade, the Canadians have appreciated a provision that exists in the existing NAFTA, which causes an independent body to resolve those disputes. The U.S. wants to get rid of that. It's called Chapter 19. It's a chapter within existing NAFTA. But the Canadians would really like to see this independent body. And they almost didn't participate in the first NAFTA agreement without it.

The second thing they want is that the U.S. has imposed steel and aluminum tariffs and are now threatening automobile tariffs on the basis of national security. And

the Canadians are saying, hey, if we enter into this deal, I want assurances that you're not going to go ahead next week and begin imposing other duties on the basis of national security, which make no sense with the U.S.-Canada relationship. And the Canadians have been very upset about that.

SIMON: Well, in the minute and half we have left, it could be particularly important in the automotive sector - couldn't it? - because a lot of what we consider to be U.S.-made cars, in fact, are made, or at least partially, made in Canada, aren't they?

HEYMAN: Yeah. In fact, if a car is assembled in Canada and shipped to the United States, Americans should realize that about 50 percent of the content of that car is American-made. A carburetor could cross the border up to eight times during the manufacturing process. We have a completely integrated manufacturing process in the automobile industry.

And here, we have something very amazing. We have the labor unions - the head of the AFL-CIO; the industry - head of the automobile manufacturers - each of them; and we have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, all coming together and agreeing that auto tariffs would be bad for not only Canada, but also U.S. jobs. And it would be bad for the U.S.-Canada relationship overall. And so I think that there are a lot of people that do not want to see us go down that road. And it would be very detrimental economically.

SIMON: So one last yes or no question - do you see an agreement?

HEYMAN: I'm the eternal optimist. You know, President Obama said once to me he's a congenital optimist, so I'll go with that.

SIMON: OK.

HEYMAN: It's too important. The U.S.-Canada relationship's just too important.

SIMON: Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, thanks so much.

HEYMAN: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Iraq's Kurdistan Region Heads To The Polls To Elect New Parliament

By Jane Arraf

All Things Considered, · The United States' closest allies in Iraq, the Kurds, vote for their regional parliament on Sunday, as the old leadership shifts to a new generation with new issues.

Transcript

MARY LOUISE KELLY, HOST:

Perhaps the closest allies the U.S. has in Iraq are the Kurds. And Iraq's Kurdistan region votes Sunday to elect a new parliament. This is the first parliamentary election since the Kurds helped defeat ISIS and since they voted for independence, which they still don't have. NPR's Jane Arraf reports there's a focus on a new generation of Kurdish leaders.

(APPLAUSE)

JANE ARRAF, BYLINE: At this stadium in the Kurdish capital Erbil this week, thousands of people cheered for a man who isn't even running for office.

MASOUD BARZANI: (Speaking Kurdish).

ARRAF: Masoud Barzani is 72 and one of the founders

of modern Kurdistan. He stepped down as president last year in the backlash after a referendum for independence. The U.S. worried the vote could destabilize Iraq, but the Kurds overwhelmingly voted yes. In response, the Iraqi government sent tanks to take back territory. Kurds still see the vote as a defining moment.

I stood in this same stadium a year ago exactly when then-President Barzani urged his supporters here to vote yes in the referendum for separatism. There was a feeling of euphoria here that's certainly absent now, but his supporters are still determined.

(APPLAUSE)

ARRAF: Masoud Barzani's tribe has controlled this part of Kurdistan for years. His nephew's the region's prime minister. His sons hold senior security positions.

(APPLAUSE)

ARRAF: Over in Kurdistan's second biggest city of Sulaymaniyah, it's much less tribal but still largely controlled by a single family. And that's part of why for the first time new opposition parties have sprung up. This is a rally for one of them called New Generation. It's run by a charismatic businessman Shaswar Abdulwahid. Abdulwahid opposed holding the independence referendum, saying it wasn't the right time. He tells his supporters it is time to end the reign of the Barzanis and the Talibanis, the other political dynasty, and their stranglehold on the economy.

SHASWAR ABDULWAHID: (Through interpreter) Do not trust the lies and the stories of the past. There is no place for family rule in Kurdistan.

ARRAF: At a park near the city, Qubad Talabani, the Kurdish region's deputy prime minister, is attending a youth event as he campaigns for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the PUK.

(SOUNDBITE OF GLASS BREAKING)

ARRAF: Teenagers dressed as ninjas perform martial arts. Dressed in black with their faces covered, they're fighting with wooden sticks and fluorescent light tubes. Talabani, who's 41, is the son of the late Iraqi president Jalal Talabani, another founding father of modern Kurdistan. He acknowledges his father was a towering figure in Iraqi politics but says voters now aren't as interested in the past.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER QUBAD TALABANI: The historical struggle, the fight against Saddam, the revolution, all the great history of the PUK, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan - I think that story does not resonate well with the youth of today. The youth of today want jobs. They want services. They want to know what their future is going to be like.

ARRAF: But there's no escaping the past. Outside the PUK's final campaign rally on Thursday, Amanj Ibrahim is selling carpets with Jalal Talabani's face on them. He reveres the man known as Mam Jalal.

AMANJ IBRAHIM: (Speaking Kurdish).

ARRAF: "He was the person who introduced the Kurds to the world," he says. And his eyes tear up. "After God and the prophet, Mam Jalal," he says, "he was my everything." Politics here in Kurdistan is still very personal. Jane Arraf, NPR News, Sulaymaniyah in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Latest Collateral Damage In U.S.-Russia Spat: An Anglo-American School Is Shut

By Lucian Kim

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · This week 140 schoolchildren in St. Petersburg, Russia, became the latest victims of the chill in U.S.-Russian relations, when they were forced out of their school in a matter of days.

On Thursday the Anglo-American School in St. Petersburg, founded during the Cold War, posted [a statement on its website](#), saying, "It is with great disappointment that we have to say good-bye." Just a week earlier, city authorities had informed the school that their building was to be vacated by midnight Wednesday.

One parent described the school as "an entire universe" and "the heart of the expat community," but parents would not speak on the record, saying that it could scuttle their negotiation efforts to reopen the school.

The U.S. and British consulates in St. Petersburg were [closed earlier this year](#) in a diplomatic spat that escalated following the poisoning of an ex-Russian spy in England, which Western countries blamed on Russia. Canada closed its consulate in the city in 2007.

With those consulates gone, the Anglo-American School began to look for a new sponsoring organization to take

over its lease and other legal obligations. Teachers and parents believed the school had until June 2019.

But on Sept. 20, the city of St. Petersburg's [diplomatic properties agency](#) informed the school it had to close within less than a week. The next day, a Friday, administrators emailed parents that their children would have to collect their belongings the following Monday — and that school was out for good.

The St. Petersburg school was an offshoot of the [Anglo-American School of Moscow](#) and founded by the U.S., Britain and Canada in 1975, when Russia's old imperial capital was called Leningrad.

The school originally catered largely to the children of diplomats from those three English-speaking countries. But the school later attracted a diverse student body from two dozen countries, whose parents worked for other diplomatic missions and foreign companies. The largest contingent of pupils came from South Korea, followed by Russia. It taught [pre-K to 12th grade](#).

"It is a regrettable decision by the Russian authorities which will damage the education of the children at the school and make St. Petersburg less attractive as a place to do business," Britain's Foreign Office said in an email to NPR.

The Russian authorities insist they had no alternative but to close the school, which, because it was located in a building outside the premises of the U.S. Consulate,

required special permission from the Russian Foreign Ministry.

"Over the course of many years, we suggested that the American side resolve the status of the school in accordance with Russian legislation," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement to NPR. That demand was clearly stated in a diplomatic note sent on Sept. 8, 2017, the ministry said.

A week earlier, on Aug. 31, 2017, the U.S. had ordered the Russian Consulate in San Francisco closed amid a diplomatic tit-for-tat between the two countries. When the Trump administration then also shut down the Russian Consulate in Seattle in March, the Kremlin responded by ending the U.S. diplomatic presence in St. Petersburg.

The school can have no claim to "some kind of special, quasi-diplomatic status" now that the U.S. Consulate is gone, said the Foreign Ministry, blaming its "American partners" for not settling the school's status before its lease expired.

The State Department did not respond to a request for comment.

Over the summer, the Russian Foreign Ministry required about half of the Anglo-American School's 30 teachers to leave the city, as they held U.S. diplomatic passports. The school scrambled to stay open, partially by promoting local teaching assistants. [Brookes Education Group](#),

which runs a network of international schools, was identified as a possible new parent organization.

While local authorities in St. Petersburg gave school administrators the impression they could remain in the leased building until a deal with Brookes was finalized, the Foreign Ministry continued to insist on its closure, especially after the State Department announced [new economic sanctions](#) against Russia in August.

For now, although classes are no longer in session, furniture and equipment remain in the building as parents seek to reopen it.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Russia, a U.S. business lobbying group, [has criticized the Foreign Ministry's decision](#) to close the school.

The business group says it's working with authorities in St. Petersburg to allow students to resume their studies.

'Rafiki': The Lesbian Love Story That Kenya Banned And Then Unbanned

By Eyder Peralta

Weekend Edition Saturday, · Even in the middle of the day, in middle of the week, the theater was completely packed.

Hundreds had come to watch *Rafiki*, a movie about two young Kenyan women who are full of life, joy and wonder. Kena is a great student; she plays football and hangs out with the guys. And Ziki is the free spirit — cotton candy dreads and a smile full of mischief.

At one point, inside an abandoned van, the two realize they've fallen for each other. They touch, they look in each others' eyes. At the theater, you could almost hear the audience holding its breath — and as their lips touched, there was applause.

Over the past week, there has been a small revolution happening across movie screens in Kenya. For the first time, a same-sex love story is playing on the big screen, sparking conversations about freedom of expression, the constitution and finally feeling heard.

After the movie, the theater lobby is buzzing. Alex Teyie, 25, is sitting with a group of friends, discussing what just happened.

"It's like, a queer movie in Nairobi in 2018," she says.

"That's just fantastic to see."

Rafiki is a milestone here, where gay sex is illegal. A few years ago, the film [*Stories of Our Lives*](#), which profiles several LGBT Kenyans, was banned. It was so controversial that some of the filmmakers feared retaliation and legal consequences. So for a long time, they remained anonymous.

The Kenya Film Classification Board used many of the same arguments to ban *Rafiki*. [In a letter](#) banning the film, Ezekiel Mutua, [the outspoken and controversial head of the KFCB](#), said the film "undermined the sensibilities" of Kenyans.

"*Rafiki* contains homosexual scenes that are against the law, the culture and moral values of the Kenyan people," Mutua [said in a statement in April](#). "The film seeks to overtly promote lesbianism."

The film's director, Wanuri Kahiu, sued the KFCB saying the ban was not only an affront to her constitutional rights but would also keep the movie from being considered for the Oscars. One of the requirements for a nomination is that a movie is screened at least seven days in its home country. While deciding on the merits of the case, Kenya's high court issued a temporary injunction, allowing *Rafiki* to be screened for seven days, from September 23 to 29.

Teyie's friend, Valary Mumbo, says the ruling is bittersweet. She wishes the film were playing for months

so Kenyans in other cities and villages could watch it. But she can't help but feel glee that two theaters were jam-packed on a weekday.

"It's really good to see that Kenyans are waking up," she says. "Yeah, they're good. They are woke."

Over the phone from Los Angeles, Kahiua says they had "won the battle, but we have to continue with the war." *Rafiki* was the first Kenyan movie to screen at the Cannes Film Festival in France and she says she was heartbroken when it was banned at home.

"The case has become larger than the film, because the case is not about *Rafiki*," she says. "The case is about freedom of expression."

In a lot of ways, this is just one instance in which Kenya is coming to terms with one of the most liberal constitutions on the African continent. Courts are currently weighing cases about separation of powers; they are hearing challenges to the country's anti-sodomy laws. And here, the court is going to decide whether Kahiua has the right to tell a love story that challenges some of the country's conservative moorings.

In a statement, the film classification board called the temporary halt on its ban "a sad moment and a great insult."

Kahiua says she is simply a filmmaker who wants to tell a love story with authentic characters. She says she just

wanted to show the beauty and heartbreak that ensues when two black LGBT characters follow their heart.

"That was the point, that it doesn't matter who you are, love is love and that is an absolute universal, basic language," she says.

Pope Francis Defrocks Priest Fernando Karadima, A Notorious Abuser In Chile

By Bill Chappell

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · Pope Francis has defrocked notorious Chilean priest Fernando Karadima, making what the Vatican calls an "exceptional" decision based on his own conscience and concern for the good of the Catholic Church. Karadima has been the face of the church's sexual abuse scandal in Chile.

The move is effective immediately. It was announced in [a brief communique from the Vatican's press office](#), stating that Francis had signed the decree removing Karadima from the priesthood on Thursday and that Karadima was informed of the pope's decision on Friday.

Karadima, 88, had already been forced to retire from ministerial duties, after a Vatican tribunal found him guilty in 2011 of sexually abusing dozens of minors, in a scandal that erupted in 2010.

"Karadima escaped civilian justice but was sentenced by the church to a lifetime of penance and prayer," NPR's Sylvia Poggioli tells our Newscast unit. "That sanction has long been criticized by victims as too lenient. For a priest, being defrocked is the stiffest penalty short of excommunication from the Catholic Church."

In June, the pope accepted the resignation of three

Chilean bishops over the church's handling of the sexual abuse cases — including Bishop Juan Barros of Osorno, who was a protégé of Karadima.

Barros has been accused of covering up Karadima's abuse in cases that date back to the 1980s. Both of them have denied the allegations against them.

Francis has faced intense criticism over his handling of the abuse scandal in Chile, particularly after he appointed Barros as a bishop in 2015 — a move that enraged thousands of Catholics.

Abuse victims in Chile were also angered in January when the pope dismissed allegations against Barros as "[calumny](#)," saying he had never seen proof against the bishop. The outrage that followed seemed to persuade Francis to send a new investigative team to Chile — and soon afterward, he [admitted he had made mistakes](#) and had been given incomplete information.

The process of defrocking a priest is so unique that the Vatican has used a number of phrases to describe it. An initial bulletin said that Francis had in effect "resigned" Karadima from the clerical ranks. The Vatican's news service later put out a report saying the pope had "laicized" the priest — implying he has now been returned to the status of a layperson.

Liz Ogbu: Can We Gentrify Neighborhoods While Allowing Longtime Residents To Stay?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 1 of the TED Radio Hour episode [Building Humane Cities](#).*

About Liz Ogbu's TED Talk

Architect Liz Ogbu has seen the pain gentrification creates for displaced communities. She wonders how we can create ways for longtime residents to stay and reap the benefits of gentrification.

About Liz Ogbu

[Liz Ogbu](#) is an architect who works in underprivileged urban spaces around the world. Her design firm, Studio O, partners with local communities to create a positive social impact through design. For one of her projects, Ogbu worked with a community battling gentrification in Bayview-Hunter's Point, San Francisco. She partnered with StoryCorps to set up a listening booth where community members could have their stories recorded for posterity.

Ogbu has taught design courses at California College of the Arts, UC Berkeley, and Stanford University.

Ogbu has won many honors for her work, including the 2009 Holcim Global Innovation Prize. She is an Aspen Ideas Scholar and a member of Public Interest Design's Top 100.

Business

Elon Musk Settles With SEC, Agrees To Step Down As Tesla Chairman

By Emma Bowman

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · Updated at 1:02 a.m. ET
Sunday

Elon Musk, Tesla's chief executive, has reached a deal with the Securities and Exchange Commission to settle a securities fraud charge brought against him on Thursday, the agency announced on Saturday.

Under the terms of the settlement, Musk has agreed to step down as chairman of the Silicon Valley-based company, but will remain in his post as CEO.

Tesla and Musk will each pay a separate fine of \$20 million, the SEC said in [a press release](#), and Musk will resign as chairman within 45 days. After that, he'll be ineligible to be re-elected chairman for three years.

The resolution comes two days after the SEC sued Musk in federal court for fraud, alleging that he misled investors when he announced on Twitter last month that he had "funding secured" to take the electric-car company private at \$420 a share. Musk later admitted that the share price — a nod to marijuana culture — was a calculated stunt meant to amuse his girlfriend, the musician Grimes.

As NPR's [Vanessa Romo reported on Thursday](#):

The court documents note the calculation resulted in a price of \$419, but that Musk later admitted he had added the extra dollar — \$420 — “because he had recently learned about the number’s significance in marijuana culture and thought his girlfriend ‘would find it funny, which admittedly is not a great reason to pick a price.’ ”

The SEC says that Musk and Tesla agreed to the deal without admitting or denying the allegations brought against them.

The day after the SEC filed its lawsuit, Tesla’s stock sank 14 percent, dissolving more than \$7 billion in shareholder returns. Since the Aug. 7 tweet, Tesla’s stock has fallen 30 percent, closing Friday at \$264.77, according to The Associated Press.

What NAFTA Without Canada Would Mean

Weekend Edition Saturday, · NPR's Scott Simon asks Bruce Heyman, former U.S. ambassador to Canada, how a NAFTA replacement that excludes Canada would affect U.S.-Canada relations.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The North American Free Trade Agreement's governed how Canada, Mexico and the U.S. do business with each other since 1994 until now. Mexico and the U.S. struck a deal last month, but Canada and the U.S. have not been able to agree. There is a deadline tomorrow imposed by the Trump administration to renegotiate it. President Trump is threatening to push ahead with an agreement that excludes Canada - to say the least, a longtime U.S. ally and closest trading partner.

Bruce Heyman is a former U.S. ambassador to Canada. Mr. Ambassador, thanks so much for being with us.

BRUCE HEYMAN: Good morning, Scott.

SIMON: We expected the administration to publish a draft agreement last night. That didn't happen, and reports are because Mexico is pushing to include Canada. How do you read events now?

HEYMAN: Well, I think we're in a very intense period. The deadline in our lives - a deadline really forces outcomes. And in this particular case, the Canadians are really scrambling to try to become a part of the deal that the U.S. has already struck with Mexico. You know, the prime minister's been on the phone, not only with the president-elect of Mexico over the last few days, but also called all of his leading bankers in most of the financial institutions in Canada, and his negotiating team are on the hotline with - from Ottawa to Washington, having intense negotiations to try to finalize what they would characterize as a win-win-win deal for Canada, for Mexico and the United States.

SIMON: What does Canada want that, so far, the U.S. hasn't agreed to?

HEYMAN: So there are a couple of things. First of all, between the two countries, if we have a dispute and we disagree in a way something's handled in trade, the Canadians have appreciated a provision that exists in the existing NAFTA, which causes an independent body to resolve those disputes. The U.S. wants to get rid of that. It's called Chapter 19. It's a chapter within existing NAFTA. But the Canadians would really like to see this independent body. And they almost didn't participate in the first NAFTA agreement without it.

The second thing they want is that the U.S. has imposed steel and aluminum tariffs and are now threatening automobile tariffs on the basis of national security. And

the Canadians are saying, hey, if we enter into this deal, I want assurances that you're not going to go ahead next week and begin imposing other duties on the basis of national security, which make no sense with the U.S.-Canada relationship. And the Canadians have been very upset about that.

SIMON: Well, in the minute and half we have left, it could be particularly important in the automotive sector - couldn't it? - because a lot of what we consider to be U.S.-made cars, in fact, are made, or at least partially, made in Canada, aren't they?

HEYMAN: Yeah. In fact, if a car is assembled in Canada and shipped to the United States, Americans should realize that about 50 percent of the content of that car is American-made. A carburetor could cross the border up to eight times during the manufacturing process. We have a completely integrated manufacturing process in the automobile industry.

And here, we have something very amazing. We have the labor unions - the head of the AFL-CIO; the industry - head of the automobile manufacturers - each of them; and we have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, all coming together and agreeing that auto tariffs would be bad for not only Canada, but also U.S. jobs. And it would be bad for the U.S.-Canada relationship overall. And so I think that there are a lot of people that do not want to see us go down that road. And it would be very detrimental economically.

SIMON: So one last yes or no question - do you see an agreement?

HEYMAN: I'm the eternal optimist. You know, President Obama said once to me he's a congenital optimist, so I'll go with that.

SIMON: OK.

HEYMAN: It's too important. The U.S.-Canada relationship's just too important.

SIMON: Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, thanks so much.

HEYMAN: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Facebook Says Hackers Accessed Information Of 50 Million Users In Latest Data Breach

By Alina Selyukh

All Things Considered, · Facebook announced a new data breach on Friday. Hackers accessed the information of 50 million Facebook users, as Facebook remains under pressure for misuse of users' personal data.

Transcript

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

We learned today that Facebook has had a new security breach, and the company says it affects almost 50 million accounts. As a precaution, Facebook is logging off those accounts and about 40 million more. The company says no passwords were stolen, but NPR's Alina Selyukh reports the full scope of the attack is unclear.

ALINA SELYUKH, BYLINE: Facebook says hackers exploited three separate security gaps to gain access to the code that allowed them to take over millions of user accounts. The security gaps came together in the feature called View As which allows users to see how their profile page looks to someone else. The hackers were able to get what's called access tokens. These are digital keys that, for example, let you stay logged in on the

Facebook app without having to re-enter your password. The most important thing that we don't know is to what extent the hackers actually used their access to the accounts. Here's Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

MARK ZUCKERBERG: The investigation is still very early. So we do not yet know if any of the accounts were actually misused.

SELYUKH: Zuckerberg said so far, the company has not found evidence that hackers had access to any private messages or posted to any accounts, though he added that this could change as the investigation continues. Here's Guy Rosen, Facebook's executive who oversees safety and security.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

GUY ROSEN: We haven't yet been able to determine if there's specific targeting. It does seem broad. And we don't yet know who is behind these attacks or where they might be based.

SELYUKH: Zuckerberg pointed out several times how quickly his team acted given frequent accusations that Facebook moved too slowly on the Cambridge Analytica security scandal. Facebook says with this data breach, engineers discovered it on Tuesday, notified the FBI on Wednesday, made fixes on Thursday and notified the public today.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: It definitely is an issue that this happened in the first place.

SELYUKH: On the call, reporters posed one question to Zuckerberg several times in different ways. Why should people keep trusting Facebook? Zuckerberg seemed to search for an answer before resorting to one of his regular phrases.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: Security is a bit of - it's an arms race.

SELYUKH: He said the breach underscored how constant the hack attacks are and, without addressing the trust issue directly, said Facebook's security teams were working very hard.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: This is going to be an ongoing effort. And we're going to need to keep on focusing on this over time.

SELYUKH: The same can be said about Facebook's ongoing challenge of convincing federal and state officials that it's not too big to secure the personal data of millions and millions of users. Alina Selyukh, NPR News.

Airport Workers In New York, New Jersey To Receive Minimum Of \$19 Per Hour

By Sasha Ingber

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · It's being called the highest minimum wage in the country. Thousands of airport workers in New York and New Jersey — baggage handlers, cabin cleaners, people at concession stands — will see their hourly pay rise to \$19 by 2023, after the Port Authority Board of Commissioners voted unanimously on Thursday to require businesses to increase the minimum wage.

"We believe this substantially improved minimum wage for airport workers will greatly reduce turnover, improve morale and develop better trained workers as critical contributors to airport operations and security in this post 9/11 world," Port Authority Executive Director Rick Cotton said in a [statement](#).

The Port Authority manages some of the country's most bustling airports. Its decision follows nearly 800 messages written to the board by workers, businesses, academics and elected officials — and years in which airport workers marched, held strikes "and even got arrested on Martin Luther King Day," a major union representing workers [wrote](#).

Under the new policy, changes begin Nov. 1. Hourly earnings of \$10.45 for workers at Newark Liberty

International Airport are scheduled to increase to \$12.45.

Workers at JFK International and LaGuardia airports in New York, who currently earn a minimum wage of \$13 per hour, will see a bump of 60 cents in November before the state's minimum wage becomes [\\$15 in January](#). Wages for workers at the three airports will continue to increase in stages over a five-year period.

"This historic victory will give thousands of airport workers a fair living wage for decent work," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo [said](#). "It is the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do."

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy [said](#), "With today's vote, the agency has made it clear that they've heard the voices of approximately 40,000 workers who will be impacted by increased wages on both sides of the Hudson." He said that all of New Jersey's workers should earn a living wage.

Michael Saltsman, managing director at [Employment Policies Institute](#), tells NPR that "it's deeply concerning" that authorities think a \$15 minimum wage in New York that goes into effect Jan. 1 "is not enough." He thinks decisions for increases are coming too quickly, "without taking a rest stop to say, 'What are the consequences of \$15?'"

Saltsman says that if businesses at the airport can't offset their higher costs with higher prices for consumers, then workers could see their hours cut or jobs eliminated.

"The trend, as cost rises, is heading toward fewer employees and more automation," he says. "They feel like conveniences but they were actually part of someone's job description."

On the first day of 2018, [18 states](#) saw minimum wage increases — from 4 cents in Alaska to a dollar in Maine.

Sylvia Wallingford, a business owner in Maine, [told NPR's Joel Rose](#), "I hired fewer people because I can't — you can't afford to promise everybody a certain number of hours regardless of whether we're busy or not."

An "[Analysis and Justification](#)" report by the Port Authority found the increased minimum wage was unlikely to be offset by higher unemployment. Instead, it found evidence that businesses developed "channels of adjustment" to maintain stable levels of employment.

The agency also said there has been a turnover of more than 30 percent of privately employed airport workers every year, according to the statement. The high turnover limits their ability "to play a critical security role," the Port Authority said.

One employer, United Airlines, wouldn't comment on whether it plans to oppose the wage increases in court, [according to WNYC](#).

Yasmeen Holmes, who has worked at Newark's airport for 16 years, spoke to WNYC about the wage increase. "I figured it would never happen. Maybe now I won't have

to do so much overtime, and I can stay home with my kids.”

The Case Of The Pricey Frito

By Stacey Vanek Smith and Cardiff Garcia

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · NPR White House correspondent Scott Horsley asked us to solve a mystery for him: He's been reporting on corn prices, which have been falling lately, but when he went to get a snack from the vending machine in the press corps break room in the White House, he discovered the price of a bag of Fritos had risen 20% (a quarter!) Today on the Indicator, the case of the pricey Frito! A tale of transportation costs, tariff penalties, and our deep love of salty snacks.

Archival tape from [Suspense](#)

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SEC Lawsuit Seeks To Remove Elon Musk As Tesla CEO Or Officer In Any Public Company

All Things Considered, · NPR's Audie Cornish talks with Bloomberg reporter Max Chafin about the Securities and Exchange Commission's lawsuit against Elon Musk announced on Thursday.

Transcript

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

Elon Musk, the co-founder and CEO of the electric car company Tesla, is brash, outspoken and seen by many as a quirky genius. Those who worry about the quirky part had new evidence recently when Musk smoked marijuana legally in California on a live Internet podcast with comedian Joe Rogan.

(SOUNDBITE OF PODCAST, "THE JOE ROGAN EXPERIENCE")

ELON MUSK: So is that a joint, or is it a cigar?

JOE ROGAN: No.

MUSK: OK.

ROGAN: It's marijuana...

MUSK: It's weed.

ROGAN: ...Inside of tobacco. You never had that?

MUSK: Yeah, I think I tried one once.

ROGAN: Come on, man.

MUSK: I mean, it's legal, right?

CORNISH: Now Musk's other public actions have landed him in trouble. The Securities and Exchange Commission is accusing him of securities fraud. This relates to a claim Musk made on Twitter about securing funding to take Tesla private. The SEC's lawsuit seeks to remove Musk as CEO or an officer of Tesla and to ban him as well from holding such posts at any public company. And that has implications for many people beyond Elon Musk. Reporter Max Chafkin of Bloomberg News told me about the SEC's allegations and why they're serious.

MAX CHAFKIN: Elon Musk in August surprised everyone with this tweet that he was going to buy the company for \$420 per share. Now, that was kind of weird for a bunch of different reasons. Probably the biggest one is that it would have made this the biggest buyout in corporate history. And it was also weird because it was sort of immediately apparent that he hadn't really thought through it. The SEC takes a more sober view of sudden market-moving news.

CORNISH: Why does the SEC care?

CHAFKIN: Elon Musk said that funding was secured for this proposed buyout offer. And as far as the SEC is concerned, if you say that, you actually have to have the money to buy the company. And if you read the SEC's complaint, it looks like very clearly that he didn't and almost as if he - making up as he went along.

CORNISH: Is Elon Musk fighting this lawsuit? I know the company board is behind him.

CHAFKIN: Yeah, he's absolutely fighting. They - he released a statement saying that he was disappointed, he didn't feel like he acted in bad faith. And you can expect that the defense is going to be that he was on Twitter. He wasn't saying this in the most official capacity possible. He was just sort of tweeting what he thought and that people shouldn't have taken this as seriously. But the thing is the investors did. The stock went way up. And now the SEC is unsurprisingly looking into this.

CORNISH: Is this a dilemma for the SEC? I mean, they're saying they want him banned from running any kind of public company - I mean, not just running it, being an officer on any kind of company. What are they trying to accomplish here?

CHAFKIN: This is sort of a standard thing that the SEC will threaten in cases like this. What makes it a bit unusual is that it's unclear that removing Elon Musk from Tesla would leave much left of it. He is sort of the

singular force who is seen as the guy who has made this happen. So if you were to take him away from the head of the company...

CORNISH: Right. He's the head engineer, like, the head marketer (laughter).

CHAFKIN: The guy who designed the car. In a way, that is - it's probably more than anywhere else in business - I mean, Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg is probably the place where it comes the closest. So if they get rid of him, you don't know what's left.

CORNISH: He's also, as you said, I mean, basically a titan in the automotive industry. Does this have broader implications going forward?

CHAFKIN: Well, the implications are that there are lots of other car companies who are trying to race to make their own electric cars. They've sort of seen what Elon Musk and Tesla have achieved. They've seen that customers like this. And they're coming out with these things. And we're about to see lots and lots of them over the next couple of years. So they're going to see this as an opportunity. And so it may not halt the progression of electric cars. It might just cause some people to buy different electric cars.

CORNISH: Reporter Max Chafkin - he's been covering this story for Bloomberg News. Thanks so much.

CHAFKIN: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF MTBRD FEAT. FLAMINGOSIS'
"FANFARE")

Drugmakers Play The Patent Game To Lock In Prices, Block Competitors

By Sarah Jane Tribble

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · David Herzberg was alarmed when he heard that Richard Sackler, former chairman of opioid giant Purdue Pharma, was listed as an inventor on a new patent for an opioid addiction treatment.

Patent No. [9861628](#) is for a fast-dissolving wafer containing buprenorphine, a generic drug that has been around [since the 1970s](#). Herzberg, a historian who focuses on the opioid epidemic and the history of prescription drugs, said he fears the patent could keep prices high and make it more difficult for poor addicts to get treatment. "It's hard not to have that reaction of, like ... these vultures," said Herzberg, an associate professor at the University of Buffalo.

James P. Doyle, vice president and general counsel of Rhodes Pharmaceuticals, the Purdue subsidiary that holds the patent, said in an email statement that the company does not have a developed or approved product and "therefore no money has been made from this technology."

He wrote, "the invention behind the buprenorphine patent in question was developed more than a dozen years ago. If a product is developed under this patent, it

will not be commercialized for profit.”

Yet, the patenting of a small change in how an existing drug is made or taken by patients is part of a tried-and-true pharmaceutical industry strategy of enveloping products with a series of protective patents.

Drug companies typically have less than 10 years of exclusive rights once a drug hits the marketplace. They can extend their monopolies by layering in secondary patents, using tactics critics call “evergreening” or “product-hopping.”

Lisa Larrimore Ouellette, a patent law expert at Stanford University, said the pharmaceutical industry gets a greater financial return from its patent strategy than that of any other industry.

AstraZeneca in 2001 famously fended off generic versions of its blockbuster heartburn medicine [Prilosec](#) by patenting a tweaked version of the drug and calling it Nexium. When Abbott Laboratories faced multiple generic lawsuits over its big moneymaker [Tricor](#), a decades-old cholesterol drug, it lowered the dosage and changed it from a tablet to a capsule to win a new patent.

And Forest Laboratories stopped selling its Alzheimer’s disease drug Namenda in 2014 after reformulating and patenting Namenda XR to be taken once a day instead of twice.

Another common strategy is to create what Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb calls "patent thickets," claiming multiple patents for a single drug to build protection from competitors. AbbVie's rheumatoid arthritis drug Humira has gained [more than 100 patents](#), for example.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office awards patents when an innovation meets the minimum threshold of being new and [non-obvious](#). Secondary patents are routinely granted to established drugs when an improvement is made, such as making it a once-a-day pill instead of twice a day, said Kristina Acri, an economist and international intellectual property expert at the Fraser Institute and Colorado College.

"Is there a better way? Maybe, but that's not what we're doing," Acri said.

The controversial patent that Sackler and five co-inventors obtained is widely known as a "continuation patent." (The original patent application for the wafer [was filed](#) in August 2007.)

Continuation patents do not necessarily extend the patent life of a drug, but they can have other uses. In 2016, Rhodes filed a lawsuit against Indivior alleging patent infringement.

Indivior, formerly part of Reckitt Benckiser, sells a film version of the popular addiction treatment drug Suboxone that is placed under the tongue — an oral

medicine similar to what Rhodes has patented. Indivior's comes in a lime flavor.

Indivior's film, which federal regulators approved in 2010, dominates the market with a 54 percent average market share, according to the company's most recent financial report. And the company has [vigorously fought rivals](#), including filing lawsuits against firms such as Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, which sought approval to manufacture generic versions. Indivior declined to comment.

The Rhodes Pharmaceuticals version would be a wafer that melts quickly in the mouth. The inventors list potential flavors including mint, raspberry, licorice, orange and caramel, according to the [patent](#).

For opioid historian Herzberg, the patent battles between companies like Rhodes and Indivior are "absolute madness."

Decisions on what is available on the market to treat addicts should be based on what is the best way to treat the people who have the problem, he said.

Patent battles, Herzberg said, are "not how you want drug policy getting made."

Attempts to change the patent system have intensified over the past decade as prices of prescription drugs [continue to climb](#).

In 2011, President Barack Obama signed the America Invents Act, which included the creation of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board. The PTAB is an alternative to using the cumbersome U.S. court system to challenge weak patents. Generic drug manufacturers have used the board's "inter partes review" process and overturned 43 percent of the patents they challenged, according to [recent research](#).

Critics of the administrative process, including the pharmaceutical industry trade group PhRMA, said it creates "significant business uncertainty for biopharmaceutical companies." Often companies have to defend their products twice — both in the courts as well as before the PTAB, said Nicole Longo, PhRMA's director of public affairs.

Drug giant Allergan [attempted](#) to overcome the PTAB's review process by arguing that the patent couldn't be challenged at the review board because they sold the patent to the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, which had sovereign immunity. A federal appeals court [ruled this summer](#) that Allergan could not shield its patents from the PTAB review this way.

This year, several members of Congress proposed bills that would unwind or limit changes made by the America Invents Act, though nothing is likely to happen before the midterm elections. The STRONGER Patents Act, introduced in both the House and Senate, would weaken the PTAB board by aligning its claims standards

with what has been established by court rulings.

[Kaiser Health News](#) is a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation that is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

KHN's coverage of prescription drug development, costs and pricing is supported in part by the [Laura and John Arnold Foundation](#).

A 'Turning Point' In The Housing Market

By Stacey Vanek Smith and Cardiff Garcia

Morning Edition, · Ever since the end of the financial crisis, rents have been rising all across America. A recent report could signal a turning point in the housing recovery.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

One of the toughest parts of living in a big city is finding an affordable place to live. That might be getting a bit easier. Here's Stacey Vanek Smith and Cardiff Garcia from NPR's economics podcast The Indicator.

STACEY VANEK SMITH, BYLINE: Rents in the U.S. have been on the rise for years until now. According to the real estate database Zillow, the median rent in the U.S. is \$1,440. And that is unchanged from a year ago.

SUSAN WACHTER: This is a big deal.

VANEK SMITH: This is Susan Wachter. She's a professor of real estate and finance at Wharton. She says, yes, New York is extreme, but this story has been playing out all across the country.

WACHTER: This is a big deal because it signals a turning

point. The housing recovery has been a story of supply chasing demand.

CARDIFF GARCIA, BYLINE: And supply was chasing demand in large part because of the housing crisis 10 years ago. For a long time after the crisis, construction was just dead. Other parts of the economy, though, started gradually recovering, you know, like the tech sector and retail industry. And people started wanting to move again and get nicer places, but building and construction just lagged behind.

VANEK SMITH: As a result, there weren't enough apartments to meet demand. And the prices of the rentals that were available just kept going up. The construction industry did eventually kick into gear. And building has been happening like crazy in many parts of the country. Still, there was such a backlog of people wanting apartments - even though new places were being built, there still weren't enough places to meet all of the demand. So rents just kept climbing and climbing.

GARCIA: Until now. The supply of housing seems to finally be catching up with demand.

WACHTER: Or right now if you need to rent, you're going to be renting for less than last year. So that's a good thing. And if you wait a bit, rents are probably going to fall even farther.

GARCIA: This seems to be a window for the little guy. What about everybody else?

VANEK SMITH: For the economy as a whole, good or bad?

WACHTER: Well, I think this is actually good for the economy because we've had a real hit on mobility.

GARCIA: Susan says a lot of people were dealing with unaffordable rents in a few different ways, you know, like they'd split a place with a bunch of people.

VANEK SMITH: Sardine life.

GARCIA: (Laughter) Yeah, or they'd stay with family or with their parents longer or just not taking a job in the places where the jobs were because the apartment rents were so high.

VANEK SMITH: Now that rental prices are flattening, says Susan, it means people will have more options. They can be more mobile.

WACHTER: Mobility to where the new jobs are is what drives the economy. The job market is booming, but it's been difficult to find places in the hot markets particularly.

VANEK SMITH: Susan says a lot of companies have been struggling to find workers to fill all their jobs, which meant that those companies could not grow as fast as they wanted to. Lower rent, she says, will help companies and cities and small businesses.

GARCIA: Also if people are spending less on rent, it means they have more money to spend on other things, like eating out or going to the movies or buying clothes. And that's obviously good for those parts of the economy.

VANEK SMITH: Unless you are a landlord. Then you are not so excited about this. Suddenly, it's taking longer to rent a place. People are pickier. You can't raise the rent every year. Maybe you even have to lower the rent.

GARCIA: Susan says vacancy rates have been around 4 percent across the country, and that is really, really low. But now, they're starting to rise. That's still totally fine for landlords. And for the rest of us, at last a little breathing room.

VANEK SMITH: And maybe a bedroom. Stacey Vanek Smith.

GARCIA: And Cardiff Garcia. NPR News.

(SOUNDBITE OF MADLIB'S "DISTANT LAND")

SEC Sues Elon Musk Over Tesla Tweets

By Jasmine Garsd

Morning Edition, · The Securities and Exchange Commission is suing Elon Musk over statements he made on Twitter about taking Tesla private.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

Elon Musk, the CEO of the electric car company Tesla, is being sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission, the SEC, all of which started with a tweet. NPR's Jasmine Garsd reports.

JASMINE GARSD, BYLINE: On August 7, Elon Musk tweeted that he was thinking of taking Tesla private at \$420 a share. That sent Tesla's stock skyrocketing. Problem is, Musk didn't actually have any firm backers to go private.

JAMES COX: This cost several people and institutions hundreds of millions of dollars.

GARSD: Professor James Cox specializes in corporate and securities law at Duke University.

COX: We don't want prominent executives making statements about their company that have no factual

basis.

GARSD: Musk backed down on the plan and kept Tesla a publicly traded company. The SEC didn't let it go. It's now coming after Musk for allegedly misleading investors. The lawsuit says Musk set the share price at \$420 on a whim because he had recently learned the number's significance in marijuana culture and thought his girlfriend would find it amusing.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ELON MUSK: I mean, it's legal, right?

JOE ROGAN: Totally legal.

MUSK: OK.

GARSD: It's not such a bizarre allegation, given Musk's recent behavior, like when he recently went on comedian Joe Rogan's podcast and apparently smoked pot. The interview had some strikingly sad moments, like when Musk stared blankly into space and talked about the pressures he's under.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

MUSK: I don't think you'd necessarily want to be me.

GARSD: Investors were worried. Gene Munster works at Loup, a venture capital company that follows Tesla. He says the last couple of months...

GENE MUNSTER: To call it a roller coaster is an understatement.

GARSD: In the lawsuit, the SEC seeks that Musk be barred from serving as an officer or director of a public company. Munster says that's what many investors have wanted all along. He'd like to see Musk as a chief visionary.

MUNSTER: Where he doesn't have investor-relations responsibilities. After what happened today, I think it's less likely because the SEC really is out for blood here.

GARSD: It's a tough spot for the company. To many devoted fans, Tesla is inextricably linked to the charismatic and innovative Elon Musk.

ERIK GORDON: A real fundamental question here is, do we have a real company, or do we have Elon Musk Incorporated?

GARSD: Erik Gordon is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.

GORDON: Through all of these sort of troubles and shenanigans with Musk, the company has said, well, yeah. But he needs to be CEO. He probably can't be CEO anymore, so they're going to have to change their tune, and they're going to have to convince investors that the company is OK without him as CEO.

GARSD: In a public statement following the lawsuit

announcement, Elon Musk called the SEC's actions unjustified. He wrote, quote, "I have always taken action in the best interests of truth, transparency and investors." Jasmine Garsd, NPR News, New York.

SEC Sues Tesla CEO Elon Musk

By Vanessa Romo

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Updated at 9:32 p.m. ET

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission is suing Tesla CEO Elon Musk, alleging securities fraud a month after he announced that he planned to take the publicly traded electric-car company private.

"Musk's false and misleading public statements and omissions caused significant confusion and disruption in the market for Tesla's stock and resulting harm to investors," the [lawsuit](#) says.

The SEC is asking the court to ban Musk from acting as an officer or director of any publicly traded company. In addition to being at the helm of Tesla, he is also the CEO and founder of SpaceX.

Musk denies the allegations of wrongdoing and insists he did not mislead investors.

"This unjustified action by the SEC leaves me deeply saddened and disappointed. I have always taken action in the best interests of truth, transparency and investors," Musk told NPR in an emailed statement.

"Integrity is the most important value in my life and the facts will show I never compromised this in any way," he added.

Separately, a statement issued by the company said: "Tesla and the board of directors are fully confident in Elon, his integrity, and his leadership of the company, which has resulted in the most successful US auto company in over a century. Our focus remains on the continued ramp of Model 3 production and delivering for our customers, shareholders and employees."

The case stems from an Aug. 7 tweet in which Musk [boasted](#) that he could take Tesla private at \$420 a share — a significant premium over its price at the time — and that funding for the switch was "secured."

That brief tweet was enough to send the stock soaring — up by nearly [11 percent](#) by the end of the day.

Musk later posted that the only thing he needed to take Tesla private was a shareholder vote.

The SEC complaint says, "Musk had not even discussed, much less confirmed, key deal terms, including price with any potential funding source."

It alleges the 47-year-old "knew or was reckless in not knowing that each of these statements was false and/or misleading because he did not have an adequate basis in fact for his assertions."

As NPR's Sasha Ingber [reported](#):

"Musk said [later] his tweet was prompted by [Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund](#), which

brought up the possibility of taking the company private. Tesla later admitted that it did not have the funding for the deal, and less than three weeks after his tweet, Musk walked back the prospect of going private.

"Short-sellers who had anticipated that Tesla's stock would fall said Musk's tweet was meant to manipulate the shares, according to the Associated Press."

In a [statement](#) on Tesla's website following the initial tweet, Musk provided an explanation for setting the stock price at \$420, writing that he had calculated the price per share based on a "20% premium over the stock price following our Q2 earnings call (which had already increased by 16%)."

The court documents note the calculation resulted in a price of \$419, but that Musk later admitted he had added the extra dollar — \$420 — "because he had recently learned about the number's significance in marijuana culture and thought his girlfriend 'would find it funny, which admittedly is not a great reason to pick a price.' "

Tesla stock was down nearly 10 percent in after-hours trading.

Baby Got Buybacks

By Rhaina Cohen and Stacey Vanek Smith

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Companies buy back their stock from shareholders when they have excess cash lying around, and they want to hand some of it over to the owners. And they've been doing it a lot more recently: companies are on track to spend more than a trillion dollars on buybacks this year. Today on the Indicator, dueling opinions on buybacks. One economist says they're a way to get cash to companies that need it; another argues they're a brake on the economy.

Music: "[Break Me](#)"

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Europe's Copyright Reforms Are More Than (Just) A Boring Policy Change

By Andrew Flanagan

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Earlier this month, British pianist James Rhodes received a notification from Facebook. A short video he had recorded and uploaded of himself playing a passage of Bach's Partita No. 1 had been flagged by Facebook's copyright identification system as belonging to Sony Music, resulting in 47 of the video's 71 seconds being muted.

"Stop being a**holes," Rhodes [tweeted](#) in response.

Of course, Bach has been dead for some time now — 268 years, but who's counting — and his compositions have been public property longer than any of us have been alive.

Recordings of those compositions, however, do not belong to the public, and Facebook had confused Rhodes' performance with one owned by Sony. (Speaking to NPR, Rhodes confessed a hope that his recording was confused with one from a notable player, at the very least.) If you consider what is asked of big tech's copyright-protection efforts, the mix-up wasn't entirely unreasonable. Facebook's identification system exists to prevent copyrighted material from being used — particularly in videos — in ways its owners might object to. As with its analogues on other platforms like

YouTube and SoundCloud, the technology uses "fingerprints" of copyrighted material — movies, television and music, but not just — to police users' uploads to the platform. These filters compare the contours and cartographies of each file's data and if they match the "fingerprint" of copywritten material, the owner is notified.

It took about five days for those 47 seconds of Rhodes' recording to eventually be unmuted, and only after he launched a campaign to call attention to the mistake. The tones and timbres of pianos are all broadly similar, and even though the breadth of possible interpretations of a composer's work is wide, it's not inconceivable that one player's would sound deceptively like another's, especially if, instead of listening deeply, one was cursorily scanning code-based refractions of the recordings' idiosyncrasies for similarities.

None of this is exactly new. Two years ago, the well-known producer Four Tet [criticized](#) SoundCloud for what he took to be an overbearing takedown of his work (in that case, his official remix of another artist's song). YouTube's own system, called Content ID, has had a similarly [spotty history](#). In July, when Facebook [flagged](#) the Declaration of Independence as hate speech, a Facebook spokesperson explained: "We process millions of reports each week, and sometimes we get things wrong." (Facebook declined to comment when asked about the muting of Rhodes' upload.)

Companies like Facebook and YouTube don't monitor

their networks for copyright infringement out of an abundance of feeling for creators, or the people they pay to manage their works (labels, publishing companies, managers and so on). They do so to protect themselves under the good graces of "safe harbor," a [legal provision](#) that shields Facebook and YouTube and other companies similarly situated from legal liability over the things their users upload to their servers. Companies that host user-uploaded content are spared from being legally on the hook if those users post things that don't belong to them, as long as those companies make a reasonable effort to tamp down on those posts or uploads. The relative imprecision of the language establishing safe harbor — particularly [in the U.S.](#) — as well as the stipulation that copyright owners are responsible for requesting takedowns has lent these companies a fairly large umbrella under which to shield themselves from a shower of lawsuits. It might lead to other benefits as well. Some record labels assert that, in the case of YouTube, the rule has allowed the company an [unfair high ground](#) in negotiations with them.

On Sept. 14, the European Commission (E.C.), the legislative core of the European Union (E.U.), took a major step toward attempting to fix that situation, which is viewed as imbalanced by some (mainly copyright holders and their advocates) and as existentially necessary by others (companies like YouTube). The Commission voted to approve [a directive containing a slew of extremely controversial new rules](#) around how tech companies who operate in the E.U. are required to

police content uploaded to their servers.

The rules — which will only take effect once the European Union's 28 member states each ratify them independently — will require companies to continue monitoring those services for infringement. But removing these infringements *speedily* will now be required by law, and removes the requirement that copyright owners need to report that their work was posted without their permission, placing that responsibility instead on the platforms themselves. The new policy also requires tech companies to provide content creators with transparency as to how their copyright-protection systems work. (As it stands right now, it's not even clear what criteria must be met in order to *use* YouTube's Content ID system.)

"The proposal solely addresses the services as they are the ones distributing the content and, most importantly, making a profit out of it," the Commission explains on a [question-and-answer page](#). "The measures taken by the services and agreements concluded by them with rights holders would benefit the users, which can upload their content with more confidence that the relevant rights are respected." What that means, essentially, is that if you post a video of yourself dancing to a song, that post is on the up-and-up, legally. At least, that's the idea, since the law so strongly encourages these platforms to reach reasonable agreements with copyright owners.

(Facebook declined to comment about the passage of the E.C.'s new copyright directive.)

And so, of course, a controversy.

Cory Doctorow, a co-founder of the popular blog *Boing Boing* and vocal critic of copyright law, characterized the effect of the E.C.'s vote as the continent having "[lost the Internet](#)" in a post for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a tech advocacy organization. Doctorow concluded that the directive's passage signals bureaucrats' misplaced confidence in technologies like Content ID, and that the policy will stifle the open Internet and hurt individual creators by forcing them to fend for themselves. (Which, it could be argued, they are doing currently anyways.) In [a blog post](#) written before the directive's passage, YouTube chief business officer Robert Kyncl delivered an ultimatum of sorts: the directive could "potentially undermine [YouTube's] creative economy, discouraging or even prohibiting platforms from hosting user-generated content."

On the other side of this debate is Helen Smith, executive chair of the Independent Music Companies Association, who asserted in [an op-ed for Politico](#) that its effect would be the opposite. Smith believes that tech companies' hegemony gives them unfair leverage in business negotiations, and that with the new rules — particularly the directive's preference for companies to reach licensing agreements with creators and pay them fairly — "artists will have a say and capture more revenue no matter how big they are or where they come from."

The directive could have the effect of increasing the number of erroneous takedowns such as the one

experienced by Rhodes, since technology companies now have a more dramatic incentive to ratchet up the policing of copyright infringement on their platforms. Trolls could [misuse reporting systems](#). But the new rules also come packaged with much broader implications for the interplay of art, commerce and fandom on digital spaces whose doors are open for public sharing. There's no good answer, and no magic technology, that will equally please creators, the tech companies who profit from those creators' creations and the corporations that have decades of experience doing the same.

In the "[Information Wants To Be Free](#)" corner, you have advocates like Cory Doctorow, who is of the opinion that regulations on the Internet can have a stifling effect on freedom of expression. They want to preserve the web "as a place where we can fight the other fights" like "inequality, antitrust, race and gender, speech and democratic legitimacy," as Doctorow put it in a recent [podcast](#). (Doctorow obliquely references a 2004 [copyright dispute](#) around Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land," which Guthrie, in an unconfirmed statement, said he didn't "give a dern" if others performed.) Doctorow's point is that creativity is best when it's unanchored from profit motive, and thus available to be copied freely. (Doctorow himself walks the walk, making his novels [available](#) for no charge.) James Rhodes' recent experience with music that wasn't even protected by copyright isn't exactly encouraging in this regard.

Meanwhile, some copyright holders are very much

interested in being paid for their creations. Lisa Alter, a visiting professor at Yale Law School and practicing attorney who specializes in music copyright, tells NPR: "Obviously, whenever there's something new, there will be a period of time where systems are worked out and glitches, but I don't see those insurmountable in the year 2018." As to situations like the one Rhodes experienced with his Bach video? "Could there ever be a erroneous takedown? Sure, but then you let them know and they should put it back up," she says. "But I don't see it being an epidemic. And the technology will get better, the filtering system will improve."

And somewhere else entirely you have creators, a group so varied in approach and purpose and motivation that it's ludicrous to try and divine their desires in even the broadest sense. Some want to make things and give them away. Some want to make things and use those things to make money. But all have the same thing in common that most everyone else does: A reliance on both technology and the law, and a significant hill to climb to affect either in any meaningful way.

"I mean, who really cares about YouTube's bottom line or the major labels' bottom lines," asks Rhodes in a phone call to NPR. "They're always going to fight for their own self-interest and they're not really going to fight for the benefit of the artist, are they?"

Uber Pays \$148 Million Over Yearlong Cover-Up Of Data Breach

By Bill Chappell

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Uber is paying \$148 million to settle claims over the ride-hailing company's cover-up of a data breach in 2016, when hackers stole personal information of some 25 million customers and drivers in the U.S.

Instead of reporting the stolen data [as required by law](#), Uber paid the hackers \$100,000. That was in late 2016; it wasn't until November 2017 that Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi revealed that hackers had downloaded the names, email addresses and mobile phone numbers of 57 million Uber users around the world. The figure included 600,000 of the company's drivers, whose names and driver's license numbers were also at risk.

Uber paid the hackers when the company was still run by its former CEO, Travis Kalanick — who [resigned in the middle of 2017](#) in the face of numerous accusations about the burgeoning start-up's culture and ethical practices.

"Uber's decision to cover up this breach was a blatant violation of the public's trust," California Attorney General Xavier Becerra [said in announcing the settlement](#). "The company failed to safeguard user data and notify authorities when it was exposed."

Attorneys general from all 50 states and the District of Columbia filed a lawsuit over the breach. They announced the settlement on Wednesday, saying that in addition to the penalty, Uber agreed to bolster its data security practices and to give quarterly security updates to the states for the next two years.

Uber's chief legal officer, Tony West — who joined the company just as the hacking case was made public — said that paying the settlement was part of Uber's focus on "taking responsibility for past mistakes, learning from them, and moving forward."

When Uber revealed the breach, it said the hackers had targeted data stored on a third-party, cloud-based service and that the information that was exposed did not include trip location history, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, Social Security numbers or dates of birth.

The San Francisco-based company says it contacted the hackers and "obtained assurances" that the downloaded data had been deleted.

As NPR's Yuki Noguchi reports, "By not reporting the breach for a year, regulators say the company left its drivers vulnerable to financial fraud and identity theft. This settlement comes as Uber prepares to sell shares to the public for the first time next year."

As part of its response to the data breach, Uber fired Joe Sullivan, its chief security officer. After the hack became

public, Sullivan defended the company's handling of the issue, [saying Uber had paid a "bug bounty"](#) to the hacker, rather than a ransom for stolen data. It was part of an ongoing security program and not, Sullivan said, a cover-up. But others, both at the company and at regulatory agencies, disagreed.

Uber is still facing lawsuits from private parties and from some cities over its handling of the 2016 breach.

In July, the Federal Trade Commission [began sending checks totaling nearly \\$20 million](#) to Uber drivers in 19 cities, after finding that they were misled by exaggerated claims of the income they could make. Those payments stem from a separate 2017 settlement.

Head Of Australian Broadcasting Corp. Quits Amid Editorial Independence 'Firestorm'

By Scott Neuman

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · The chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation has stepped down amid allegations that he ordered the firing of journalists deemed too critical of the government.

Justin Milne resigned his post as the head of the independent, government-funded network after "his board turned against him and staff threatened to walk off the job," [The Sydney Morning Herald reports](#).

In May, Milne reportedly emailed ABC's managing director, Michelle Guthrie, insisting that Emma Alberici, the network's chief economics correspondent, be fired [after complaints about her coverage](#) from then-Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

"They [the government] hate her," Milne reportedly wrote.

"We are tarred with her brush. I think it's simple. Get rid of her," Milne wrote to Guthrie, according to Fairfax Media. "We need to save the ABC - not Emma. There is no guarantee they [Turnbull's Coalition] will lose the next election."

Milne and Turnbull, who was ousted amid inter-party wrangling in August, are [described by Australian media](#) as "long-term [friends]."

Separately, another publisher reports that Milne had also ordered the firing of ABC's political editor, Andrew Probyn, due to government criticism.

Guthrie reportedly resisted pressure to get rid of the two journalists.

Turnbull, who has been living in New York since being forced to resign as prime minister, said he had complained about the two journalists, but never asked for their dismissal, according to The Associated Press.

"The bottom line is I've never called for anybody to be fired," he told reporters in New York. "My concern has been on the accuracy and impartiality of reporting."

On Thursday, Milne, a former executive at Australian telecom giant Telstra, described the recent reports as a "firestorm" and said he decided to quit because he "wanted to provide a release valve" for the network.

However, he has denied any wrongdoing. Asked Thursday in [an interview with ABC](#) if his resignation was an acknowledgement of a failure to protect the network's independence, Milne responded: "Absolutely 100 percent not."

"In fact I feel that the interests of the ABC have always

been uppermost in my mind," he said.

"There was absolutely no interference in the independence of the ABC by the Government," he insisted in the interview. "Nobody from the Government has ever rung me and told me what to do in relation to the ABC."

The day before his resignations, Milne fired Guthrie, ABC's first female managing director, saying that the board of directors had determined it was in the network's best interests to let her go.

Guthrie said her termination was not justified and that she was considering legal options. "At all times I have promoted the ABC's importance to the community, including having to defend and protect the ABC's independence," she said, [according to ABC](#).

According to the AP, "The conservative coalition has long complained of a leftist bias in ABC reporting. But center-left governments have also complained of unbalanced reporting in the past."

Australia's new prime minister, Scott Morrison, tweeted on Thursday that the decision by Milne to step down was "the right call."

Speaking with reporters earlier, Morrison described the allegations against Milne as "very concerning," according to the AP.

However, he added, "the idea that the government has somehow got some list and is telling the ABC who should work there and who shouldn't - that's complete rubbish."

Hannah Storm, Part Of First All-Women NFL Broadcast Team, Is Set For Kickoff

By Cameron Jenkins

Morning Edition, · Since Amazon [announced Tuesday](#) that sportscasters Hannah Storm and Andrea Kremer would become the first all-women team to call NFL games, the pair has faced public backlash.

Displeased sports fans have been critical of their knowledge of football as well as their qualifications as commentators — and complained that Amazon had hired the women to call games. Storm is an anchor at ESPN's *SportsCenter* and Kremer, an award recipient of the Pro Football Hall of Fame for broadcasting, is a correspondent at the NFL Network.

In an interview with *Morning Edition's* Rachel Martin, Storm responded.

"I think it's extremely myopic to think that ... the NFL or really any sport is only for men," she says.

Interview Highlights

On the significance of the moment

Two women have never called an NFL game, much less an entire season. So we're actually calling 11 games on Thursday night football, and I think it's something

whose time has come, but something that feels forward thinking as well.

On criticism that women don't make good sports commentators

It's funny, for some reason sports has been considered like this bastion of male superiority or some kind of secret language that women couldn't understand. And the NFL in particular, you know, the broadcasts are extremely technical and to some men and women it kind of sounds like they're speaking a different language. I think that the rap if you will against women ... is "Oh, well, they didn't play football," which is absolutely ridiculous. If you are smart, if you're a good communicator, if you're very, very hard working and you do your homework, you can learn anything.

On bringing her own perspective to sportscasting

Amazon wanted to hire us; not two women as a gimmick. They specifically wanted to hire me and Andrea because of our years of experience; the breadth of what we do. I cover all sports. Andrea's in the Hall of Fame for football. It's a perspective of what we think is interesting. So it's not maybe the traditional play-by-play, x's and o's, 'Let's go down to the sideline.' This is that but it's a lot of storytelling mixed in.

That's really what fascinates me; that's the reason I got into sports. What makes these people tick, you know? What makes them achieve at such a high level? What do

they overcome?

So we don't feel that we necessarily have to describe every single thing that you're seeing on TV as we're talking. We might be having a discussion, and you know, we'll also catch you up on the action but you're also watching it so you can see it with your eyes.

On what to expect Thursday night when the Los Angeles Rams play the Minnesota Vikings

So the Rams are a total juggernaut. They've got so much talent on both sides of the ball — top five offense and defense. And Minnesota is coming off this really embarrassing, huge upset at home to the Buffalo Bills. So now they're going to roll into L.A. Coliseum with this team that's on an absolute high — that some people are saying is the best team in football. So two incredible coaches, so many storylines and its going to be a blast.

Reena Advani and Jacob Pinter edited and produced this story for broadcast.

Science

Perspective: A Heart Device Can Save Lives, But Doctors Need To Explain The Downsides

By Dr. Matthew Movsesian

NPR.org, September 30, 2018 · [Sign up for the CommonHealth newsletter](#) to receive a weekly digest of WBUR's best health, medicine and science coverage.

Let's say you're one of the 6.5 million Americans with heart failure.

Your heart's ability to pump blood is impaired. Despite being on all the right medicines, at doses as high as you can tolerate, your quality of life is getting worse. You're comfortable at rest, but you get short of breath with even mild exertion, and you feel weak and tired all the time.

At this point, your cardiologist may suggest a heart transplant. Or if you're not an ideal transplant candidate, he or she may instead suggest a device known as an LVAD.

LVAD stands for left ventricular-assist device. It's an electrically powered pump implanted surgically between the left ventricle and the aorta to boost your failing heart's ability to pump blood.

The stats on LVADs sound good. Overall, they save lives and improve the quality of life for many heart failure

patients. But these benefits come with a high rate of possible complications that include stroke, bleeding, infection and pump failure.

That's a lot to process, and it's up to the doctor to convey the complex information you need clearly enough for you to be able to make a fully informed decision.

Unfortunately, we doctors are not doing a great job of that, a [recent study suggests](#) — because if we were, fewer patients would be choosing to have these devices implanted.

Expanding use of LVAD

When they were first developed, LVADs were used only in patients with the most advanced disease, on the waiting list for a heart transplant. Those patients had heart failure so severe they required drugs known as inotropic agents that stimulate the heart to contract more forcefully.

These drugs, when given continuously over long periods of time, increase the likelihood of sudden cardiac death, so they're usually used only when a decent quality of life can't be maintained without them.

In patients with such severe disease, the likelihood of surviving — and the quality of that survival — was [found to be](#) much higher with LVADs than with available medications.

Based on this success, the practice of implanting LVADs has expanded. It's now a "destination" therapy for patients with end-stage heart failure who are poor candidates for heart transplants.

More recently, LVAD started being offered to patients with heart failure that is severe, but not severe enough to require support with inotropic agents. Among these patients, those with LVADs do better, a [study published in 2017](#) found.

Complications

I worked as a cardiologist in my university's advanced heart-failure program for 16 years. I cared for many patients in whom LVADs were surgically implanted, and I can attest to the huge benefits many of them derived from the devices. It's been common for a patient tell me something like, "I feel a thousand times better." I've even seen reports of younger patients who did so well they could have their LVADs removed.

But there's more to the story, and it's sobering — particularly for those patients who are not in dire need of a transplant. LVAD patients are at risk of dangerous complications, including the infections of the power cable, formation of blood clots within the pump and problematic bleeding. Compared to patients managed with medicine alone they are more likely to have worsened failure of the right ventricle or ventricular arrhythmias, a common cause of sudden cardiac death.

Most alarmingly, the [incidence of stroke is 12 percent](#) per LVAD patient-year (and as high as 30 percent in some reports) while it's about 4 percent in those without LVADs.

Just as I've seen patients whose lives were restored by the placement of an LVAD, I have seen others who spent months in intensive care, only to die directly or indirectly from these complications.

How can the overall positive results of LVADs square with these high complication rates?

Here's an analogy: Say you're given the chance to place \$1,000 on an even-money bet where the odds are actually 2:1 in your favor. So for every three people who make the bet, chances are two will win \$1,000 each, but the third person will lose \$1,000.

The group as a whole will have bet \$3,000 and walk away with \$4,000, which makes for a positive outcome for the group — but one of the three will come out \$1,000 poorer.

These are *not* the odds of LVAD success rates, which depend on many variables. But the same idea applies: Statistically, you're likely to do better, but there's a serious chance you'll be made seriously worse.

Of course, technology improves with time. A [clinical trial](#) published in May showed that a newer-model LVAD had significantly fewer complications. This is encouraging,

but it will be important to see whether these outcomes hold true in practice — particularly because almost on the day that study was published, the manufacturer recalled the device to deal with technical problems.

Heart failure patients need to be able to make a well-informed decision. And, overall, this doesn't seem to be happening the way it ought to. A [recent study](#) published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* looked at the effects of thoroughly educating both doctors and patients — including a video and pamphlet for patients — on the risks and benefits of LVADs. With better education, the percent of patients choosing the LVAD dropped from about 80 percent to about 54 percent.

The author of an accompanying [editorial](#) notes that this finding "raises the alarming possibility that many patients ... are consenting to an LVAD without being fully aware of the risks and benefits, and may have chosen otherwise with more information."

That really is alarming.

Doctors' incentives and enthusiasm

Are doctors swayed by the financial upside of prescribing this device? The devices generate huge revenues both for the device industry and for medical centers, and it would be naive to argue that this has no possible influence. And many of the medical school-affiliated authors of papers in the medical literature on LVADs disclose financial relationships with device makers. They may be

paid to speak at professional meetings, for example, or they may be paid by device makers to conduct the research.

But patient outcomes in advanced heart failure programs are under intense scrutiny, giving doctors a powerful incentive to try to avoid putting LVADs in patients who seem likely to suffer complications.

Most importantly, doctors have a commitment to doing what's best for their patients. I have never seen a colleague promote the placement of an LVAD without believing it was in the patient's best interests.

But I also see a fervor for LVADs among many advanced heart failure specialists, despite their complications and costs. At national meetings and in the medical literature, I encounter passionate practitioners who see themselves as pioneering a new era in the treatment of heart failure.

They may well be right — but it's harder to be objective when you're passionate.

The patient's dilemma

Advanced heart failure is a debilitating disease, and those afflicted may feel deeply despondent. It's understandable that advanced heart failure specialists feel a need to do all they can to offer the patient a better quality of life, even with the high potential for bad outcomes. None of us want to say, "I'm sorry, I have nothing to offer you."

It may also be tempting for patients to focus on the promise rather than the potential complications of a new device, especially after talking to one of the patients who feel much better with the device. (They're not likely to speak to one with a bad outcome.)

Ultimately, dealing with complex probabilities is uncomfortable for patients and doctors alike. Few of us find it easy to process information like, "Procedure X offers a 65 percent chance of a 50 percent improvement, though also a 35 percent chance of an 80 percent worsening of the patient's condition." (And even that is a tremendous oversimplification.)

What has to happen, I think, is for both doctors and patients to be open to the difficult discussions that need to take place, in which the potential benefits and risks are considered fully. That communication is hard, and the stakes are high.

We physicians need to do a better job of explaining. And I urge you, the patient, to try as best you can to understand the risk you're taking when you have an LVAD implanted. Ask, for example, to see the pamphlet and video used in the study I mentioned above.

Talk to other providers — not necessarily cardiologists — who have cared for LVAD patients. Talk to patients — though it's unlikely you'll have the chance to talk to those with the worst outcomes.

I don't have an easy answer. It's a gamble. That LVAD

will probably help you, and you may be one of the majority of patients who say afterwards, "I feel a thousand times better." But you may not. Just make sure you understand and can accept the risks before you say, "Yes."

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A version of this story originally ran on [WBUR's Common Health](#).

The Flight Of The Condors, And Their Audience

By Stina Sieg

Weekend Edition Sunday, · It would normally be easy to miss the dirt road jutting north from a tiny highway near the Arizona-Utah border. But not today, with the long line of cars rumbling toward lonely, rosy cliffs, and an encampment of bird watchers forming under them.

They're all here for four birds.

With a wingspan that can stretch 10 feet, California condors are some of the largest birds in North America. They're also some of the rarest. After the population plunged to just 22 in 1982, all were taken into captivity for safe keeping and breeding.

Once a year, just a few are released into the wild in Northern Arizona. Others are released in California and in Mexico.

Chris Parish stands with a microphone in front of the growing crowd.

"This is phenomenal!" he says, his voice carried by solar-powered speakers. "I think there are more vehicles here than we had people in some of the early releases."

Parish is with the Peregrine Fund, which has been reintroducing California condors to Arizona for more

than 20 years, with the help of various organizations and state and federal agencies. This time, 750 condor groupies have come to watch, with their folding chairs and binoculars, umbrellas and dogs.

Brigitte Le Vea takes a turn squinting through a high-powered spotting scope.

"Oh my God! Oh my God!" she says, looking toward the top of the Vermilion Cliffs. "This is bananas!"

She can see a pen housing four young, soon-to-be released birds. A handful of older condors, released years ago, are nearby, some circling and others sitting on the rocks, unfurling their big, black wings.

"This is really, really, really special," she says, on the verge of tears. "I've been trying so hard all season to see a damn condor, and I'm finally here, and I'm so excited about it."

Le Vea is choked up, even though she and the rest of the group are a half a mile away and a thousand feet below the birds. With their naked, pink necks, these scavengers sometimes get called ugly. But here, people like Lee Ann McAda use a different word. Charismatic.

"Oh my God, how could they not be?" she says. "It's like, you look at those wings up there and you look at those heads and how they soar, how could you not think that they're charismatic? They're gorgeous."

And worth her seven-hour drive from Grand Junction, Colo., all for something that could last two minutes or all day.

When the pen is opened for the first time, you never know how long the condors will wait to take their first free flight high over the desert.

Finally, biologists start a countdown.

"Five! Four! Three! Two! One!" the crowd chants

Then Tim Hauck, a biologist on the ground, radios to a biologist on the cliffs.

It takes a moment for to open the pen's door. But then, a burst.

"Holy cow!" Hauck says. "It never happens this fast!"

Three condors fly out almost immediately, massive wings flapping against the sky. It's instant, elating gratification.

And for Ron Brown, a park ranger at the Grand Canyon, it's deeply personal.

"I was in the hospital three weeks ago with a pretty major heart attack," he says. "This is my first big thing was to come here, because I knew that this just makes you feel alive."

His late wife Pat, thought so, too. Brown says the last time she was here, she was sick and probably didn't

weight a hundred pounds. But she was glowing. Brown says that's the effect these birds — and the effort to save them — have on people.

"This kind of thing is human beings trying our best to say, "Together, we can do this," he says.

Soon, the fourth and final condor flies free. Thanks to interventions like this one, there are now nearly 500 California condors in the wild.

Holly Ridings On Breaking A Glass Ceiling At NASA

Weekend Edition Sunday, · Holly Ridings, NASA's first-ever female chief flight director, weighs in on being a woman in the field with NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro.

EPA To Dissolve Office Of Science Advisor

By Dan Boyce

All Things Considered, As part of a broader reorganization, the EPA will eliminate the science advisor role created to counsel acting EPA Administrator, Andrew Wheeler. Critics fear the move is a further demotion of scientific research.

Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is moving to dissolve its Office of the Science Adviser. That is the direct scientific adviser to acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. The EPA describes the move as an effort to streamline the agency, but critics call it another move by the Trump administration to diminish the role of science in decision making. Dan Boyce has the story.

DAN BOYCE, BYLINE: This past summer, Andrew Wheeler took over at the EPA after the resignation of embattled administrator Scott Pruitt. And Wheeler - he's familiar with the EPA. He started his career with the agency in the early '90s.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ANDREW WHEELER: I do understand firsthand the stress that goes along with a change in management or a change in a reorganization.

BOYCE: That's Wheeler addressing EPA employees back in July. After his first stint at the EPA, he worked as an adviser to Senator Jim Inhofe, one of the biggest climate change skeptics on Capitol Hill. Then Wheeler worked as a lobbyist where one of his major clients was a coal company. Still, he told the assembled EPA staff he brings a passion for helping the environment.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

WHEELER: We must be able to speak with one voice and clearly explain to the American people the relevant environmental and health risks that they face.

BOYCE: But to Michael Halpern, the plan to remove the post of top science adviser is a step away from that pledge. He's with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

MICHAEL HALPERN: I mean, yeah. I mean, this is a colossally bad idea.

BOYCE: Now, the EPA did not respond to requests for an interview. In a statement, the agency describes it more as a bureaucratic reorganization combining this Office of Science Adviser with the Office of Science Policy. But Halpern says what that does is it moves the agency's top science advocates several rungs down the chain of command, and the EPA administrator should have

immediate access to those advisers.

HALPERN: Science advice is important both for long-term policy decisions and for reacting during a crisis.

BOYCE: A crisis like Hurricane Florence, recently causing the release of toxic coal ash in North Carolina.

STAN MEIBURG: We interacted with the science advisory position all the time.

BOYCE: That's Stan Meiburg, acting deputy EPA administrator during the final years of the Obama administration. He believes in the importance of the science adviser but says, in some ways, this reorganization appears to be an understandable response for an EPA working with reduced staff under President Trump.

MEIBURG: And, in this particular case, I think it has gotten more attention because of some of the concerns about the administration's use of science.

BOYCE: Both the Trump administration broadly and the EPA have been notably dismissive of scientific advice. Under Administrator Pruitt, the EPA restricted the types of scientific studies it recognizes. And Pruitt also appointed several scientists who work for industries the EPA regulates. Meiburg worries about the signal this latest reorganization sends because there are a lot of pressures acting on an EPA administrator when it comes to crafting policy.

MEIBURG: Lawsuits, demands and deadlines in the statutes, pressures from state, from industry, from nongovernmental organizations.

BOYCE: Meiburg says it's important science remains one of those pressures, too.

Dan Boyce, NPR News.

Boys And Masculinity In America

Weekend Edition Saturday, · NPR's Scott Simon talks with author and psychologist Michael Thompson about masculinity and boys' emotions after emotional hearings this week.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The allegations against Brett Kavanaugh took place against a backdrop of high school and college parties, and an atmosphere among boys that's been described by some as jovial male bonding and others as toxic masculinity. It's prompted discussion among parents about what it means to grow up as a boy in America and the fear and pressure our children feel to act in certain ways.

Child psychologist Michael Thompson is the co-author of the 1999 book "Raising Cain: The Emotional Life Of Boys." He joins us now. Thanks very much for being with us, Mr. Thompson.

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Thanks, Scott.

SIMON: We heard a lot this week in the hearings on Thursday about friendship. Christine Blasey Ford talked about the chilling laughter of boys, who she remembers hearing after she says they assaulted her and laughed

with a kind of bonding moment. And we heard Brett Kavanaugh describe his friendships not just with other boys, but also with young women. What did you hear? What struck you?

THOMPSON: Yeah, I know. I work at an all-boys school, and this is the dark side of boys' lives - that they - sometimes their fun can come at the expense of girls. And I think we have to teach boys - we have to teach them about consent, and we have to teach them about sexuality in a better way than we do. Many of the boys at my school get no instruction from their parents whatsoever, so they get their instruction from peers and from parties.

SIMON: When you talk about the fact that - and you know firsthand - a lot of young boys you work with that haven't had these important conversations with their parents - how has that fallen down? What's happened?

THOMPSON: The conversation about risk-taking and sexuality is always an awkward one because the teenager thinks, oh, here it comes. Oh, no, this is awkward. And many fathers, particularly, feel awkward about talking to their sons about sexuality. What kids crave is to know that their parents accept that they are becoming a sexual being, that their parents are realistic about what the temptations are going to be. And they want some clarity from their parents about how they're supposed to behave.

And what they need from parents and teachers and

schools and sex educators is real strong education in what consent is. In sex, not everybody moves at the same rate, especially kids who are developing. And some kids want to jump ahead, and some kids are holding back. And you cannot presume.

SIMON: How do you instill - I'm trying hard to avoid the word, teach, 'cause as a parent, I know I'm not sure how we teach. How do you help instill empathy?

THOMPSON: Well, you have to require kids to be empathic. Little kids don't share toys naturally. You know, we like to hold on to what we've got. But we have to train kids to feel the pain of another. Some kids take to it immediately. It is a natural human feeling. You know, when a 9-month-old pulls his mother's earring and she goes, ouch, because that's really - he yanked your earring, you can see a look of concern and guilt.

But when the person whom we are hurting comes from a different tribe, a different gender, a different party, our capacity to identify and empathize is diminished.

SIMON: How do you help a child to learn and to behave in accord with the idea that the other is as precious as he is?

THOMPSON: Well, if I were in charge of everything, Scott, every boy would take care of children at some point in his own boyhood. He'd take care of small children who get hurt, who cry, who need comforting. Many boys go through their whole boyhood - I mean,

unless they have younger siblings, they're not asked to take care of other people. They're just asked to do their stuff and compete and be a good student and be socially attractive, but not to take care.

So I - for instance, I consult a lot to sleep-away summer camps. And boys who have been camp counselors, for instance, 18-year-old boys who've taken care of a cabin of 10-year-old, 11-year-old boys - they're different because they've had to take care of somebody's hurt and loneliness and homesickness and pain. And it changes the older boy, and it makes him a better young man.

SIMON: Michael Thompson is a child psychologist and co-author of the book "Raising Cain." Thanks so much for being with us.

THOMPSON: Thanks for having me.

WATCH: 'Extremely Rare' 2-Headed Snake Stuns Social Media, Charms Scientists

By Emma Bowman

Weekend Edition Saturday, · The venomous fangs of a copperhead snake are one thing. But the recent sighting of a rare two-headed snake in Northern Virginia is alarming — and mesmerizing — both social media spectators and scientists.

Earlier this month, a Woodbridge resident stumbled upon the young mutant reptile in a neighbor's yard. "I wanted to look away but couldn't stop looking at it. Plays trick[s] on the eyes," Stephanie Myers told *USA Today* after finding the snake and posting photos of it to [her Facebook page](#).

What's even more exceptional is that the snake was discovered alive, according to state herpetologist J.D. Kleopfer, a reptiles and amphibians specialist at the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Two-headed copperhead snakes are "extremely rare" to find in the wild, Kleopfer told NPR's Scott Simon on *Weekend Edition Saturday*. Their competing heads often contribute to their short life span. "They can't coordinate escaping from predators and they can't coordinate capturing foods, so they tend to not live," he says.

Luckily, the rest of the baby viper's anatomy is shared,

Kleopfer says, which means that "both heads are getting the nutrition they need."

In a news release, the [Wildlife Center of Virginia](#) says Kleopfer brought the snake to the hospital on Sept. 20 for an examination. X-rays revealed that one head has a more developed esophagus, Kleopfer says, while the other has a more developed throat. "Based on that, we're just attempting to feed the [left] head," he says.

That's because the left head appears more dominant, the wildlife center adds. "It's generally more active and responsive to stimulus," the release reads. "It would be better for the right head to eat, but it may be a challenge since the left head appears more dominant."

That unusual mutation also prevents the snake's heads from quarreling with each other over the same food. Instead, Kleopfer says, the separated heads "seemed to be oblivious to each other."

The gender is still unknown, but Kleopfer estimates the baby viper to be about 3 weeks old and 6 to 8 inches long. Copperheads typically reach [18 to 36 inches](#) in length. The scientist says a private keeper who specializes in vipers for zoological facilities is currently caring for the snake.

[Venomous copperheads](#) are a fairly common sighting for U.S. residents, especially in the Southeastern United States or in forested, temperate climates. Captive-bred two-headed snakes are slightly more common, he says,

"but that's usually the result of inbreeding."

Kleopfer has been in the field of herpetology for some 30 years. Still, he says, "This is definitely a first" and an "extraordinarily rare" sighting that few of his colleagues have seen.

He hesitates to name the snake, as his goal right now is to keep it alive. If it survives, he says he hopes to donate the snake to a zoo.

As for the current state of the snake, Kleoper tells in NPR in a follow-up email, "The little guy or girl is doing well. It [has] eaten and pooped, which are excellent signs."

NPR's Sarah Handel and Viet Le produced and edited the story for broadcast.

How Trauma Affects Memory: Scientists Weigh In On The Kavanaugh Hearing

By Rhithu Chatterjee

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · In Thursday's testimony at Judge Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings, Christine Blasey Ford alleged Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her at a party in 1982, when she was 15 years old and he was 17.

Kavanaugh staunchly denied these allegations.

But memory is fallible. A question on many people's minds is, how well can anyone recall something that happened over 35 years ago?

Pretty well, say scientists, if the memory is of a traumatic event. That's because of the key role emotions play in making and storing memories.

On any given day, our brains store or "encode" only some of the things we experience. "What we pay attention to is what's more likely to get encoded," says [Jim Hopper](#), a teaching associate in psychology at Harvard University and a consultant on sexual assault and trauma.

A region of the brain called the hippocampus plays an important role in this process. Ford referred to the hippocampus when questioned by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., about how she was so sure that Kavanaugh was

the perpetrator of the alleged assault.

"The hippocampus certainly plays a role in taking things into short-term memory and then transferring them and consolidating them into long-term memories," says Hopper.

If an event elicits an emotional reaction in us, then it's more likely to make it into our memory. "Things that have more emotional significance tend to get more encoded," he says.

And when something elicits an intense negative emotion, like a trauma, it's even more likely to be encoded in the brain.

"The stress hormones, cortisol, norepinephrine, that are released during a terrifying trauma tend to render the experience vivid and memorable, especially the central aspect, the most meaningful aspects of the experience for the victim," says [Richard McNally](#), a psychologist at Harvard University and the author of the book *Remembering Trauma*.

That's because a high-stress state "alters the function of the hippocampus and puts it into a super-encoding mode," says Hopper, especially early on during an event. And "the central details [of the event] get burned into their memory and they may never forget them."

Whether it's sexual assault victims or soldiers in combat or survivors of an earthquake, people who have

experienced traumatic events tend to remember the most essential and frightening elements of the events in vivid detail for life, says McNally.

However, this doesn't mean that these memories include every detail of the event. The brain holds on to the most important stuff at the expense of the peripheral details.

Take, for example, a clerk at convenience store who gets robbed at gunpoint, says McNally. "The person may often encode the features of the weapon, the gun pointed at him, but not recall whether or not the person was wearing glasses, because their attention is focused on the most central features of the experience."

McNally says this would explain why Ford says she remembers what happened during the alleged assault but she can't remember the date of the party or its location.

"They were forgotten because they were never encoded," says McNally. "When somebody has an experience such as this, they're not necessarily saying, 'I better get down the address.' They're preoccupied with trying to escape this terrifying experience."

Also, "people in general are not good about dating events, whether they're traumatic events or nontraumatic events," he adds. Unless there are other clues to the date, most people tend to forget when something happened.

As for the memory of perpetrators of sexual assault, there's been little research on it, says Hopper. But what

the research on emotions and memory suggests is the perpetrator's memory will depend on their emotional state, he says.

"If holding someone down and trying to take their clothes off was an entertaining experience, or a routine, familiar experience you're less likely to store that," he says. "It really depends on how the perpetrator is relating to things."

Another factor that affects how memories are stored is alcohol use.

"Generally alcohol can make people forget things," says [Mary Beth Miller](#), a clinical psychologist at the University of Missouri, Columbia who has studied the impact of alcohol consumption on making and retrieving memories.

Earlier this month, [Ford told](#) *The Washington Post* that she remembers Kavanaugh being "stumbling drunk" whereas she recalls having one beer that night.

Other accusers who did not testify Thursday have also suggested Kavanaugh was part of a group of friends who indulged in heavy drinking in the 1980s.

In his testimony, Kavanaugh said he likes beer, but he denied ever drinking so much that he didn't remember things.

Miller says memory loss from alcohol — blackouts —

[are very common](#) among young people.

"In a blackout, you're walking around, talking to people," says Miller. "And a lot of times in a blackout people will be very coherent. You're just doing your thing, and people don't know, because it's hard to know if someone's in a blackout state."

These blackouts are what scientists call "fragmentary" blackouts, where someone has partial memory loss, but "you can usually recall, if someone reminds you later."

These fragmentary blackouts can occur at low blood alcohol concentrations, as low as 0.06, she says. (For comparison, the legal limit for driving is 0.08 in all states except Utah.)

Miller also says that animal studies suggest that "adolescent brains are actually more sensitive to the memory impairing effects of alcohol."

A permanent memory impairment, what scientists call "en bloc blackout," has a beginning and an end, says Miller, and the person cannot remember anything that happened in between. She says these typically occur at higher blood alcohol concentrations, around 0.24.

This is because higher amounts of alcohol prevent short-term memory from being converted to long-term memory, says Miller.

"And people with a history of heavy drinking are more

likely to have more memory deficits," she adds.

Why Did An Octopus-Wielding Sea Lion Slap A Kayaker In The Face?

By Rachel D. Cohen

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · A sea lion smacks a kayaker with an octopus, and the video capturing the unlikely encounter quickly becomes a viral sensation.

The conflict between man and beasts happened off the coast of New Zealand's South Island.

Taiyo Masuda, Kyle Mulinder and friends were going for a paddle off the coast of Kaikoura. Masuda's camera follows the sea lion as it zips beneath the ocean's surface and pops up a couple of feet from Mulinder and flings an octopus his way.

"Whoa!" Masuda shouts, as Mulinder shakes his head and looks back into the water.

"I'm not sure who got more of a surprise: the seal, the octopus, or me," Mulinder wrote on Instagram in a comment about the [video](#).

But what exactly was the sea lion up to?

For answers, we turned to two scientists who know something about what makes sea lions tick: [Colleen Reichmuth](#), a principal investigator and associate research scientist at the University of California, Santa Cruz's Institute of Marine Sciences, and [Peter Cook](#), an assistant

professor of psychology at the New College of Florida who studies animal cognition and has experience with sea lions.

First off, they wanted to make clear that the [pinniped](#) in question was indeed a sea lion, not a seal. Cook guesses the star of the show might be a New Zealand sea lion based on the whereabouts, but he couldn't be completely sure from the video alone.

Sea lions and fur seals belong to the *otariid* family and are sometimes called "eared seals." Unlike true seals, however, they have external ear flaps and big front flippers, which allow them to be more active on land.

Behaviorally, Cook says, sea lions are more outgoing than seals and have a more flexible foraging ecology, meaning that they eat a wider variety of things — crabs, squids, octopuses, really anything they can get a hold of.

Sea lions also eat their prey in much less predictable ways.

It might be sea lions' tendency to play that gives them their complex feeding behaviors, Cook says. Sea lions spend anywhere from nine months to two years with their mothers before venturing out on their own. During that period, they are being fed milk by their mother and have a lot of free time, most of which they use to play.

"In animal behavior work, we tend to think of play as a way that an animal learns and sort of preps itself to take

on a more complicated set of potential behaviors as an adult," Cook says.

So was the sea lion just playing with the octopus?

It's hard to say, Cook says, but it's possible. "They do like to fiddle with their food, and throwing an octopus around could be pretty fun," he says.

Cook says he has witnessed sea lions in captivity playing with leftover food after finishing a meal. For half an hour or so, a sea lion might throw a piece of fish up and down, playing catch with itself.

For Cook, a sign that this sea lion might have been messing around with the octopus is that after the smacking incident, the sea lion circles back, swimming very slowly. The way it turns and flops its flipper tells Cook that it's pretty relaxed, and sea lions are not usually relaxed when they're chasing down food.

At the same time, sea lions also sometimes throw their food around to make it easier to eat.

Reichmuth says the video could portray typical sea lion foraging. "The behavior in that video is pretty normal behavior for a sea lion that is feeding on prey that is too big to swallow whole," Reichmuth says.

Sea lions don't have grinding teeth, so while they can hold onto a slippery fish or octopus, they can't chew it well. Instead, they bring the prey to the surface and

smash it on the water to break it into bite-size pieces, she says.

Reichmuth and Cook agree that it is entirely likely a feeding sea lion would have flung the octopus out of the water and smashed it on the surface, whether the kayakers had been there or not.

Sea lions typically regard humans with indifference. "They definitely will approach people and look at them, but they mostly just do their own thing," Cook says.

So it's unlikely the sea lion was using the octopus as a weapon to fight the humans, according to Cook. "The idea of a sea lion hitting a person aggressively with an object — I've never heard of that happening. I'd be very surprised," he says.

But even though sea lions can be indifferent toward humans, it doesn't mean they can't be bugged by us, Reichmuth says. "Sea lions are playful animals, but that doesn't mean they're not disturbed by the presence of people," she says, especially when they are carrying out biologically important activities like foraging for food.

The kayakers, she says, most likely paddled into an area where the sea lion was feeding, putting them in the line of fire. "You see the animal surface a few times, so [the kayakers] probably were not where they should have been, maybe a little too close to feeding animals," she says.

This makes her think that while the video is entertaining, it also evokes a larger issue: the encroachment of people into wildlife areas.

Common courtesy for wildlife, she says, is to stay well away from the "threshold of response," which is when animals alter their behavior because of human presence.

In the end, though, it's hard to know with certainty what the now world famous sea lion was doing with the octopus, or if its behavior was affected by the kayakers.

Anytime someone witnesses a novel sea lion behavior, or the unexpected actions of any behaviorally flexible animal, Cook says, there's often speculation about why it might have done it.

"Frequently people observe sea lions doing new things that we did not know they could do," Cook says. "There are always a lot of questions, and we make our best guess. But, yeah, they can surprise you."

Rachel D. Cohen is an intern on NPR's Science Desk.

The Effects Of Sexual Assault On The Brain

Morning Edition, · NPR's Rachel Martin talks with Jim Hopper, a teaching associate at Harvard Medical School, about sexual assault and its effects on the brain.

Transcript

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The Senate judiciary committee is set to vote today on the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh. The hearing about a sexual assault accusation provoked different emotions for the millions of Americans watching it. For many, it was a grim reminder of trauma in their own lives and the power and limits of memory. For some, watching Christine Blasey Ford testify Christine Blasey Ford was like watching her relive the alleged assault in her mind 36 years later. We're going to hear now from someone with a specialty in stress, sexual trauma and memory. Jim Hopper is a teaching associate at Harvard Medical School, an expert on sexual assault and its effects on the brain. And he joins us in our studios. Dr. Hopper, thanks for coming in.

JIM HOPPER: Thanks for having me.

MARTIN: When Christine Blasey Ford gave her testimony, she said she was terrified to be there. Her

voice shook. Her throat often caught as she spoke. But she also described her symptoms in a way that showed her training as a psychologist.

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: I want to play a clip that begins with a question from California Democrat Dianne Feinstein. Let's listen.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

DIANNE FEINSTEIN: Can you tell us what impact the event's had on you?

CHRISTINE BLASEY FORD: Well, I think that the sequela of sexual assault varies by person. So for me personally, anxiety, phobia and PTSD-like symptoms are the types of things that I've been coping with. So more specifically, claustrophobia, panic and that type of thing.

MARTIN: Did you find her testimony to reveal a special amount of insight on her part into her own psyche?

HOPPER: Yes, definitely. I mean, she's someone who's thought about this for a long time, studied it, struggled with it personally. And as we heard in that clip, you know, she brings out words that are technical, like sequela, basically meaning the effects of things. So yes, she definitely was - had insight into it. At the same time, sometimes people use technical language in real abstractions in order to distance themselves from the

emotions that are associated with it or the sensations, visual images and things like that that could come back. So it can have that purpose as well.

MARTIN: Did you see that happen? I thought - I mean, I'm not an expert at all, but I thought, as watching it, there were moments when you could clearly see she was in that place. She was that 15-year-old girl in that room. And then all of a sudden, she's the psychologist again.

HOPPER: Yes, definitely. And this is something that a lot of people struggle with, but you don't have to be a psychologist. People have their abstractions that they hold onto to push away the sensations and the emotions. And so it's very common. We can see that oscillation in her yesterday. Yes.

MARTIN: Republicans pointed out the gaps in her memory, that there was a lack of corroborating evidence. Are memory gaps to be expected from an event like this?

HOPPER: Definitely. I mean, memory gaps are really to be expected from any experience. We're not taking in everything we're experiencing right now. Some things we're focusing our attention on or have emotional significance to us, that's getting in. Those are called central details. But the things we're not noticing or aren't emotionally significant, they're not getting in. They're not getting encoded, and they're not going to get stored away. In a traumatic experience, as she talked about, there's this release of chemicals that affects the hippocampus. And that differential encoding between

what is focused on and what's peripheral, that's greatly amplified.

MARTIN: So it would make sense to you that she could remember Brett Kavanaugh's face and name without a doubt, with a 100 percent certainty. But she couldn't remember the house she was in. She couldn't remember when it happened.

HOPPER: Yeah, so that would be totally consistent with how memory works. And one thing I'd like to say is, you know, we can say it happened at a house. We can say it happened at a party. But what really got burned into her brain most of all was what happened in that room, and that room was a world away from that house and that party, a world of violence and horror for her.

MARTIN: You train DA offices around the country, military leaders, police departments on trauma and memory recall from traumatic events. Can you talk about the importance of setting? I mean, as you conduct these trainings - I mean, this was in public. This was...

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: ...Broadcast across the country. What is the impact of giving that kind of testimony and trying to elicit real memories on the part...

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: ...Of Rachel Mitchell who was trying to get

her...

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: ...To recall this? How did the setting play into it?

HOPPER: Yeah. So if we're talking about memories, you know, they get encoded. Then they may get stored. And then we have to retrieve them. And so the - what determines what gets retrieved is probably the context that we're in, as you're describing, the setting. And another thing we know is that stress impairs retrieval. So on the one hand, stress can really burn in those central details. But stress can impair our ability to retrieve them. And so as that experience is unfolding for her, it's going to sometimes impair her ability to retrieve things. And so we often heard Ms. Mitchell saying, what are you able to remember? And really what that question means is, what are you able to retrieve right now in this setting, in the state of mind and body that you are in? And there may be things that are burned into her brain that stress could make it hard to retrieve in that context.

MARTIN: It was also interesting she was very clear on what she didn't remember as well. And I imagine when dealing with witnesses, that is a good indicator - people who know their limits and are willing to articulate them.

HOPPER: It certainly helps things be clearer for everybody involved, that people can have - try to have that straight forward about what they're - they know and

what they're doubtful about. Yes.

MARTIN: I want to ask you about how the country writ large kind of internalized all of this because as people were listening to Dr. Ford's testimony, there were a lot of calls into hotlines. The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network said it experienced an unprecedented jump in calls - a jump of 147 percent.

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: I mean, can you just speak to that? Was this hearing basically a massive trigger for other people's trauma?

HOPPER: Yes, definitely. So, you know, people are sitting at home, watching or watching at an airport or something like that. And they are encountering all these reminders of their own trauma. And it's activating their brain, their body. And then, again, those sensations and emotions can start flooding in. And it can be very overwhelming to the normal defenses that they have against that.

MARTIN: Did you watch the testimony of Brett Kavanaugh?

HOPPER: I did. Yes.

MARTIN: Also emotional, compelling. He displayed his own sense of pain, talked about what this has done to his family. Do you believe based on what you saw of him

that he, too, has been traumatized by this?

HOPPER: Oh, absolutely. I mean, we could all see that. I mean, his emotions were raw. It was extreme.

MARTIN: And when you look at the sum total of that experience, it - if it was supposed to elicit truth about what happened in that room on that night, do you think the memories pieced together give us any bigger picture about what did happen?

HOPPER: Well, I would say, you know, what happened yesterday was we had a prosecutor asking her questions that were focused on everything except what happened in that room. And then the Democrats didn't spend that much time - two, maybe three senators asked her, what do you most remember? So the - it was set up in a way that would reduce the amount of information we would get from her about what she could remember about what happened in that room.

MARTIN: So it reinforced people's feelings about the whole situation and the credibility of the witnesses...

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: ...In other words. Jim Hopper is an expert on trauma and the brain. Thank you so much for being with us this morning. We appreciate it.

HOPPER: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Memory And Trauma

Morning Edition, · Thursday's testimony put a spotlight on trauma and memory. NPR's Rachel Martin talks to Tracey Shors, a professor of neuroscience and psychology, who focuses on stress, sexual trauma and memory.

Transcript

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The hearing yesterday was many things for the millions of Americans watching it. It was a grim reminder of trauma in their own lives and the power and limits of memory. Watching Christine Blasey Ford testify was like watching her relive the assault in her mind 36 years later. We're going to hear now from someone with a specialty in stress, sexual trauma and memory. Jim Hopper is a teaching associate at Harvard Medical School, an expert on sexual assault and its effects on the brain. And he joins us in our studios. Dr. Hopper, thanks for coming in.

JIM HOPPER: Thanks for having me.

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DIANNE FEINSTEIN: Can you tell us what impact the events had on you?

CHRISTINE BLASEY FORD: Well, I think that the sequelae of sexual assault varies by person. So for me personally, anxiety, phobia and PTSD-like symptoms are the types of things that I've been coping with. So more specifically, claustrophobia, panic and that type of thing.

MARTIN: Did you find her testimony to reveal a special amount of insight on her part into her own psyche?

HOPPER: Yes. Definitely. I mean, she's someone who's thought about this for a long time, studied it, struggled with it personally. And as we heard in that clip, you know, she brings out words that are technical, like sequelae, basically meaning the effects of things. So yes, she definitely has had insight into it. At the same time, sometimes people use technical language and real abstractions in order to distance themselves from the emotions that are associated with it or the sensations, the visual images and things like that that could come back. So it can have that purpose, as well.

MARTIN: Did you see that happen? I thought - I mean, I'm not an expert at all, but I thought as watching it there were moments when you could clearly see she was in

that place. She was that 15-year-old girl in that room. And then all of a sudden, she's the psychologist again.

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MARTIN: Republicans pointed out the gaps in her memory, that there was a lack of corroborating evidence. Are memory gaps to be expected from an event like this?

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MARTIN: You train DA offices around the country - military leaders, police departments, on trauma and memory recall from traumatic events. Can you talk about the importance of setting? I mean, as you conduct these trainings. I mean, this was in public. This was broadcast across the country. What is the impact of giving that kind of testimony and trying to elicit real memories, on the part of Rachel Mitchell, who was trying to get her to recall this? How did the setting play into it?

HOPPER: Yeah. So if we're talking about memories, you know, they get encoded then they may get stored, and then we have to retrieve them. And so what determines what gets retrieved is probably the context that we're in, as you're describing, the setting. And another thing we know is that stress impairs retrieval. So on the one hand, stress can really burn in those central details. But stress can impair our ability to retrieve them. And so as that experience is unfolding for her it's going to sometimes impair her ability to retrieve things, since we often heard Ms. Mitchell saying, what are you able to remember? And really what that question means is what are you able to retrieve right now in this setting, in the state of mind

and body that you are in? And there may be things that are burned into her brain that stress could make it hard to retrieve in that context.

MARTIN: It was also interesting. She was very clear on what she didn't remember, as well. And I imagine when dealing with witnesses, that is a good indicator people who know their limits and are willing to articulate them.

HOPPER: It certainly helps things be clear for everybody involved, that people can try to have that straightforward about what they know and what they're doubtful about, yes.

MARTIN: I want to ask you about how the country writ large kind of internalized all of this because as people were listening to Dr. Ford's testimony, there were a lot of calls into hotlines. The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network said it experienced an unprecedented jump in calls, a jump of 147 percent. I mean, can you just speak to that? Was this hearing basically a massive trigger for other people's trauma?

HOPPER: Yes. Definitely. So, you know, people are sitting at home watching or watching at an airport, or something like that, and they're encountering all these reminders of their own trauma and it's activating their brain, their body. And then again those sensations and emotions can start flooding in, and it can be very overwhelming to the normal defenses that they have against that.

MARTIN: Did you watch the testimony of Brett Kavanaugh?

HOPPER: I did. Yes.

MARTIN: Also emotional, compelling. He displayed his own sense of pain, talked about what this has done to his family. Do you believe, based on what you saw of him, that he, too, has been traumatized by this?

HOPPER: Absolutely. I mean, we can all see that. I mean, his emotions were raw. It was extreme.

MARTIN: And when you look at the sum total of that experience, if it was supposed to elicit truth about what happened in that room on that night, do you think the memories pieced together give us any bigger picture about what did happen?

HOPPER: Well, I would say, you know, what happened yesterday was we had a prosecutor asking her questions that were focused on everything except what happened in that room, and then the Democrats didn't spend that much time. Two, maybe three senators asked her, what do you most remember? So it was set up in a way that would reduce the amount of information we would get from her about what she could remember about what happened in that room.

MARTIN: So it reinforced people's feelings about the whole situation and the credibility of the witnesses, in other words.

HOPPER: Yeah.

MARTIN: Jim Hopper is an expert on trauma and the brain. Thank you so much for being with us this morning. We appreciate it.

HOPPER: Thank you.

You've Been To Mars And A Comet; Japan's Space Agency Invites You To An Asteroid

By Ruben Kimmelman

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Want to see what it would be like to stand on a asteroid? Well, if you were not a human but rather a seven-inch-diameter, just under 3-inch-tall, hopping robot?

A video released Thursday and taken by one of the two bouncing rovers currently on the surface of the asteroid Ryugu — over [200 million miles away from Earth](#) — shows you just this.

"Enjoy 'standing' on the surface of this asteroid!" Japan's space agency, JAXA, wrote on [their Twitter post containing the video](#).

Part of a collection of media released by the agency, the video shows the rocky surface of the asteroid and the sun moving across the sky, as seen from the asteroid.

As seen in the night sky from Earth, the asteroid — and the small rovers on it — are currently moving across the constellation [Virgo and positioned between the planets Mercury and Venus](#).

The video, which is composed of 15 frames, was captured on Sept. 23, along with the other media

[published by JAXA](#) on Thursday.

A series of photos taken by the same rover that captured the video confirms a "hop" by the robot, according to the Japanese team, which is a big deal for them.

"We were able to confirm that Rover-1B hopped!" JAXA wrote in [their tweet containing the photo series](#).

The gravity on the surface of asteroids like Ryugu is very weak. Rovers that move by wheels or tracks would float upwards as soon as they started to move. So the [rovers hop instead](#).

"Within the rover is a motor that rotates and causes the rover to "hop" (jump up) during the rebound," JAXA says on its website.

That hop propels the rovers off the ground for up to 15 minutes and allows the rover to move up to almost 50 feet horizontally along the asteroid's surface.

As quoted on JAXA's [site](#), project manager Yuichi Tsuda was at a loss for words when the rovers' on-asteroid hopping ability was first confirmed on Sept. 22.

"I cannot find words to express how happy I am that we were able to realize mobile exploration on the surface of an asteroid. I am proud that Hayabusa2 was able to contribute to the creation of this technology for a new method of space exploration by surface movement on small bodies," Tsuda said.

According to the JAXA website for the mission, the two hopping rovers that have captured the media are called Rover-1A and Rover-1B.

The rovers were stored within a container called MINERVA-II1. The container was launched from the spacecraft Hayabusa2 last week and that spacecraft is currently orbiting the asteroid.

MINERVA stands for Micro Nano Experimental Robot Vehicle for Asteroid. The twos in MINERVA-II1 and Hayabusa2 come from the fact that this is a successor mission. However, the first [Hayabusa failed to land its hopper](#), the original MINERVA, on the surface of the asteroid Itokawa more than a decade ago.

"The image taken by MINERVA-II1 during a hop allowed me to relax as a dream of many years came true," Takashi Kubota, a spokesperson for the project was quoted as saying on the project's website.

Both the series of hopping photos and the video were taken by Rover-1B, which, despite having the designation of being the "B" rover, seems to have stolen the show.

However, Rover-1A did capture an image which displays the shadow of its own antenna and pin.

The pins on the rovers have a few roles: they increase friction when hopping, protect the solar cells that power the robots when landing, and a few of the pins have a sensor that can measure the asteroid's surface

temperature directly.

Because Ryugu is a primitive asteroid, [NPR's Bill Chappell has reported](#), studying it could help scientists understand the evolution of Earth as a planet and learn more about how the solar system works.

While the Rover-1B might think it is the center of the solar system following its video premiere, both rovers and their asteroid host are currently in between the orbits of Earth and Mars more than 100 million miles away from the sun.

NASA Hosts Conference All About Looking For Signs Of Civilization Beyond Earth

All Things Considered, · NPR's Mary Louise Kelly speaks with astrophysicist Adam Frank, who is attending a NASA conference in Houston that's exploring how to discover intelligent life beyond earth.

Transcript

MARY LOUISE KELLY, HOST:

Astrophysicist Adam Frank is bouncing in his seat. He is that excited to be at a NASA conference in Houston - a NASA conference all about looking for signs of civilization somewhere far beyond Earth. This sort of meeting has not happened in decades, so we've got Adam on the line to tell us all about it. Hey there.

ADAM FRANK: Hey, how's it going?

KELLY: Well, thank you. So why hasn't this kind of meeting happened in decades, and why now?

FRANK: Well, in the 1990s, NASA was - had a project for doing search for extraterrestrial intelligence, or SETI. And it turned out that some people in Congress thought it was a giant waste of taxpayer dollars. But since then, you know, researchers - there was sort of the sense that

NASA was not the place to do SETI. And so even though NASA has done amazing work in searching for life, it has really not done much about searching for intelligent life.

KELLY: So you're at a NASA conference now, though, and they are searching for signs of extraterrestrial life. That's the focus of this conference?

FRANK: Yeah. Well, really what they're looking to do is they're looking for help, suggestions in terms of looking for technosignatures.

KELLY: What's a technosignature?

FRANK: A technosignature is basically any signal or evidence you can find that there is a technology-using civilization out there. So we have been talking about things for the last couple days like looking for pollution in the atmosphere of a distant planet. We've talked about detecting satellites - their satellites in orbit. We've even talked about the ability to see cities on distant planets because of their heat signature. So it's really all amazing stuff, and we're really getting to the point where some of this is going to be possible now, or it is going to be possible in the near future.

KELLY: For the record, have they found anything?

FRANK: No. We have not found anything yet. But the important thing to understand is that, you know, people have this idea that, like, SETI's happening all the time, that astronomers are always looking for civilizations

among the stars. And it's actually not true. One of the talks that was given was by a researcher who actually looked at how much searching we've done, and it turns out that if the stars were, like, at the ocean, then the only thing that we've looked at so far is a hot tub (laughter).

KELLY: Because there's just so - it's so big. There's so much to look at.

FRANK: There's so much to look at. And we've done so little of it so far. So if you're interested in whether or not there are dolphins in the ocean and you've looked at one hot tub and you didn't find a dolphin, would you then say like, oh, there's no dolphins in the ocean?

KELLY: You're making the case for optimists. The fact that they haven't found anything yet by no means rules out that it's out there and could be found.

FRANK: That's true. What has really changed now is the discovery of exoplanets - that we've found all these planets orbiting other stars whereas, 20 years ago, we didn't know whether there were any planets orbiting any other stars. And that changes the whole nature of how we go about looking for them.

KELLY: It raises all kinds of possibilities in terms of places to look.

FRANK: That's it and that we're finally actually able to stare at planets, which is where we think life forms. And if you look at the history of SETI, originally taking a

radio telescope and looking for someone beaming messages to you - right? - an intentional signal, and now with these exoplanets that we're staring at, we can look for unintentional signal, things like pollution or satellites in orbit. And that really changes the game. It's not your grandparents' SETI anymore.

KELLY: Thank you, Adam.

FRANK: Oh, it so much fun. Thank you.

KELLY: Adam Frank - he teaches astrophysics at the University of Rochester. His most recent book is "Light Of The Stars: Alien Worlds And The Fate Of The Earth."

(SOUNDBITE OF JOHN WILLIAMS' "CANTO BIGHT")

Fire Ecologists Say More Fires Should Be Left To Burn. So Why Aren't They?

By Nathan Rott

All Things Considered, · When a wildfire starts, whether by lightning or human hand, it is almost always smothered.

Firefighters and aircraft are dispatched at the first sign of smoke. Ground crews build tight containment lines, contouring where they can with the fire's edge. Helicopters douse hot spots and flames with deluges of foamy water.

The public and media extol their efforts. The headline reads, "Brave firefighters tame destructive fire."

Malcolm North, a fire ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service and the University of California, Davis, gets it. He once worked as a wildland firefighter himself.

The problem, he says, is that approach to wildfire is not just short-sighted, it's dangerous.

Overgrown forests, the result of a century of aggressive firefighting, are one of the biggest contributors to the types of massive, catastrophic fires that are becoming more common in much of the west.

A lesson we learn [over](#), and [over](#), and [over](#).

"Every time you get one of these big fires, it is the result of 100 years of management decisions where they went and put out lightning strikes, they limited or shut down prescribed fire. And those decisions eventually accumulate and bite you in the butt," he says, between quick breaths, hiking up a rock-strewn trail in the Sierra Nevada.

Miles back, North passed a sign declaring the trail closed due to a fire ahead. The sky is a muted blue and the jagged Sierra peaks to the west are fuzzy from a haze of drifting smoke.

North is hiking towards the fire — [the Lions Fire](#) — because it's an example of a different approach. It was, for a brief moment, the rare fire that forest managers decided not to smother, but to let burn.

It's also a good example of just how difficult that decision can be.

A rare opportunity

The Lions Fire started the way a wildfire should, when lightning struck a tree-covered ridge in the Ansel Adams Wilderness, south of Yosemite National Park.

That already made it a rarity. The [vast majority of wildfires](#), 84 percent, are human-caused.

It also made the fire an opportunity.

The Forest Service has been talking about [letting more naturally-caused wildfires burn](#) for decades. There's a recognition that wildfire is part of the landscape across much of America. Forests evolved with fire. They [depend on it](#).

The area the Lions Fire was burning hadn't burned in a long time, and there were indications that fire was needed. Half of the trees in the surrounding forest were already dead, killed by beetles. A windstorm, years earlier, had downed thousands of trees to the east of the fire, creating a jumbled mess on the forest floor.

For forest managers like Denise Tolmie, a district ranger in the Sierra National Forest, the Lions Fire seemed like an opportunity to restore some health to the forest.

It checked all of the boxes.

It started naturally, early in the season. It was far away from people and property. It was in an area that had seen fire historically but hadn't burned in some time.

"Initially we said, 'Yup. This fire is in a good place,'" Tolmie says. "Can we have positive effects from the fire? Yes we can."

So the Forest Service allowed the fire to burn over a 2,000 acre area, she says. Fire crews were sent in to make sure the fire stayed in that area, but they didn't go with the goal of stamping out every flame. They were there to manage the fire, not fight it.

This decision is incredibly rare.

"It's a nail-biter," Tolmie says. "You're making a decision where — I usually do it as: Did I dot every 'i' and cross every 't'?"

The Forest Service stopped counting how many fires it and other agencies manage this way in 2009, as part of a larger policy change. From the years 1998 to 2008 though, [the last with data](#), less than half of one percent — 0.4 percent — of all ignitions in the U.S. were allowed to burn. The rest were put out.

The Lions Fire would be no different.

Delaying the inevitable

A stump burns in a swirl of flame on the eastern edge of the Lions Fire. Smoke rises from downed logs and stump holes under a canopy of tall trees.

The forest is quiet, apart from the occasional crack or pop of wood and flame.

"It almost seems peaceful," North says. "It's kind of nice."

The Lions Fire is burning through this area at a low-intensity, slowly creeping through pine needles, branches and brush on the forest floor.

Historically, North says, a lot of the forests in the Sierras saw fire like this about every 20 years. For the last century, the Forest Service has been aggressively putting

those fires out.

But the conifers didn't stop dropping needles. Trees didn't stop growing or falling down. Without fire, that vegetation has built up over time.

North looks at that accumulation as a debt that society, someday, is going to have to pay off.

"Every time you put a fire out, you're just postponing it. You're just kicking the can down the road," he says. "And not only are you postponing it, but you just increase the actual fuel load that is out there, so when it does happen you get these massive megafire events."

[Climate change](#) is another major contributor to the those types of fires. And the effects of it are only expected to [worsen the problem](#) going forward.

But there has been more political attention on the issue of overgrown forests of late.

The Trump administration is [calling for more 'active' logging](#) and thinning in western forests. The goal is to reduce fire risk and jump-start resource-dependent economies in parts of the rural west.

There are logistical challenges to doing that though. The Lions Fire, for example, is burning in the wilderness, an area where mechanical thinning or logging is prohibited.

"We can't thin our way out of this," North says.

Prescribed fire needs to be utilized more often, he says, and more fires need to be allowed to burn.

Full suppression

A couple of days after forest managers decided to let the Lions Fire burn, a weather event brought high winds to the area. The fire jumped from a couple dozen acres to over 1,000 overnight, expanding beyond the area in which forest managers wanted to keep it.

With the change in conditions, management of the fire changed too. Helicopters went in to douse the flames. Fire crews came in by aircraft to stop the fire's spread. It was now being fully suppressed.

That was welcome news to the residents of Mammoth Lakes, a resort ski town about seven miles from where the fire was burning.

For weeks, smoke from the Lions Fire had inundated the town, driving away tourists and vacation home owners.

"Nature has to do its thing, but there comes a point where it gets too close for comfort," says Cruz Jonathan Valleflares, who works at a local car rental agency. "Tourism is a huge part of this community, so if tourism doesn't come through, there's no money. There's no jobs."

Those concerns were shared by many in the community. Some wrote angry op-eds in the local newspaper. Others

vented their frustrations on social media.

"We are all angry about the smoke," says John Wentworth, a town councilman. "But personally, I know there's no future in denial. There's no future in just saying, 'put out every fire that you see,' because that's just going to put money in the bank for the big one that's going to come here and burn us to the ground."

North was disappointed with the decision to suppress the fire.

He understands why it was made, but he points to a section of forest floor in the still-smoldering Lions Fire. The pine needles and branches are gone, replaced by a layer of black ash.

"These are the fire effects you want to see," he says. "High-severity catastrophic fire — it's going to be a lot harder for that to happen here."

A Drifting Weedkiller Puts Prized Trees At Risk

By Dan Charles

All Things Considered, · Mike Hayes and I are sitting on the patio of [Blue Bank Resort](#), the business he owns on Reelfoot Lake, in Tennessee. The sun is going down. It's beautiful.

What really catches your eye here is the cypress trees. They line the lake, and thousands of them are standing right in the water. Hayes tells me that they are more than 200 years old.

They were here in 1812, when the lake was formed: A cataclysmic earthquake shook this area, the land dropped, and water from the Mississippi River rushed in and covered 15,000 acres of cypress forest. Yet these trees survived and became a home for fish and birds.

"The fishing's around the tree; the eagles nest in the tree, the egrets. So much wildlife all out in the trees," he says. "The trees define Reelfoot Lake."

Last year, though, Hayes noticed that the trees didn't look right. Their needles were turning brown. Some were curling. "Something was going on that never happened before," he says.

Neighbors were talking about it. Everybody had a theory: disease; drought; insects. "They thought of other things,

but when it came down to it, it was a drifting chemical,” Hayes says.

The chemical is called dicamba. It’s a weedkiller, and it blew in from nearby soybean and cotton fields.

Similar things have happened across the Midwest and Mid-South over the past two years. From Mississippi to Illinois, people have noticed trees or other kinds of wild vegetation that show signs of damage from dicamba. The Environmental Protection Agency now has to decide whether farmers should be allowed to keep using this chemical in quite the same way. The agency’s previous approval expires at the end of the year.

Many farmers have come to rely on dicamba. In the area around Reelfoot Lake, the vast majority of farmers use the chemical, says Jason Hamlin, a consultant who works with farmers in west Tennessee and southeastern Missouri.

Farmers have turned to dicamba because it still works; many other herbicides don’t anymore, because weeds have become resistant to them. Dicamba is a new option for farmers growing soybeans and cotton because the big seed company Monsanto, which is now owned by Bayer, created new genetically modified versions of these crops that can tolerate dicamba. This means that farmers can spray this chemical and the weeds die, but the crops are fine. Farmers got permission to spray dicamba on their new, tolerant crops two years ago.

"Nobody wants it to get on their neighbor's crop, the tree line, the lake, the state park, whatever; nobody wants that. But they have to have a tool to control their weeds or they can't farm, you know?" says Hamlin.

Dicamba has long been known as a chemical that's hard to control. It can evaporate from the soil or plants where it was sprayed, and that vapor can drift for miles. But both Monsanto and the chemical company BASF developed new "low volatility" formulations to solve this problem.

The problem resurfaced, though. In each of the past two years, drifting dicamba has been blamed for damaging more than 1 million acres of neighboring crops, mostly soybeans. It has provoked fights between farmers and set off a huge controversy.

Receiving less attention, so far, is the damage to wild plants. Few people were watching them quite so closely.

"I've never really paid attention to trees," says Tom Burnham, a farmer in Mississippi County, Ark. "But in the last two or three years I've actually started looking at trees in people's yards and everything, and you know it's amazing, once you start looking, what you see."

So I started looking. Greg Allen, an agricultural extension agent with the University of Tennessee, took me on a little drive down a country road a few miles from Reelfoot Lake. We passed a big field of soybeans on our right. On our left was woodland.

I didn't really know what to look for. I asked Allen what caught his eye. He rolled down his window and gestured toward a nearby tree. "Well, one thing that would've caught my eye is that sycamore, and them itty-bitty leaves," he says.

Normal sycamore leaves are big and flat; these are curved into the shape of small cups, a sign of exposure to dicamba. "And you can see it goes all the way to the top," he says. "That's a 30- or 40-foot tree."

I realize that the leaves of almost every sycamore tree nearby show similar symptoms. Other trees, though, do not. Dicamba affects various plant species very differently. Based on what scientists have observed this past year, the tree species that seem most sensitive to dicamba include sycamore, cypress, Bradford pear, and white oak.

The amount of damage also changes from place to place. In Iowa, forestry experts haven't seen many signs of exposure to dicamba. In Arkansas, though, a scientist that state officials hired to conduct a survey saw dicamba-damaged trees in every town that he visited across the northeastern part of the state.

It's now up to the EPA to decide just how much protection these trees need, balancing that against the desire of many farmers to keep using dicamba.

There are billions of dollars at stake. Monsanto is arguing that the government can't take this tool away

from farmers. If used properly, the company says, dicamba doesn't hurt anything but weeds.

Back at Reelfoot Lake, Hayes says his prematurely brown cypress trees are evidence that this isn't true. He thinks state politicians are ignoring the problem — in part because they're scared of Monsanto.

"The problem with dicamba is, there's so much money behind it," he says with a deep sigh. "I've never seen so many people run from a problem so bad in my life. It really hurts to lose what we're about to lose."

Dicamba hasn't killed the trees in the lake, but Hayes is convinced that the chemical has weakened them. And new cypress trees can't sprout and grow in the water. The trees that make Reelfoot Lake what it is — if they die, they're gone forever, he says.

Apples Or Fries With That? When It Comes To Kids' Meals, Fries Are Hard To Beat

By Rachel D. Cohen

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · In the past few years, consumer advocacy groups have pressed restaurant chains to offer healthier kids' meals and more nutritious side options like milk and fruit, and the restaurants have responded.

In 2013, McDonald's [pledged](#) to remove all mentions and images of soda from Happy Meal menu boards, and shortly thereafter, other fast-food restaurants began to devise policies to introduce nutritious drink and side options beyond fries and dessert. McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's and Subway — the four biggest fast-food chains — [replaced](#) soda on kids' meal menus with low-fat milk, water and 100 percent juice, and McDonald's and Subway [promised](#) to make fruit and vegetable sides available.

So have the voluntary pledges to make fast food healthier meant parents are purchasing more of the healthier food for their kids at the restaurants?

Not really, says a [study](#) released Thursday by the University of Connecticut's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. And that may not be a good sign for children's health.

The study documented about 800 parents' purchases for their children at McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's and Subway through online surveys conducted in 2010, 2013 and 2016.

Between 2010 and 2016, the percentage of parents who purchased kids' meals and received healthier drinks remained about the same at 59-60 percent. And from 2013 to 2016, the percentage of parents who purchased kids' meals with healthier sides actually declined from 67 percent in 2013 to 50 percent in 2016.

Also, parents report buying fast food for their children more often. In fact, 91 percent of parents surveyed in 2016 said they had purchased a meal for their child at the four largest fast-food chains in the past week, compared with 79 percent in 2010.

"It appears that restaurants' voluntary policies as currently implemented are unlikely to substantially reduce children's fast-food consumption overall, or increase their consumption of healthy items," the study says.

The report doesn't really surprise researchers. Past studies conducted by Rudd have shown that fast-food restaurants are following their own voluntary pledges inconsistently.

For example, at one McDonald's location, the cashier may automatically include soda with a kids' meal, at another location you might need to ask, and the same

goes for french fries, the study found. While all chains removed the items listed in their pledges from their online menus, many still listed soda on kids' meal menus in the brick-and-mortar restaurants.

Still, the "health halo" of the healthy offering policies seems to resonate with parents. Nearly all parents surveyed in the latest Rudd study said they would purchase food for their children at that restaurant more frequently because of the healthy offerings. But Harris says while they may have health in mind when entering the restaurant, this doesn't always lead to healthy choices.

"The marketing of the healthy options available is getting people in the door, but it's unlikely they'll take the effort to ask if [the restaurant has] something healthier," says the study's lead author, [Dr. Jennifer L. Harris](#), the director of marketing initiatives at the Rudd Center.

Instead, Harris says, the best option for public health would be to automatically include the healthy options with the kids' meals. "If fast-food restaurants start automatically giving patients healthy choices, that would be encouraging," she says.

[Hillary Caron](#), a senior policy associate at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, says that the Rudd Center's study is particularly interesting because it demonstrates the power of defaults in consumer decision-making. That is, if the meal comes with fries unless you ask for apple slices instead, you're likely to get fries.

Some government officials have already taken this message to heart. Just last week, California became the first state to pass a healthy-kids'-meal policy when Gov. Jerry Brown signed [legislation](#) that prohibits soda and other sugary drinks from being the designated beverages that come with kids' meals. Similar bills have passed in cities like [Louisville, Ky.](#), and [Baltimore](#) and have been proposed in [New York City](#) and [D.C.](#)

Harris says that the findings of the latest Rudd study indicate a need for such public policies. Voluntary and mandatory policies could work hand in hand, though, according to Caron.

"Both approaches reinforce each other," Caron writes in an email to NPR. Voluntary commitments from restaurants, she says, help make the case for state and local policies because they show that the changes are achievable. But state and local policies ensure that the principles apply to all restaurants, not just chains that propose voluntary health policies.

Still, Harris wants people to remember that even if the fast food offered at restaurants is billed as healthy, most fast-food meals still consist of chicken nuggets, burgers and fries.

"It's important to communicate that fast-food meals are not healthy options," Harris says. "Replacing soda with milk or water doesn't make the meal healthy," she adds. "It's a small step, but in the right direction."

Rachel D. Cohen is an intern on NPR's Science Desk.

Education

Can Schools Use Federal Funds To Arm Teachers?

By Cory Turner

All Things Considered, · This question came up again and again Tuesday during an at-times heated [hearing](#) of the Senate's education committee: Does the law allow schools to use federal money to arm teachers?

The federal money in question comes from Title IV of the big, k-12 federal education law known as The Every Student Succeeds Act. It's a billion-dollar pot intended for what the law calls "student support and academic enrichment."

"There's a range of services that Title IV funds, from computer science programs, music, art, STEM, extended learning time," said Shavar Jeffries, one of four witnesses at Tuesday's hearing and head of Education Reform Now.

In fact, Title IV is pretty expansive in what it allows school districts to buy. In addition to a range of academic services, the law also permits spending on "violence prevention." That's the beating heart of the current debate.

Last month, the [New York Times](#) reported that Education Secretary Betsy DeVos was considering allowing districts to use Title IV money to arm teachers. Since then, DeVos

has made clear, if that's what districts want, she won't stop them. The department's reasoning: The law leaves the choice up to states.

In Tuesday's Senate hearing, the committee's top Republican, Lamar Alexander, said he's no fan of arming teachers but agreed with DeVos.

"As I read the law," Alexander said, "Title IV specifically gives states the decision about spending their money to create safe conditions, including drug and violence prevention."

Again, Alexander is referring to that section of the law that talks about using the money to promote school safety — so that students "are free from violent and disruptive acts." But Democrats point to the same section, which also prioritizes "the creation of a school environment that is free of weapons."

Democrat Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts pointed out at the hearing that many schools can barely afford nurses or guidance counselors. "Allowing schools to use scarce federal dollars to put guns in classrooms is an idea that is dangerous and dumb, and it clearly wasn't our intent."

This debate, around what lawmakers intended, is not entirely partisan. According to [*Education Week*](#), Rep. Tom Cole, the powerful, Oklahoma Republican, agrees with Democrats. Using Title IV dollars to arm teachers is "against the law," he said recently, and if DeVos and

Alexander continue down this path, they could find themselves in court.

One big caveat: This debate is still largely hypothetical. It's not clear many states have any interest in using Title IV dollars to arm teachers, especially if the hearing's panelists are any indication.

"I would say, in Nebraska's case, we've had no serious conversations at all about trying to use federal funds for that approach and I wouldn't support that," said Matthew Blomstedt, the education commissioner in Nebraska.

And Molly Spearman, a former teacher and South Carolina's current schools superintendent, said her state is focusing its efforts "on mental health counselors, school resource officers, and training of teachers."

In recent weeks, lawmakers have been crafting a spending bill for the U.S. Department of Education, and Democrats have tried to add language that makes clear — these dollars cannot be used to arm teachers. But [the bill](#) currently moving through Congress includes no such ban.

Should We Teach About Consent In K-12? Brett Kavanaugh's Home State Says Yes

By Anya Kamenetz

All Things Considered, · When the [Access Hollywood tape of Donald Trump](#), along with sexual assault stories involving [Brock Turner](#) and [Bill Cosby](#), hit the news back in 2016, a middle school student in Maryland named Maeve Sanford-Kelly was listening.

"I was frankly really distraught," she recalls. "I felt powerless. I assumed that this was what happened, that sexual harassment and sexual assault was a *thing* in our society and it wasn't going to change because it was part of the power structure."

Her mother had an idea that might help. Ariana Kelly, a Democrat, is a delegate in the Maryland state legislature, and she introduced a bill that would require the state to include consent in sex ed classes. Maeve and her friends, as well as student groups across the state, campaigned and testified for the bill.

It defines consent as "the unambiguous and voluntary agreement between all participants in each physical act within the course of interpersonal relationships."

Before they turn 18, about 8 percent of girls and 0.7 percent of boys experience rape or attempted rape,

[according to](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In the majority of these reported cases, the CDC says, the perpetrator is a peer: either an acquaintance or a current or former intimate partner.

And yet few schools across the country are required to teach about consent or healthy relationships in sex ed classes.

Currently, according to a report in May by the [Center for American Progress](#), under a dozen states mention the terms "healthy relationships," "sexual assault" or "consent" in their sex education programs.

But with the #MeToo movement, that might be changing. Since the beginning of 2018, five states besides Maryland have introduced bills to require the teaching of consent in sex ed.

Amy Tiemann is a neuroscientist and educator and co-author of a new book on child safety, *Doing Right By Our Kids*. She works with KidPower, a child safety education group. She says the message of respect for others and your own body can be made simple and empowering even for young children.

"They can be 3 years old, they can be 15 years old, they can be in college, and we don't know who might be a potential perpetrator or who might be a potential victim someday," she says. "And people can be both."

In KidPower's training and materials, Tiemann adds, they

emphasize a few key messages:

- Touch is the choice of both people.
- It needs to be safe and it needs to not be against the rules or against the law.
- If you have a problem you should speak up — problems should not be secrets.
- It's never too late to tell and you should keep telling until you get help.

Alan Berkowitz is a psychologist and expert on sexual assault prevention. He said that one approach to consent education, backed by a lot of research, is to use positive social norms.

"One of the most powerful ways of encouraging young people to make healthy decisions is to know the truth about their friends, because in fact most of their friends are healthy."

He says that, for example, "Boys may think their friends enjoy hearing about sexual exploits and talking about girls and women's bodies," but research shows, in most peer groups, a silent majority disapproves and is uncomfortable. For that reason, he says, effective consent education also focuses on the role of bystanders in speaking up.

Kelly's bill failed the first time it was submitted. Similar bills have faltered recently in Massachusetts, Mississippi,

Utah, and Virginia, with opposing voices, both Democrats and Republicans, arguing that explaining consent is tantamount to condoning sex, while others say the topic should be the province of families, not schools.

But the Maryland law passed on a second try. Schools in Montgomery County, where Maeve is now in ninth grade, are now using resources like a viral video that compares consent to a cup of tea.

Maeve and her mother Ariana Kelly both see reasons to hope for change in this generation — not just because of what teachers will be teaching, but what students themselves are saying. Kelly says she's found it especially heartwarming to see teenage boys speak up "passionately" about this issue.

Teenagers like Matt Post, who at age 16 campaigned for the bill, and recruited friends to do so as well. "Guys cannot relegate themselves to the sidelines on this issue," he says. "Ending misogyny starts with us."

Today, Post is a first-year at Yale University, Judge Brett Kavanaugh's alma mater — a place that's been under the microscope recently for the behavior of its male students. He says that while things seem to have improved somewhat from decades ago, what he calls rape culture is still around, and many of his peers have gaps in their understanding of healthy relationships.

"They don't understand the ongoing nature of consent. They don't understand that a incapacitated yes is not

really a yes," he says. "I think it's still sort of a mixed bag and I think it's because of when we were respectively taught these lessons."

He hopes more education, starting as young as kindergarten, can help.

So does Maeve Sanford-Kelly. Sexual assault is once again in the news, and it hits her close to home, with the Kavanaugh allegations set in suburban Maryland. She's seen many friends posting on social media about affirmative consent and with messages of support for survivors.

"It brings me joy to see that all of the kids who are my age, even the ones who could be seen as comparable to [Kavanaugh], go to the same schools, living in the same environment, are different. And I think that is positive change that we have seen."

Need Help Paying For College? There's An App For That

By Cory Turner

Morning Edition, · At midnight, Oct. 1, the rush begins.

That's when first-time and returning college students can get their first look at the 2019-'20 FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Anyone who wants the government's help paying for college has to finish the notoriously complicated form. But this year, in an effort to make it easier, the U.S. Department of Education has given the FAFSA a new look: a smartphone application [for iOS and Android](#) devices.

"Every year, we handle over 250 million transactions of some shape, form or fashion," says A. Wayne Johnson, the chief strategy and transformation officer at the department's office of Federal Student Aid.

The problem, Johnson says, is that students who most need help paying for college often have the hardest time filling out the FAFSA. It asks questions about families' income and tax status that many low-income students struggle to answer because the only computer in their lives is at school — where their parents can't help them. That's why, when Johnson arrived at the department last year, he says, "the very first thing that I wrote on my board was FAFSA."

As in: How can the department make this thing easier?

Considering the government received 19 million FAFSA forms in 2016-'17, making it easier could help a lot of potential borrowers.

"We want the experience of a student to be every bit as good as if they were a customer of American Express, a customer of a major credit union," Johnson says.

He should know. His hiring was controversial with some Democrats because he comes from the private banking world. Johnson has worked for VISA and even run his own, private student loan company. Since coming to the department, Johnson says he's fast-tracked the development of the My Student Aid app.

Ultimately, the department hopes the app will be a one-stop shop for students. A place they can research colleges, check their loan balance and even make a payment. But the real game-changer comes soon, Oct. 1, when borrowers will be able to fill out the FAFSA on their phones using the new app.

"Many families, including low-income families, rely on smartphones solely for their internet access," says Kim Cook, executive director of the National College Access Network.

Cook says, in the past, many students had no choice but to fill out the FAFSA in a school computer lab. They still can, especially if they're getting help from a counselor,

but now they can also take it home — for the questions that only a parent can answer. They'll also be able to access the [IRS' data-retrieval tool](#), which helps students by autopopulating the FAFSA with key tax information.

Cook believes this new app also changes the game for school counselors and advocates, like her, who are trying to spread the word about the importance of applying for federal student aid. A mobile FAFSA allows them "to meet students where they are, at festivals, at football games. To meet parents where they are, maybe at brownbag lunches or financial aid nights."

Maybe you're thinking, 'This sounds great, but what does the Education Department know about building a good app?'

It turns out, Cook's group worked with the department to do early user-testing.

"Students flew through this app," Cook says. "It was amazing to see how native they are to using apps. They said the app was easy. Parents as well."

Cook says they did find a few hang-ups, and the department insists it's listening and already making changes.

The fact is, this form still won't be easy for everyone. It never will be — unless Congress [radically rewrites](#) the FAFSA. For now, though, students can take some comfort knowing that it may not be easy, but it did just get

easier.

How To Talk To Young People About The Kavanaugh Story

By Anya Kamenetz

Morning Edition, · Young people around the country are among those joining the debate over Christine Blasey Ford's accusation of sexual assault against Judge Brett Kavanaugh in 1982, when both were teenagers.

What are teens learning from all this? And how should adults be handling this conversation?

One night during the summer of 2017, a teenager named Francesca in Virginia was assaulted by a classmate: "I was pinned down and he fondled my breasts and sexually assaulted me." We're only using her first name because she's 15 years old.

Francesca says she struggled at first with coming forward, but eventually became an activist and public speaker on consent and survivors' rights.

Jules Spector, meanwhile, is an 18-year-old graduate of a private high school in Brooklyn, now taking a gap year before attending Wellesley College.

Spector is also a survivor of sexual assault, and it took her years to come forward. She says she's willing to use her full name because she is a feminist activist who feels the importance of raising public awareness.

The accusations against Judge Kavanaugh have reminded her of parties she's attended, and boys she knew in high school.

"A lot of boys that I've grown up around have the thought that they can do anything," Spector says. "And these decisions that they make, whether inebriated or not, won't follow them later in life because they can just forget about the horrors that they caused people and move on with their lives and become successful."

She says she admires Christine Blasey Ford for confronting the issue.

"The amount of strength it takes to come forward is unparalleled. And no one does it for attention, because it's the most painful thing you could possibly do, but also the strongest thing you could possibly do."

For too many young people like Spector and Francesca listening to the news right now, they're not learning about sexual violation — because that's already happened, if not to them then to someone they know.

What they *are* learning, educators say, is whether the adults in power will take these claims seriously, and whether speaking up results in harsher consequences for survivors or for those accused.

So how are we supposed to talk to our children about all this? Here's some guidance from experts:

1. It's your job.

"As parents, you are the primary sexuality educator of your children — whether you're saying anything or not," says Debra Hauser, the president of Advocates for Youth, a national nonprofit that works for honest sexual health education. Francesca works with the organization.

When something like this is in the news, as it has been all too often lately, Hauser adds, it's "a great teachable moment." Talking about a situation that doesn't personally affect your kids or someone they know can be a less threatening way to open up the topic.

2. It's not too soon.

Hauser says conversations about consent and bodily autonomy can — and should — predate any discussion of the mechanics of sex.

"You see two 4- or 5-year-olds, where one wants to borrow the other one's crayon and they just grab it," she explains. "And the response that you have is, 'You have to ask for it. And if that other child says no, you have to respect that and find another way to get a crayon.' That's the very beginning of consent education right there."

3. Give them the information.

Karen Rayne is a sex educator with a nonprofit called UnHushed. She also has a daughter in middle school and one in high school. She says giving kids the facts

they need is especially crucial for younger teens. "They're going to hear whispers and not really have access to full information or the skill set to find that information."

4. Be the "askable" parent.

In other words, Hauser explains, be the one that your children can come to with questions. She says that, by bringing up tough topics even when they make you uncomfortable, you increase the likelihood that your child will do the same.

Francesca says she confided first in her friends about her assault. It took her awhile to share the story with her mother.

"My mom was surprised and very upset as any mother would be, but she was very very helpful," Francesca says. Her mother, sadly, had her own experience of sexual violence to draw on. "She knew the process and the importance of reporting the crime to the police."

5. Or designate someone else they can talk with.

Each year, on their birthdays, Hauser would tell each of her children (who are now grown) to name a trusted adult outside of the family to share hard things with. Things they might be tempted to keep secret because of a fear of punishment, a fear of disappointing a parent, or for any other reason.

" Let's agree on a couple other adults that you respect

that you could go and talk to,' " she told them. " 'And we'll go together and tell them that we have this agreement.' "

6. Talk to potential perpetrators, not just potential survivors.

When talking about sexual assault and consent, we often focus on victims, and primarily on girls.

But, "it's the people who are doing the sexual assaulting that need a different kind of education and a different kind of support starting from a very young age," says Rayne. "About things like [what to do] when they're attracted to someone or interested in someone and that person rejects them."

With the right education, says Rayne, a young man might be able to say, " 'Oh, you know what? I've been drinking too much and I feel like my capacity to make wise decisions is failing me.' Or, 'Hey, you know, when someone's trying to push me off of them, that's something that I should take as a cue to get off.' "

Hauser says the landscape of consent is shifting for this generation, and not only with the #MeToo movement. Guidance issued under President Obama has led to [a greater emphasis on sexual misconduct](#) prevention and enforcement on campuses under Title IX. And, several states are working towards adding consent to their high school sex education standards.

But, Hauser and Rayne say, there's a lot more work to do.

When Florence Hit Her School Community, This Principal Stepped Up

By Lisa Philip

Morning Edition, · Krista Holland wanders past huddles of people [at a storm shelter in Chapel Hill, N.C.](#) Some are wearing Red Cross vests; others are in bathrobes and pajamas. The Wilmington principal is looking for any of her students who may have evacuated to the shelter before Hurricane Florence made landfall.

She recognizes a young man wearing earbuds.

"You remember me," the longtime educator says. "Ms. Holland?"

It turns out Tyshawn Pringle is a former student. He doesn't remember Holland — but his mom, Delichia Pringle, does.

"The principal, Ty," Pringle says to her son. "He done got older, that's why."

"What grade is he in now?" Holland asks.

"Seventh," Pringle says. "He's about to be 14."

Holland worries about the uncertainty kids like Tyshawn are facing. Over a week after the storm made landfall, more than 60,000 North Carolina students are starting another week without school. Many of the students and

educators who evacuated for the storm are still far from home as districts [continue to assess the damage](#).

Holland also evacuated, and has been staying with family in Raleigh. Friends who stayed behind have told her her home is mostly unscathed, and her school, Anderson Elementary, has some water damage.

"Nothing that can't be cleaned up and repaired," Holland says, "and it probably will not take long. ... The lack of a sense of normalcy for the kids, I think that's where my heart aches the most."

Classes at Anderson Elementary have been canceled at least through this week, and it's unclear when the school might reopen. Then, Holland says, there's "the unknown of not knowing when you're going to get home and what may be waiting for you — or not waiting for you."

Families separated

Some Anderson Elementary families were able to turn their evacuations into fun getaways. Earlier this week, the PTA posted a call-out on Facebook, and parents responded from as far away as San Diego and Austin, Texas. One family took advantage of a [discount at Disney World](#) for Florence evacuees.

Other parents, like Meghan Digby, stayed in Wilmington and sent their kids out of town. Digby has been separated from her 6-year-old daughter for more than a week now.

"We obviously had no idea that we would be cut off from each other for so long," she says. "I'm trying to stay calm and wait for roads to clear up so that she can come back. But there's a lot of rumors circling about how long it might take."

Digby says she took comfort in a phone recording Holland distributed to parents a few days ago. In it, Holland sent love to her students and their families — and put a plug in for reading while students are away.

"I was actually working on a puzzle just trying to keep my mind busy, and when it came through I put it on speakerphone," Digby says. "And it made me cry, just hearing how much she cared."

Giving, and receiving

At the Chapel Hill shelter, Holland carries bags of toys she bought for the kids there. She sets the hula hoops, bubbles and footballs down next to a stack of diapers.

Holland says service learning is front and center at Anderson. In 2016, after Hurricane Matthew, students and staff collected supplies for Lumberton, a North Carolina town that was severely flooded. Last year, they organized a "Hats for Houston" fundraiser after Hurricane Harvey.

"And now we are going to be on the receiving end of help and support," she says. "I think for our kids there will be valuable lessons to see that sometimes you give

and you help other people.”

And sometimes, she says, it’s OK to get help back.

A High Schooler Reacts To Kavanaugh And Ford Hearings

*Weekend Edition Sunday · NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro
talks to 17-year-old Jessica Melnik about what it's been
like to follow the Ford-Kavanaugh hearings as a high
school student.*

No Cash Needed At This Cafe. Students Pay The Tab With Their Personal Data

By Chaiel Schaffel

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · Shiru Cafe looks like a regular coffee shop. Inside, machines whir, baristas dispense caffeine and customers hammer away on laptops. But all of the customers are students, and there's a reason for that. At Shiru Cafe, no college ID means no caffeine.

"We definitely have some people that walk in off the street that are a little confused and a little taken aback when we can't sell them any coffee," said Sarah Ferris, assistant manager at the Shiru Cafe branch in Providence, R.I., located near Brown University.

Ferris will turn away customers if they're not college students or faculty members. The cafe allows professors to pay, but students have something else the shop wants: their personal information.

To get the free coffee, university students must give away their names, phone numbers, email addresses and majors, or in Brown's lingo, concentrations. Students also provide dates of birth and professional interests, entering all of the information in an online form. By doing so, the students also open themselves up to receiving information from corporate sponsors who pay the cafe to reach its clientele through logos, apps, digital

advertisements on screens in stores and on mobile devices, signs, surveys and even baristas.

According to [Shiru's website](#): "We have specially trained staff members who give students additional information about our sponsors while they enjoy their coffee."

The website for the Japanese-owned cafe also explains Shiru's mission and philosophy: "Through a free drink we try to give students some information which sponsor company would like to inform exclusively for university students to diversify the choices of their future career."

Companies can host recruitment sessions inside the cafe. Two Brown students, [in a letter](#) to *The Brown Daily Herald*, called for a boycott of the cafe in December, calling into question the principles of some sponsor companies:

"According to *The Herald's* article about the Shiru Cafe, 'last year, 40 percent of JP Morgan Japan's new hires were Shiru Cafe patrons.' This statistic is alarming, given that JP Morgan engaged in deceitful financial practices which likely contributed [to] the 2008 financial crisis and then became the only large financial institution to make a profit during the crisis."

But if handing over personal data seems invasive, Ferris said the students don't seem to mind. She doesn't think she has seen a single customer refuse to give up the data.

It certainly didn't seem to bother Nina Wolff Landau, a junior at Brown University. She is studying environmental studies, which the cafe already knows. Landau said the data collected are easily accessible on LinkedIn or other websites with a quick Google search.

"Maybe I should have been more apprehensive, but everyone has your information at this point anyway," she said. "To give out my name and email and what I study does not seem so risky to me."

Owned by Japanese company Enrission, Shiru Cafe operates similar shops in Japan and India. In other locations, corporate sponsors have included big names such as Microsoft, Nissan and Suzuki.

In response to a request for more information, Alex Inoue, Shiru Cafe's general manager, wrote in an email that the cafe does not give out data on specific students. But it does provide general, aggregate data such as student majors and expected graduation years.

Sitting at the Shiru Cafe location in Providence, Daniel Traver, environmental engineering student at Brown, said he thinks future corporate sponsorships will bring in more career-focused students — but also more controversy.

"I think there will be some sort of pushback. I think a lot of people could be against some of those sponsors," Traver said.

But corporate connections aside, should students be more wary of giving up so much personal information? Nicholas Tella, director of information security at Johnson & Wales, a private nonprofit university that has a campus in Providence, was a little more skeptical than the customers inside Shiru Cafe.

"If they're giving you something for free, this data that's being collected, for any vendor, there seems to be more value in the data than in the product," Tella said.

In an [article in New York Magazine](#), Jacob Furst, a professor of computer security at DePaul University, said that concerns could arise if students were required to connect to the cafe's Wi-Fi, which would allow access to a much wider range of information that could be accessed by third parties.

Right now, Shiru Cafe in Providence doesn't have any sponsors. Ferris said the student information she and her staff are collecting will be used to narrow down the companies the cafe will bring on as sponsors. She said the student information is securely held and will not be sold to third-party companies.

"They're very good about keeping everyone's information close. They don't sell it, they don't do anything of that sort," Ferris said.

The Providence location is the only Shiru Cafe currently operating in the U.S. But the company hopes to open up more cafes near Amherst College, Harvard, Yale and

Princeton.

This story comes to us from member station [Rhode Island Public Radio](#). Listen to the audio [here](#).

New Education Budget; Yale Discrimination Investigation; Faults In Loan Forgiveness

By Anya Kamenetz, Cory Turner and Sara Ernst

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · *You're reading NPR's weekly roundup of education news.*

A new education budget awaits approval

A new spending bill could add \$581 million to the Department of Education's budget. The legislation would bolster career and technical training and programs that serve low-income students.

One specific program in the bill — Title IV, also known as The Every Student Succeeds Act— was questioned this week during a hearing of the Senate education committee. Lawmakers deliberated whether this billion-dollar pot of money could legally be used to arm teachers across the country. One senator, the committee's top Republican, Lamar Alexander, interpreted the law saying, "Title IV specifically gives states the decision about spending their money to create safe conditions, including drug and violence prevention." Education Secretary Betsy DeVos also [expressed](#) a hands-off approach recently, making it clear that this decision is up to states.

The spending package, which would give the Education

Department a budget of \$71.5 billion, still needs a signature from President Donald Trump to pass.

6 ways to talk to your kids about sex after Kavanaugh

The country watched this week as Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh and Dr. Christine Blasey Ford gave their testimonies of an alleged sexual assault that Ford said happened while the two were in high school over 35 years ago. NPR's Anya Kamenetz spoke to sex education experts about how you should talk to your kids, not just about sex, but also consent. Here are [six things](#) you can do to make the Kavanaugh story a "teachable moment."

Home schooling is growing and changing rapidly

The [New America Foundation](#) reports the number of home schooled students has doubled since 1999. With the growth of online learning in K-12, homeschooling looks different than it did in past generations. Families' motivations are changing, too: religion is no longer the primary reason for choosing home schooling. The top reason was dissatisfaction with public school offerings.

Report finds faults in student loan forgiveness program

A new report from the Government Accountability Office finds that a popular student loan forgiveness program has been badly mismanaged. Public Service Loan Forgiveness was created in 2007 under a supposedly simple idea: Spend ten years in public service while

making monthly payments on your student loans, and the government would forgive what's left at the end. But it's becoming clear the program is a muddle.

Last week, [NPR reported](#) that, since October of 2017, the first year borrowers could qualify for forgiveness, 99 percent of applications have been denied. And in [a deeply critical review](#) of the PSLF program, the Government Accountability Office found persistent communication problems between the Education Department and its student loan servicers. NPR's Cory Turner reported that many borrowers may have worked in public service, sometimes for years, without being told their loan payments wouldn't count towards PSLF. GAO recommends, among other things, that the Education Department provide clear information to its contractors and borrowers about a wide range of issues - like who actually qualifies.

In a response to the report, the Education Department agreed with GAO's findings and with all of its recommendations.

Yale under investigation for discrimination against Asian-Americans

The departments of education and justice are opening an investigation into whether Yale University illegally discriminated against Asian-Americans in its admissions process. Together with a similar investigation into [Harvard](#), a separate lawsuit, the case against Yale challenges the current state of the law on affirmative

action.

In related news, a [national survey](#) of nearly 500 college admissions directors, found that almost half believe some colleges hold Asian-American applicants to higher standards than other applicants.

Free preschool means more working mothers

That's according to a new analysis by the [Center for American Progress](#), which specifically looked at Washington, D.C.'s preschool expansion.

The nation's capitol began to expand funding in preschool in 2009 and by last year, 7 out of 10 3-year-olds and 9 out of 10 4-year-olds were enrolled. As a result, the rate of mothers with young children working rose dramatically. D.C. now has the highest maternal labor force participation rate of the 50 largest cities in the country.

Chicago Schools Lose Millions For Allegedly Not Shielding Students From Sexual Abuse

By Sasha Ingber

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · Chicago Public Schools will lose millions of dollars in grant money for what federal officials say is a failure to protect students from sexual abuse.

The Department of Education is withholding \$4 million, asserting that the school district wasn't complying with investigations or addressing disturbing trends, [according to the Chicago Tribune](#). The funding is part of a \$14.9 million Magnet Schools Assistance grant which was awarded to Chicago schools in 2017 and is supposed to be dispersed over a five-year period.

The *Tribune* [reported](#) on sexual violence within the public school system this summer: One teacher allegedly gave a student sangria before sexually assaulting her in his car. He had been the subject of other complaints at the school prior to the incident. Another student, then a sophomore, said she was punched and forced into an empty building by a group of boys who made her perform oral sex, the paper reported. None of the suspects were disciplined, her complaint reportedly stated.

According to the newspaper, the Chicago schools have

four sexual violence cases open — “more pending federal sexual violence investigations than any other K-12 grade district in the country.”

Chicago Public Schools spokesman Michael Passman said in a statement emailed to NPR that the cut in funding harms three elementary schools that serve low-income and minority students.

“The Trump Administration’s move to threaten funding for schools that serve children of color is another attack on Chicago considering CPS has already taken significant steps recommended by an independent expert to transform the way it responds to and prevents abuse,” Passman said.

The Board of Education asked an independent expert — Maggie Hickey, a former federal prosecutor and Illinois Executive Inspector General — to review the district’s policies for addressing sexual misconduct. Hickey [found](#) that some “predators went undetected or unpunished.”

Passman said Hickey’s assessment resulted in changes, including partnering with the Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center and updating its sex ed curriculum to teach students about sexual violence. The school district has also shifted the responsibility of investigating allegations of adult-on-student sexual abuse to the Office of the Inspector General, Passman said.

He told NPR that Chicago Public Schools never received a memo, reportedly sent by the Department of Education

on Monday, which justified why the grant funds were withheld. Passman said CPS asked for the memo after media reported on it.

"We are working tirelessly to address this pervasive societal challenge and safeguard our students — including by cooperating with the Department of Education — and it is hard to believe that any administration committed to providing low-income and minority students with real opportunity would be able to stomach the threats the Trump Administration is making."

The district plans to appeal the decision, he added.

[According](#) to a 2016 report by the Department of Health and Human Services, there were 57,329 sexual abuse victims that year across the United States.

5 Things To Encourage Brain Development In Your Little One

By Elissa Nadworny

Morning Edition, · Researchers know there's an achievement gap that exists at 18 months. That's before any formal learning has taken place. An organization in Boston is trying to help parents close this gap.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

Look at the education of kids, even kids at preschool age, and you see an achievement gap. Kids who differ by race or by economic status also differ in what they learn. Yet, it seems possible to close that learning gap by following five basic principles. And that number, five, is the starting point for our latest installment of take a number. NPR's Elissa Nadworny reports from Boston.

(SOUNDBITE OF BABY CRYING)

ELISSA NADWORNYY, BYLINE: Here in this basement room in a church in Dorchester, a group of teen moms are focusing on No. 3 on that list. Count, group and compare with your child. It's basically math for babies.

TARA REGISTER: You're probably thinking, math? With these little guys? Like, they're not even writing. They

don't even know how to talk. I know. I know.

NADWORNLY: Tara Register is the group leader and insists babies love numbers and counting. She explains you can just use sentences that compare things - that's math vocabulary.

REGISTER: Like, saying, oh, look grandpa's tall. But grandma's short.

NADWORNLY: The new parents nod their heads and imagine how they'll do it. A mom named Brianna says she'll try and point things out when she gets home.

BRIANNA: I have two lotion bottles, so you have three toys in your crib. And stuff like that.

NADWORNLY: Because these moms are teenagers, we're not using their last names to protect their privacy. Another teen named Celeste offers her suggestion.

CELESTE: On his play thing, it has one, two, three.

NADWORNLY: She'll count those out, maybe even hold up her fingers while she's doing it. Register picks up Brianna's baby LJ. She bounces him as she motions to his head and the developing brain inside.

REGISTER: You can't imagine how much of a sponge this is right here. We can have some engineers and some math geniuses right here in this room, right?

NADWORNLY: So how did this lesson from a Harvard

economist get into this church in Dorchester? Ron Ferguson came up with the idea. He's one of the leading experts who studies the achievement gap. And he's found there are differences in learning when you compare kids by race and socioeconomic status by age 2.

RON FERGUSON: Kids aren't even halfway to kindergarten. And they're already way behind their peers.

NADWORNYY: This comes despite the fact there's actually a whole bunch of research on what caregivers can do to encourage brain development.

FERGUSON: The things that we need to do with infants and toddlers are not things that cost a lot of money. It's really about interacting with the child, paying attention to them, being responsive to them.

NADWORNYY: So Ferguson set out to translate the research into five simple and free things adults could do with their little ones.

FERGUSON: The first of the basics is to maximize love, manage stress.

NADWORNYY: That means moms and dads have to take care of themselves, too, because babies pick up on that. No. 2, talk, sing and point with your child.

FERGUSON: When you point at something, that helps the baby to start to associate words with objects.

NADWORNYY: Some babies will point before they can

even talk. No. 3, that's the one about numeracy that Tara Register was focused on in the church in Dorchester.

REGISTER: Count, group and compare.

FERGUSON: So fourth of the basics is to explore through movement and play. And the idea is to have parents be aware that their children are actually learning when they play.

NADWORNYY: And No. 5 is to read and discuss stories. Ferguson puts a big emphasis on discussing. That's a piece lots of parents miss when they're just reading aloud.

FERGUSON: I mean, I've got a Ph.D. My wife has a master's degree. But I know that there are some things that are in our Boston Basics that we did not do.

NADWORNYY: So how is Ferguson getting these five principles into the hands and ultimately the brains of Boston families?

FERGUSON: A lot of people go to church. High percentages of people have jobs. They get their haircut at the barbershop. They live in a housing development. They visit the library once in a while. They have kids in the schools.

NADWORNYY: That's the heart of his idea. The basics have to go where the parents are - barbershops and home visiting programs, hospitals, churches and

community groups, like the one Tara Register runs in Dorchester.

When she learned about Ferguson's plan...

REGISTER: I was just like, I think this would be the perfect place, right? We got these young moms who are learning how to parent and trying to figure this out.

NADWORNLY: She wishes she had known about this stuff when she first got pregnant years ago.

REGISTER: I was a teenage mom. I had my daughter when I was 15, so I know the struggle, right? This is real to me. I understand it.

NADWORNLY: She said she finds her teenage parents are surprised to discover that so much learning happens so early on.

REGISTER: Some of the stuff they're doing and probably didn't even know there was, like, a name to it or there was a development behind it, you know?

NADWORNLY: Back in class, Register has one final thought for the group, which she repeats several times before they finish. It's essentially the thesis behind all five of the Boston Basics.

REGISTER: Our babies are incredible. They're complex. They're incredible. They're smart. They can take it all in. So don't underestimate them.

NADWORNYY: Ron Ferguson at Harvard - he's hoping this message can get to every caretaker and their baby first across Boston and then across the country.

Elissa Nadwornyy, NPR News, Boston.

(SOUNDBITE OF ONRA'S "MS. HO")

Space Mining — Learning How To Fuel An Interplanetary Gas Station

By Dan Boyce

Morning Edition, · Starting this semester, the Colorado School of Mines is offering the world's first degree programs in Space Resources — essentially mining in outer space.

It's not just academic institutions like the School of Mines taking note; a small but growing number of startups expect this to be very big business sooner than a lot of us might think.

If people ever want to land on Mars, or explore beyond it, it's too expensive to rocket everything these missions will ever need from Earth. You need interplanetary gas stations on the moon or on asteroids, extracting raw materials to fuel future deep space missions.

Angel Abbud-Madrid has been studying space resources at the School of Mines for two decades and directs the new degree programs. He said there is a lot in space that humans could find useful.

"Anywhere from solar energy to microgravity," he said. "Yes, there's minerals and there are metals that will be mined, but there's also gases and water."

Down below the geology museum on the School of Mines campus in Golden, Colo., some of Abbud-

Madrid's students were at work in a laboratory. A 3D printer whirred in one corner and in the middle of the lab sat a reflective silver funnel wrapped in copper tubing.

Graduate researcher Hunter Williams said they would be shining a light from an IMAX theater bulb through that funnel, condensing it down to a beam about an inch wide.

"It's going to have the watts per square centimeter of about a thousand suns and we're going to hit an asteroid simulat sample with it and blow it up," he said.

Williams quit his job as an engineer at aerospace giant Lockheed Martin to join the space resources program. He believes that an industry which still sounds like utter science fiction to many is coming fast. And it won't just put one or two people in space, but a whole space-faring society.

"And it's not going to be 100 years from now," he said. "It's going to be maybe a decade from now."

Master's degree student Liz Scott is starting the program while still working her engineering job and raising two kids.

"It's always been frustrating that it seemed like going out into space, doing real work out there, has always been 10 years away and it's been 10 years away for 30 years," she said, adding that she believes space mining could finally

spur more human activity beyond Earth.

Ph.D. student Justin Cyrus has already started a company called Lunar Outpost that he hopes will eventually serve the space mining industry.

"This is going to happen only once in our lifetime," Cyrus said. "This is an opportunity that we have to take."

He said he wants to be in on the beginning of what he thinks could be a new industrial revolution.

But Henry Hertzfeld, director of the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University, is not convinced. He believes over the next five to 10 years, there may be some small, isolated projects that demonstrate a concept or a new technology.

"But, in terms of lots of jobs and a burgeoning commercial enterprise, I don't see that anytime soon," he said.

Professor Abbud-Madrid at the School of Mines is nonetheless confident that now is the appropriate time for academia to get involved. He said interest in space resources has grown exponentially in the last five years from both the public and private sector.

Although, he admits, the industry is in its infancy, and he warns prospective students to keep that in mind.

Students Whose Families Are In The Grips Of The Opioid Epidemic Get Help At School

By Rachel Gotbaum

Weekend Edition Sunday, · On Cape Cod in Massachusetts, school districts are using addiction counselors to help kids and their teachers cope with the chaos and trauma of the opioid epidemic.

Transcript

RENEE MONTAGNE, HOST:

And in Massachusetts, drug deaths are down slightly for the first time in years. But the number of children being raised by someone other than their parents is up. That's put new pressure on schools as they try to educate a generation of kids whose lives have been upended by the opioid crisis.

As Rachel Gotbaum reports, districts on Cape Cod are using addiction counselors on site to help kids and their teachers cope with the chaos and the trauma of the epidemic.

RACHEL GOTBAUM, BYLINE: The hallways of Lawrence Middle School in Falmouth, Mass., are packed with students rushing to their next class. In this language arts

class, kids are talking about their most recent projects.

UNIDENTIFIED STUDENT: A person can stop feeling when they're traumatized or have been through a lot.

GOTBAUM: There are students here who have lost a parent to a fatal drug overdose. And that's becoming a lot more common.

CAROLYN ALVES: I find myself crying more when I go home at the end of the day. And it's hard. You know they need something but that what they need is a lot bigger than what you can give to them as their teacher.

GOTBAUM: Carolyn Alves has been teaching for 17 years. She says an increasing number of her students are living in foster care or have moved in with family members because their parents are dead, in jail or struggling with active addiction.

ALVES: It's a lot because you're dealing with the trauma. You're dealing with loss. And that's what they're - you know, they're up against, a lot of these kids.

GOTBAUM: And that all makes it difficult for them to focus during school.

ALVES: The biggest thing we see is shutting down, just the absolute refusal to do work, the inability to see long term. There's a lot of, also, testing. How far can I push you? How many times can I get thrown out of class before you just give up on me?

GOTBAUM: With a growing number of her students' lives now consumed by the opioid epidemic, Alves and the other teachers here say they are re-evaluating their priorities.

ALVES: You know, it would be easy to say they just don't do their homework. But the reality of what their life is like at home is it's a ridiculous expectation that they're then going to hold it together all day long and then go home and do homework in that environment.

GOTBAUM: Right down the hall from Alves' classroom, Maddy Nadeau (ph) is meeting with her counselor.

CAYENNE KELLY: Can you tell me about that? I don't know much about it.

MADDY: There's a lot of, like, work in progress. This is a horse I've been trying, working on.

GOTBAUM: Both of Maddy's parents are battling heroin addiction. And she has memories of being left alone a lot.

MADDY: I remember Mom was always locking herself in her room and didn't take care of me. And my sister had to go to school during the day. And so I was home - like, a little child all by myself. My mom just wasn't around at the time.

GOTBAUM: Maddy and her sister Devon (ph) ended up with relatives and then a series of foster homes,

eventually ending up with Sarah Nadeau (ph).

SARAH NADEAU: Both of the girls felt like maybe Mom will get better, maybe she won't. Maybe Dad will improve. Maybe he won't. And it's up and down with drug addiction. So they didn't know for two and a half years of their life whether or not they were going home.

GOTBAUM: Both of the girls struggled with anxiety and depression. Maddy had the hardest time.

MADDY: I was kind of, like, burying everything inside. And it kind of just made me freak out sometimes. And, like, now I'm not really burying that much inside. I'm able to talk about it. I'm able to focus a little bit better.

GOTBAUM: She says she's able to talk about it now because every week she leaves class to come see her counselor, Cayenne Kelly (ph). Kelly is based at the school but works for Cape Cod's largest drug addiction treatment center, called Gosnold.

KELLY: If you've seen a family member OD, how can you really concentrate in class?

GOTBAUM: Cayenne used to work one day a week but has increased her time here, so she can offer more students counseling sessions at school.

KELLY: It's really neat when you know they started this session hurting, and they finish a session stable and focused enough to do well.

GOTBAUM: Two years ago, Lawrence Middle School joined a growing number of schools where counselors, specifically trained in addiction treatment, work on site to help students whose families are in the grips of the opioid epidemic. Each school pays Gosnold a fee. And most students get their counseling sessions paid for by insurance. When they don't, the treatment center covers them. Last year, Sarah Nadeau adopted Maddy and Devon. She says both of the girls still struggle socially and academically because of all they've been through, especially Maddy, who was exposed to drugs in utero.

NADEAU: That makes it very difficult for her brain to settle down enough to do more than one task at a time. The second part to that is she's got the confidence issues and the trust issues and the abandonment issues. So not only does she have to work harder than a lot of kids to do the exact same thing, but she lacks the confidence to put her best foot forward. Both of those hit a lot of these kids who are growing up in homes where there's drug abuse.

GOTBAUM: But she says now Maddy and her sister are doing much better in their classes and are leading more normal lives because they have the support of a counselor at school who understands what they're going through.

NADEAU: For a lot of these kids, school is the only place that's stable. They get their lunch here. They get their education here. Why not give them their support while

they're here in the school?

GOTBAUM: Last year, Gosnold counselors were in 17 schools from elementary to high school. This year, that number has tripled and now includes districts throughout Massachusetts. For NPR News, I'm Rachel Gotbaum in Boston.

MONTAGNE: And our story was produced in collaboration with The Hechinger Report.

Private D.C. School Talks To Students About Healthy Relationships

Weekend Edition Sunday, · NPR's Renee Montagne asks Georgetown Day School guidance counselor Amy Killy about advising students at the prestigious Washington, D.C., high school about sexual assault.

Transcript

RENEE MONTAGNE, HOST:

Christine Blasey Ford has accused Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault. Both Kavanaugh and Ford were high schoolers at private schools in the Washington, D.C., area. Ford says they were at a party drinking. He denies the incident ever took place. She is expected to renew her accusation this week in Senate testimony. We turn now to Amy Killy. She's a guidance counselor at Georgetown Day School. That's a coed private school here in Washington. And to be clear, it is not the all-boys school where Kavanaugh went, Georgetown Prep. Welcome to the program.

AMY KILLY: Thank you.

MONTAGNE: You know, again, I want to say Brett Kavanaugh has vehemently denied Dr. Ford's allegations, but there has been a lot of people talking about these private schools - the drinking and the hard partying. Do you refer to that with your students, or do you take that

into consideration? Because they're not always partying.

KILLY: Right, and not all sexual assaults happen when there's alcohol and at parties. We do talk about drugs and alcohol. We do talk about the party scene. We do talk about hook-up culture. We do talk about healthy relationships, and what does that look like? We do talk about consent. We do talk about power dynamics and toxic masculinity. So we talk about all those different pieces and how that fits in to treating people with humanity.

MONTAGNE: In a general sense, you just mentioned power dynamics. The students at these schools can often be from families and parents who are actually powerful.

KILLY: I'm not sure the private school kids have more aggressors because they have more powerful parents. Might other power dynamics also come into play when it comes to who's reporting and who's not reporting? Maybe. But I'm not sure this issue is happening more in private schools than public schools. I think it's happening everywhere. I've been doing this work for almost 20 years. And in that time, from my very first year working in schools, I have had students come to me.

MONTAGNE: What are you able to do?

KILLY: So for me, when someone comes to talk to me, it's really about listening. It's about them feeling heard, knowing that they're not alone.

MONTAGNE: Is it about reporting a crime?

KILLY: It...

MONTAGNE: I mean, the president made a suggestion to the effect that Kavanaugh's accuser, if this had really happened to her - it sounded really bad. Therefore, she would have, of course, had to report it as a crime. So where are the criminal reports, you know?

KILLY: Right.

MONTAGNE: I mean, is that what you do?

KILLY: As a mandated reporter, depending on the state in which the attack occurred, I may have the responsibility to report it. But it's not the same state to state.

MONTAGNE: You know, another part of this conversation over these past days has been whether one can judge an adult for what they did as a teenager because teenagers are developing in so many ways. As a counselor, what's your thinking on that?

KILLY: Yeah, that's a hard question. I mean, do kids grow up? Certainly. Do they make some bad decisions? Certainly. Is an issue of sexual assault the same thing as drinking under age? I don't think so. Sexual assault is not about sex. It's about power. It's about asserting yourself. It's about aggression. And so do people grow out of that? I don't know.

MONTAGNE: That was Amy Killy. She is a counselor at Georgetown Day School here in Washington, D.C. Thanks for joining us.

KILLY: Yeah. Thank you so much.

Loan Forgiveness Denial; Puerto Rico Schools After Maria; DeVos Calls For Free-Speech

By Cory Turner and Courtney Rozen

NPR.org, September 22, 2018 · *You're reading NPR's weekly roundup of education news.*

Student loan forgiveness applicants largely denied

New data out this week from the U.S. Department of Education offer the [first glimpse](#) of how student borrowers are navigating the popular Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. And it's not pretty. As of this summer, nearly 29,000 applications for PSLF had been submitted and processed. Of those, 289 were approved. That's a 99 percent denial rate.

The findings don't tell us much about why so many borrowers were denied, only that a third were turned away for missing information, presumably problems with their paperwork. Some, perhaps many, of these borrowers will eventually be approved.

But the other two-thirds were denied for "not meeting program requirements." Many of these student borrowers are actually public servants — police officers, firefighters, school teachers. But the problem is, according to a [report last year](#) from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, they're not meeting the

program requirements because they've been given insufficient or even bad advice by their loan servicer. These are the big companies that the federal government pays to manage the paperwork and phone calls that come in from its tens of millions of student borrowers.

The Education Department did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Enrollment in Puerto Rico continues to fall in Maria's aftermath

Student enrollment in Puerto Rico had been declining long before Hurricane Maria struck one year ago this week, and since then, things have only gotten worse for students, teachers and parents, NPR's Adrian Florido [reported](#) this week. The island's education department says that, between May of last year and the start of this school year, the system saw a 10 percent drop in enrollment. That's roughly 38,000 students. Thousands of Puerto Ricans [poured into Florida and New York after the storm](#).

The government has already closed about 260 of the island's schools. This is forcing some rural families to travel even farther to get to school.

The disruption comes as the schools there were already struggling to raise student achievement. Julia Keleher, Puerto Rico's education secretary, [told Education Week](#) that there wasn't a single eighth-grader who demonstrated proficiency on the National Assessment of

Educational Progress (NAEP) for the 2017-2018 school year. Shuttering schools especially hurt special-needs students, who require specific classrooms and specially qualified teachers, the *Miami Herald* [reported](#). (The newspaper also interviewed the education secretary, students and parents in Spanish [here](#).)

Trump plans to cut Head Start funding to pay for detention of immigrant children

The Department of Health and Human Services plans to shift [\\$16.7 million](#) away from Head Start, in addition to other programs, to fund detention facilities for immigrant children, according to a report in *Yahoo News*. Head Start provides early childhood education programs for low-income families.

College campuses are smothering free speech, DeVos says

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos gave a [speech](#) in Philadelphia on Monday in honor of Constitution Day. She called for more free and open speech on college campuses. And, she urged administrators not to allow protesters to use the "heckler's veto" to silence speakers.

New research: High school teachers are handing out too many As

It's getting easier to earn an A in high school, and that's especially true for affluent students.

Teachers are more likely to inflate grades at schools in well-off neighborhoods than those attended by low-income students. That's all according to a [study](#) published Wednesday by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a Washington think tank and advocacy group.

The report, by Seth Gershenson, an associate professor at American University, says college admissions officers should take grade inflation at wealthier schools into account when considering applications.

New report: Increased school spending improves California high school graduation rates

Funding for schools in California has improved since the Great Recession, but it still isn't enough to meet state goals, according to a [report](#) released Monday by Stanford University and the research group Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE).

More than 100 researchers spent two years writing a comprehensive update on education issues in the Golden State. They say learning rates of the California students in grades 3-8 are the same or slightly better than other students nationwide. The state's low-income students, however, lag behind their national counterparts, the report says, largely because those children arrive for kindergarten less prepared than more affluent kids.

Data Shows 99% Of Applicants For A Student Loan Forgiveness Program Were Denied

All Things Considered, · The U.S. Department of Education released new data that show the popular Public Service Loan Forgiveness program is out of reach for most who apply for it.

Transcript

ARI SHAPIRO, HOST:

The government made a simple promise to student loan borrowers - work in public service for 10 years, make valid loan payments for 10 years, and the Education Department would forgive the leftover balance on the loan. The program is called Public Service Loan Forgiveness. But borrowers have complained for years that the process has not worked as advertised, and now new numbers for the program tell a similar story. For more, NPR's Cory Turner is here with us. And, Cory, what does this data show?

CORY TURNER, BYLINE: Yeah. Well, it's really important, Ari, because this is the first look we've had at who's actually using this program or trying to use it because in a nutshell, almost no one is getting their loans forgiven. As of this summer, nearly 29,000 applications for Public Service Loan Forgiveness have been submitted and

processed. But of those 29,000, just 289 applications were approved. That's a 99 percent denial rate. Now, some experts say the acceptance rate is sure to improve. It's early. But it's also hard to see how it could get much worse either.

SHAPIRO: Early - so this is a new program that has only been in effect a short while.

TURNER: So the program has been in effect since 2007. But since you have to be in it for 10 years, folks really could only start qualifying last October.

SHAPIRO: Can you figure out why people have been denied?

TURNER: Yeah. So there's a little bit of information in the data that requires some unpacking. Roughly a third of applications were turned down because of missing information, basically problems with paperwork. The other two-thirds are murkier, denied for what the department calls not meeting program requirements. That's so big. I could drive a truck through that. The problem here is that many people are in public service - police officers, firefighters, public schoolteachers. But they're not meeting the program's requirements because they're often given insufficient or sometimes bad information by the companies that the government pays to manage these student loans.

SHAPIRO: What do you mean given insufficient or bad information?

TURNER: So last year, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau issued a report from their student loan watchdog. And it studied these very problems. And it found that many students who actually told their loan servicer, look; I think I qualify for Public Student Loan Forgiveness; what do I need to do, they weren't told that maybe they had the wrong loan type and that they could consolidate and qualify. They just didn't know.

Borrowers often weren't told they were in the wrong repayment plan, which meant that the payments they were making wouldn't count towards Public Service Loan Forgiveness. So some borrowers would actually go years making payments on time, but the payments wouldn't count. In fact, some of these problems were so widespread that recently Congress actually created a new pot of money for some of these people who have been making payments and just got caught up in the confusion.

SHAPIRO: How does the Education Department explain that it has denied virtually everybody who has been participating in this program in good faith for 10 years?

TURNER: Well, so far they haven't. I've submitted several requests. I've heard nothing. It's also important to keep in mind, Ari, this really important context here that I've been reporting on for a while now. Many states right now are really furious over these loan servicers and how they've treated their student borrowers. In Massachusetts, the attorney general - her name is Maura

Healey - she's suing the company that manages the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program for misleading borrowers, she says. And today she called this new data alarming and said it's indicative of a massive failure.

And to be honest, the Trump administration through both the Education Department and the Justice Department have made very clear - they have put forth a legal argument that these servicers should be protected from state lawsuits because they say they should only have to answer to the federal government.

SHAPIRO: That's NPR's Cory Turner. Thanks, Cory.

TURNER: Thank you, Ari.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Economy

What NAFTA Without Canada Would Mean

Weekend Edition Saturday, · NPR's Scott Simon asks Bruce Heyman, former U.S. ambassador to Canada, how a NAFTA replacement that excludes Canada would affect U.S.-Canada relations.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The North American Free Trade Agreement's governed how Canada, Mexico and the U.S. do business with each other since 1994 until now. Mexico and the U.S. struck a deal last month, but Canada and the U.S. have not been able to agree. There is a deadline tomorrow imposed by the Trump administration to renegotiate it. President Trump is threatening to push ahead with an agreement that excludes Canada - to say the least, a longtime U.S. ally and closest trading partner.

Bruce Heyman is a former U.S. ambassador to Canada. Mr. Ambassador, thanks so much for being with us.

BRUCE HEYMAN: Good morning, Scott.

SIMON: We expected the administration to publish a draft agreement last night. That didn't happen, and reports are because Mexico is pushing to include Canada. How do you read events now?

HEYMAN: Well, I think we're in a very intense period. The deadline in our lives - a deadline really forces outcomes. And in this particular case, the Canadians are really scrambling to try to become a part of the deal that the U.S. has already struck with Mexico. You know, the prime minister's been on the phone, not only with the president-elect of Mexico over the last few days, but also called all of his leading bankers in most of the financial institutions in Canada, and his negotiating team are on the hotline with - from Ottawa to Washington, having intense negotiations to try to finalize what they would characterize as a win-win-win deal for Canada, for Mexico and the United States.

SIMON: What does Canada want that, so far, the U.S. hasn't agreed to?

HEYMAN: So there are a couple of things. First of all, between the two countries, if we have a dispute and we disagree in a way something's handled in trade, the Canadians have appreciated a provision that exists in the existing NAFTA, which causes an independent body to resolve those disputes. The U.S. wants to get rid of that. It's called Chapter 19. It's a chapter within existing NAFTA. But the Canadians would really like to see this independent body. And they almost didn't participate in the first NAFTA agreement without it.

The second thing they want is that the U.S. has imposed steel and aluminum tariffs and are now threatening automobile tariffs on the basis of national security. And

the Canadians are saying, hey, if we enter into this deal, I want assurances that you're not going to go ahead next week and begin imposing other duties on the basis of national security, which make no sense with the U.S.-Canada relationship. And the Canadians have been very upset about that.

SIMON: Well, in the minute and half we have left, it could be particularly important in the automotive sector - couldn't it? - because a lot of what we consider to be U.S.-made cars, in fact, are made, or at least partially, made in Canada, aren't they?

HEYMAN: Yeah. In fact, if a car is assembled in Canada and shipped to the United States, Americans should realize that about 50 percent of the content of that car is American-made. A carburetor could cross the border up to eight times during the manufacturing process. We have a completely integrated manufacturing process in the automobile industry.

And here, we have something very amazing. We have the labor unions - the head of the AFL-CIO; the industry - head of the automobile manufacturers - each of them; and we have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, all coming together and agreeing that auto tariffs would be bad for not only Canada, but also U.S. jobs. And it would be bad for the U.S.-Canada relationship overall. And so I think that there are a lot of people that do not want to see us go down that road. And it would be very detrimental economically.

SIMON: So one last yes or no question - do you see an agreement?

HEYMAN: I'm the eternal optimist. You know, President Obama said once to me he's a congenital optimist, so I'll go with that.

SIMON: OK.

HEYMAN: It's too important. The U.S.-Canada relationship's just too important.

SIMON: Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, thanks so much.

HEYMAN: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Airport Workers In New York, New Jersey To Receive Minimum Of \$19 Per Hour

By Sasha Ingber

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · It's being called the highest minimum wage in the country. Thousands of airport workers in New York and New Jersey — baggage handlers, cabin cleaners, people at concession stands — will see their hourly pay rise to \$19 by 2023, after the Port Authority Board of Commissioners voted unanimously on Thursday to require businesses to increase the minimum wage.

"We believe this substantially improved minimum wage for airport workers will greatly reduce turnover, improve morale and develop better trained workers as critical contributors to airport operations and security in this post 9/11 world," Port Authority Executive Director Rick Cotton said in a [statement](#).

The Port Authority manages some of the country's most bustling airports. Its decision follows nearly 800 messages written to the board by workers, businesses, academics and elected officials — and years in which airport workers marched, held strikes "and even got arrested on Martin Luther King Day," a major union representing workers [wrote](#).

Under the new policy, changes begin Nov. 1. Hourly earnings of \$10.45 for workers at Newark Liberty

International Airport are scheduled to increase to \$12.45.

Workers at JFK International and LaGuardia airports in New York, who currently earn a minimum wage of \$13 per hour, will see a bump of 60 cents in November before the state's minimum wage becomes [\\$15 in January](#). Wages for workers at the three airports will continue to increase in stages over a five-year period.

"This historic victory will give thousands of airport workers a fair living wage for decent work," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo [said](#). "It is the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do."

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy [said](#), "With today's vote, the agency has made it clear that they've heard the voices of approximately 40,000 workers who will be impacted by increased wages on both sides of the Hudson." He said that all of New Jersey's workers should earn a living wage.

Michael Saltsman, managing director at [Employment Policies Institute](#), tells NPR that "it's deeply concerning" that authorities think a \$15 minimum wage in New York that goes into effect Jan. 1 "is not enough." He thinks decisions for increases are coming too quickly, "without taking a rest stop to say, 'What are the consequences of \$15?'"

Saltsman says that if businesses at the airport can't offset their higher costs with higher prices for consumers, then workers could see their hours cut or jobs eliminated.

"The trend, as cost rises, is heading toward fewer employees and more automation," he says. "They feel like conveniences but they were actually part of someone's job description."

On the first day of 2018, [18 states](#) saw minimum wage increases — from 4 cents in Alaska to a dollar in Maine.

Sylvia Wallingford, a business owner in Maine, [told NPR's Joel Rose](#), "I hired fewer people because I can't — you can't afford to promise everybody a certain number of hours regardless of whether we're busy or not."

An "[Analysis and Justification](#)" report by the Port Authority found the increased minimum wage was unlikely to be offset by higher unemployment. Instead, it found evidence that businesses developed "channels of adjustment" to maintain stable levels of employment.

The agency also said there has been a turnover of more than 30 percent of privately employed airport workers every year, according to the statement. The high turnover limits their ability "to play a critical security role," the Port Authority said.

One employer, United Airlines, wouldn't comment on whether it plans to oppose the wage increases in court, [according to WNYC](#).

Yasmeen Holmes, who has worked at Newark's airport for 16 years, spoke to WNYC about the wage increase. "I figured it would never happen. Maybe now I won't have

to do so much overtime, and I can stay home with my kids.”

Should We Teach About Consent In K-12? Brett Kavanaugh's Home State Says Yes

By Anya Kamenetz

All Things Considered, · When the [Access Hollywood tape of Donald Trump](#), along with sexual assault stories involving [Brock Turner](#) and [Bill Cosby](#), hit the news back in 2016, a middle school student in Maryland named Maeve Sanford-Kelly was listening.

"I was frankly really distraught," she recalls. "I felt powerless. I assumed that this was what happened, that sexual harassment and sexual assault was a *thing* in our society and it wasn't going to change because it was part of the power structure."

Her mother had an idea that might help. Ariana Kelly, a Democrat, is a delegate in the Maryland state legislature, and she introduced a bill that would require the state to include consent in sex ed classes. Maeve and her friends, as well as student groups across the state, campaigned and testified for the bill.

It defines consent as "the unambiguous and voluntary agreement between all participants in each physical act within the course of interpersonal relationships."

Before they turn 18, about 8 percent of girls and 0.7 percent of boys experience rape or attempted rape,

[according to](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In the majority of these reported cases, the CDC says, the perpetrator is a peer: either an acquaintance or a current or former intimate partner.

And yet few schools across the country are required to teach about consent or healthy relationships in sex ed classes.

Currently, according to a report in May by the [Center for American Progress](#), under a dozen states mention the terms "healthy relationships," "sexual assault" or "consent" in their sex education programs.

But with the #MeToo movement, that might be changing. Since the beginning of 2018, five states besides Maryland have introduced bills to require the teaching of consent in sex ed.

Amy Tiemann is a neuroscientist and educator and co-author of a new book on child safety, *Doing Right By Our Kids*. She works with KidPower, a child safety education group. She says the message of respect for others and your own body can be made simple and empowering even for young children.

"They can be 3 years old, they can be 15 years old, they can be in college, and we don't know who might be a potential perpetrator or who might be a potential victim someday," she says. "And people can be both."

In KidPower's training and materials, Tiemann adds, they

emphasize a few key messages:

- Touch is the choice of both people.
- It needs to be safe and it needs to not be against the rules or against the law.
- If you have a problem you should speak up — problems should not be secrets.
- It's never too late to tell and you should keep telling until you get help.

Alan Berkowitz is a psychologist and expert on sexual assault prevention. He said that one approach to consent education, backed by a lot of research, is to use positive social norms.

"One of the most powerful ways of encouraging young people to make healthy decisions is to know the truth about their friends, because in fact most of their friends are healthy."

He says that, for example, "Boys may think their friends enjoy hearing about sexual exploits and talking about girls and women's bodies," but research shows, in most peer groups, a silent majority disapproves and is uncomfortable. For that reason, he says, effective consent education also focuses on the role of bystanders in speaking up.

Kelly's bill failed the first time it was submitted. Similar bills have faltered recently in Massachusetts, Mississippi,

Utah, and Virginia, with opposing voices, both Democrats and Republicans, arguing that explaining consent is tantamount to condoning sex, while others say the topic should be the province of families, not schools.

But the Maryland law passed on a second try. Schools in Montgomery County, where Maeve is now in ninth grade, are now using resources like a viral video that compares consent to a cup of tea.

Maeve and her mother Ariana Kelly both see reasons to hope for change in this generation — not just because of what teachers will be teaching, but what students themselves are saying. Kelly says she's found it especially heartwarming to see teenage boys speak up "passionately" about this issue.

Teenagers like Matt Post, who at age 16 campaigned for the bill, and recruited friends to do so as well. "Guys cannot relegate themselves to the sidelines on this issue," he says. "Ending misogyny starts with us."

Today, Post is a first-year at Yale University, Judge Brett Kavanaugh's alma mater — a place that's been under the microscope recently for the behavior of its male students. He says that while things seem to have improved somewhat from decades ago, what he calls rape culture is still around, and many of his peers have gaps in their understanding of healthy relationships.

"They don't understand the ongoing nature of consent. They don't understand that a incapacitated yes is not

really a yes," he says. "I think it's still sort of a mixed bag and I think it's because of when we were respectively taught these lessons."

He hopes more education, starting as young as kindergarten, can help.

So does Maeve Sanford-Kelly. Sexual assault is once again in the news, and it hits her close to home, with the Kavanaugh allegations set in suburban Maryland. She's seen many friends posting on social media about affirmative consent and with messages of support for survivors.

"It brings me joy to see that all of the kids who are my age, even the ones who could be seen as comparable to [Kavanaugh], go to the same schools, living in the same environment, are different. And I think that is positive change that we have seen."

A 'Turning Point' In The Housing Market

By Stacey Vanek Smith and Cardiff Garcia

Morning Edition, · Ever since the end of the financial crisis, rents have been rising all across America. A recent report could signal a turning point in the housing recovery.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

One of the toughest parts of living in a big city is finding an affordable place to live. That might be getting a bit easier. Here's Stacey Vanek Smith and Cardiff Garcia from NPR's economics podcast The Indicator.

STACEY VANEK SMITH, BYLINE: Rents in the U.S. have been on the rise for years until now. According to the real estate database Zillow, the median rent in the U.S. is \$1,440. And that is unchanged from a year ago.

SUSAN WACHTER: This is a big deal.

VANEK SMITH: This is Susan Wachter. She's a professor of real estate and finance at Wharton. She says, yes, New York is extreme, but this story has been playing out all across the country.

WACHTER: This is a big deal because it signals a turning

point. The housing recovery has been a story of supply chasing demand.

CARDIFF GARCIA, BYLINE: And supply was chasing demand in large part because of the housing crisis 10 years ago. For a long time after the crisis, construction was just dead. Other parts of the economy, though, started gradually recovering, you know, like the tech sector and retail industry. And people started wanting to move again and get nicer places, but building and construction just lagged behind.

VANEK SMITH: As a result, there weren't enough apartments to meet demand. And the prices of the rentals that were available just kept going up. The construction industry did eventually kick into gear. And building has been happening like crazy in many parts of the country. Still, there was such a backlog of people wanting apartments - even though new places were being built, there still weren't enough places to meet all of the demand. So rents just kept climbing and climbing.

GARCIA: Until now. The supply of housing seems to finally be catching up with demand.

WACHTER: Or right now if you need to rent, you're going to be renting for less than last year. So that's a good thing. And if you wait a bit, rents are probably going to fall even farther.

GARCIA: This seems to be a window for the little guy. What about everybody else?

VANEK SMITH: For the economy as a whole, good or bad?

WACHTER: Well, I think this is actually good for the economy because we've had a real hit on mobility.

GARCIA: Susan says a lot of people were dealing with unaffordable rents in a few different ways, you know, like they'd split a place with a bunch of people.

VANEK SMITH: Sardine life.

GARCIA: (Laughter) Yeah, or they'd stay with family or with their parents longer or just not taking a job in the places where the jobs were because the apartment rents were so high.

VANEK SMITH: Now that rental prices are flattening, says Susan, it means people will have more options. They can be more mobile.

WACHTER: Mobility to where the new jobs are is what drives the economy. The job market is booming, but it's been difficult to find places in the hot markets particularly.

VANEK SMITH: Susan says a lot of companies have been struggling to find workers to fill all their jobs, which meant that those companies could not grow as fast as they wanted to. Lower rent, she says, will help companies and cities and small businesses.

GARCIA: Also if people are spending less on rent, it means they have more money to spend on other things, like eating out or going to the movies or buying clothes. And that's obviously good for those parts of the economy.

VANEK SMITH: Unless you are a landlord. Then you are not so excited about this. Suddenly, it's taking longer to rent a place. People are pickier. You can't raise the rent every year. Maybe you even have to lower the rent.

GARCIA: Susan says vacancy rates have been around 4 percent across the country, and that is really, really low. But now, they're starting to rise. That's still totally fine for landlords. And for the rest of us, at last a little breathing room.

VANEK SMITH: And maybe a bedroom. Stacey Vanek Smith.

GARCIA: And Cardiff Garcia. NPR News.

(SOUNDBITE OF MADLIB'S "DISTANT LAND")

Is Rent Control An Answer To California's Housing Crisis?

By Kirk Siegler

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · You can add Robert Rodriguez to a growing list of Angelenos living right on the brink of homelessness. Rodriguez shares his story, talking softly, as he leans on his walker outside his old apartment. He was evicted the day before.

"Everything is gone," he says. "It's all in storage."

Rodriguez, 82, used to be a truck driver. He's on a fixed income and has had health problems including a heart attack. Last February, when his landlord notified he and his wife that their rent was going up by 15 percent, to be followed by a likely 30 percent to 40 percent increase soon after, he couldn't afford it and didn't pay. They went to court instead, but eventually lost. He was evicted last week.

"So I had to leave," Rodriguez says. But where can he go? His neighborhood, densely populated MacArthur Park with its worn midcentury apartment buildings, is gentrifying fast. Landlords are suddenly asking — and getting — \$2,000 a month in rents or higher. Rodriguez is worried he'll end up homeless.

"It's an embarrassment more than anything else," he says. "At this point in my life, I should be sitting in a rocking

chair waiting for the pearly gates to open up for me.”

New census figures show that California has the highest poverty rate in the nation because of its affordable housing crisis. And the state is now home to nearly [a quarter of the country's entire homeless population](#), despite making up only 12 percent of the U.S. population as a whole.

One proposed fix is [Proposition 10](#), billed as a local rent control initiative, which will go before voters this November. It would repeal a 1990s-era law called the [Costa Hawkins Act](#), which generally prohibits rent control on most places built after the 1970s, bars local cities from expanding rent control, and allows for units to move to free-market rates after rent-controlled tenants leave.

Peter Dreier, a former city housing official in Boston and current public policy professor at Occidental College, says Prop 10 is a key first step to addressing California's broader affordable housing crisis.

“Wages are stagnating for the majority of working families and rents and home prices are going up much faster than wages,” Dreier says.

He says the system is stacked against renters. A [recent report](#) by the National Low Income Housing Coalition calculated that just to afford market rent in Los Angeles right now, one has to make at least \$32 an hour.

"We have a shortage of housing that's affordable to school teachers, firefighters, janitors, garment workers," Dreier says, in other words, all the people that make a city or community tick.

But Prop 10 has its detractors, including people who build low-income rental housing. Elizabeth Bluhm is a project manager at a San Diego-based nonprofit developer called [Wakeland Housing](#). She's worried that if Prop 10 passes, there could be a patchwork of cities with different rent control laws and limits, making "it very hard for developers to get things done efficiently," she says. "It just adds to the cost of development."

Bluhm says even just a little uncertainty threatens funding for a project because developers need to know how much rent they're going to bring in to cover their costs and ensure they don't go underwater. Private development firms like hers, she says, are on the front line of fixing the housing crisis because federal housing subsidies for the poor have steadily declined since the 1980s.

Opponents of Prop 10 have frequently called it a Band-Aid. The root of the problem, they say, is that there's just not enough housing.

"The real solution to our affordable housing crisis is more construction of housing across the whole spectrum," Bluhm says.

In fact, the California Department of Housing and

Community Development [estimates](#) the state needs to build 1.8 million more units by 2025. This is a perennial challenge in a state with some of the most restrictive zoning laws in the country and where land is already in short supply. A lot of developers, citing the high costs of labor and building materials and concerns about getting a good return on their investment, are building only high-end units.

That in turn is fueling a lot of the anger — and momentum — behind the push to expand rent control in California. As in a lot of booming cities, residents of Los Angeles are watching as whole blocks are demolished to make way for luxury homes and big, fancy apartment complexes advertising amenities like pools, libraries and tennis courts.

In front of Robert Rodriguez's old building near MacArthur Park, Prop 10 supporters and some of his neighbors recently held a protest over the rent increases. They chanted loudly, "The rent, the rent, is too damn high," as passing drivers honked in support.

The [building's owners say](#) the rent increases were modest and are needed to cover maintenance costs. They also say, even with the increases, the [rents are below market rates](#) for the area.

For now, Rodriguez says he and his wife will stay with his sister while they desperately look for a new place.

"If you don't have family, you got a problem," he says.

"MacArthur Park is filled up, all you got left is skid row."

Rodriguez hopes it doesn't come to that.

Changing Rules On Refugees

1A, . Last week, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [announced that the Trump administration would limit refugee resettlement admissions to 30,000 people in the coming year.](#) This represents the lowest refugee ceiling since the 1980s and about a third less than the 45,000 admitted last year. The new policy “further cut[s] an already drastically scaled-back program that offers protection to foreigners fleeing violence and persecution,” according to Julie Hirschfeld Davis at [The New York Times](#).

Pompeo explained his decision this way, from the same article:

Mr. Pompeo said refugees had to be weighed against a backlog of 800,000 asylum seekers who are awaiting a decision by immigration authorities about whether they qualify as in need of protection under United States law and will be granted status to remain.

But he vastly overstated the numbers, while making a linkage between two groups of immigrants that are not the same and are processed differently. As of the end of June, the Department of Homeland Security reported just under 320,000 people who had claimed asylum — meaning they had passed an interview conducted to verify that they met the

“credible fear” threshold to be considered — and were awaiting a decision from the department about whether they could stay.

About 730,000 additional immigrants were waiting for their cases to be resolved by immigration courts, according to the Justice Department, including people who had asked for asylum after being apprehended. But that number also included people in deportation or other immigration proceedings. Those are not all “humanitarian protection cases,” as Mr. Pompeo described them; some may never be granted asylum and some will be removed from the United States.

President Trump also addressed refugee policy on Tuesday in his speech in front of the United Nations General Assembly.

— Daniel Dale (@ddale8) [September 25, 2018](#)

The president’s move to limit refugee resettlement isn’t just about the cap. There are fewer government officers available to interview and process applications, delaying the entry of refugees.

From [The Intercept](#):

The institutional slow-down is just one element of Trump’s multipronged overhaul of the system. A closer look at refugee arrival data

suggests the administration is also driving the program toward specific ethnic and demographic trends. Last month, the Refugee Council USA, an umbrella organization of resettlement programs contracted to work with the State Department, issued a damning report card on the administration's performance in the first 10 months of the fiscal year. The report highlighted the disparity in nations of origin: As of July, the U.S. had settled fewer than a third of the number of Middle Eastern refugees expected, and barely half of those expected from Africa. In contrast, the country has welcomed roughly 75 percent of expected East Asian refugees, and all but fulfilled its projected number for Europeans.

Who's behind this refugee policy? What is the administration's justification for it?

Show produced by Lindsay Foster Thomas, text by Gabrielle Healy.

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The Fed Just Raised Its Rate Again. When Will It Start To Hurt Consumers?

By Colin Dwyer and Avie Schneider

NPR.org, September 26, 2018 · Updated at 3:30 p.m. ET

The Federal Reserve announced another quarter-percentage-point increase in interest rates Wednesday as expected, citing a strong labor market and economy.

The Fed raised the benchmark borrowing rate to a range of 2 percent to 2.25 percent, the [third hike this year](#).

[In its announcement](#), the Fed said: The labor market "has continued to strengthen and ... economic activity has been rising at a strong rate. Job gains have been strong, on average, in recent months, and the unemployment rate has stayed low."

In the three months since the Fed last raised rates, there have been reports of [strong jobs numbers](#), [bullish markets](#), blockbuster [growth in GDP](#), a rock-bottom [unemployment rate](#) and [sky-high consumer confidence](#). And on Wednesday, the Fed raised its forecast for economic growth this year to 3.1 percent from the 2.8 percent it projected in June.

"It's a particularly bright moment ... for the U.S. economy," Fed Chairman Jerome Powell told reporters.

That's not to say there aren't dark spots.

There is a lot of uncertainty over trade and how that is going to play out in the economy. But more importantly for workers, sluggish wage growth lingers and economists caution that higher rates could hurt already tight household budgets.

"Wage growth — finally it has accelerated a bit, but it's still a shadow of its former self. Especially after adjusting for inflation, which has picked up," says Diane Swonk, chief economist at Grant Thornton.

With the unemployment rate hovering at a low 3.9 percent, workers should be in high demand. But they don't seem to be getting paid like it. Many economists touted August's 2.7 percent year-over-year wage growth as the [fastest in nearly a decade](#). But the cost of living increased at [roughly the same rate](#), effectively wiping out the gains for most consumers.

Economists have cited a raft of possible causes for the slow wage growth. It could be that workers are receiving more [bonuses and benefits](#) rather than raises. Employers may be desperate to find workers but aren't finding enough trained ones. Or it could be simply that the unemployment rate is deceiving — and that many people have [left the labor force](#) since the financial crash about a decade ago.

At a news conference earlier this year, Powell called the issue "a bit of a puzzle."

"We hear about labor shortages, but where is the wage

reaction?" he [asked in June](#), right after the Fed raised the federal funds rate for the [second time this year](#) — to between 1.75 percent and 2 percent.

As rates continue to climb, it could place greater pressure on families who have been relying on their credit cards and mortgages to get by.

"For a lot of households, their wages have barely kept pace with the increases in household expenses — if even that," says Greg McBride, chief financial analyst for Bankrate.com. "Layer on top of that rising interest rates and the rising headwind that that presents toward consumers that are trying to get their debt paid off, and it's just going to further strain families that already have tight household budgets."

Wages were not the only riddle hanging over the two-day meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee, the Fed's board of policymakers. There are also troubles beyond U.S. borders.

From Argentina to Turkey, many of emerging economies have been hit by turbulence as a strengthening U.S. dollar [helped send their own currencies into a skid](#).

Add to that the uncertainty surrounding the deepening trade dispute between the U.S. and China, leading to tariffs leveled on [hundreds of billions of dollars' worth](#) of goods. Powell said businesses have raised concerns about the impact of trade conflicts, but the Fed has not seen much of an impact on the economy so far.

"The Fed will always say it's making policy decisions for the U.S. economy, and that's their mandate," Swank says. "But the reality is, what happens around the world does not stay around the world. It washes up on our shores, as well."

Still, even with [eight hikes](#) in the past three years, interest rates remain historically low. The Fed effectively placed its foot on the gas during the Great Recession, driving down rates to boost borrowing and pump more money into the economy. Now that money is flowing, and now that [inflation is ticking up](#), most analysts say it's about time to ease up off that gas pedal.

"There's a lot of momentum in the inflation process, and I think there's always a concern that if the Fed waits too long to address inflation, then it becomes more difficult," says Ann Owen, a professor at Hamilton College and former Fed economist.

If the central bank waits too long to head off inflation by raising rates, she explains, it could mean having to do more drastic rate hikes down the road. The Fed wants to avoid that whiplash. So the central bank may need to inflict modest pain on borrowers now if it means preventing much worse pains later.

"One of the really difficult things about monetary policy is that it's really hard to know if you're at a turning point in the economy. So they're always questioning, 'Is now the time for us to act?' " Owen says. "Hindsight is 20/20, but they have to make policy today."

So, what does all this mean for average folks in the meantime? Probably not much in the short term. "A really important point for people to keep in mind is that interest rates are still very, very low right now," Owen says, and the Fed so far has just been raising it with little nudges.

But those increases are expected to continue — with several more tentatively planned in the next year — and those changes may soon be evident in pricier credit card statements, mortgages and student loans. At the same time, they may also translate to higher returns for people who have been socking away money in a bank account.

"Rising rates are going to be good news for savers and bad news for borrowers," Bankrate's McBride says. "Do what you can to put yourself on the right side of that equation."

News Brief: Kavanaugh And The Midterms, Interest Rates, Cosby Sentencing

By Domenico Montanaro, Colin Dwyer and Eric Deggans

Morning Edition, · We look at the Kavanaugh nomination as a voting issue for November. Also, the Federal Reserve will likely nudge up interest rates, and we look at the cultural impact of Bill Cosby's sentencing.

Transcript

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The one sure thing about Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation - it has most definitely captured the nation's attention.

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

We have a new NPR/PBS/Marist poll out this morning. Nearly 6 in 10 Americans surveyed say they want to watch Thursday's hearing. Those who do turn in are likely to see Christine Blasey Ford accuse Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault. And Kavanaugh will respond. Now, Republicans on the committee - who are all men - have hired a woman to ask the questions for them. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell said yesterday, we have hired a female assistant, by which he means Rachel Mitchell, an Arizona prosecutor with long

experience investigating sex crimes.

MARTIN: All right. We're joined by NPR lead political editor Domenico Montanaro.

Domenico, let's start off talking about this poll. You asked specifically about Americans and whether or not they would like to see Brett Kavanaugh confirmed. What was the answer?

DOMENICO MONTANARO, BYLINE: Well, Americans are pretty split on his nomination, as you can imagine. Just 38 percent support Kavanaugh's nomination right now. Forty-three percent say they oppose it. Another 1 in 5 say they are not sure. This is, by the way, worse than for any recent Supreme Court nominee in the past dozen or so years. That's about six nominees to the court. And we've heard this anecdotally, but we now have data for it. There's a big gender gap. Forty-five percent of men support Kavanaugh's nomination; 32 percent of women only do.

MARTIN: Do people believe the allegation that Christine Blasey Ford has put out there against him?

MONTANARO: Yeah. I mean, a big split again - and again, another one along gender lines. Overall, about a third of people say they believe Ford. Less than that, about a quarter, say they believe Kavanaugh. And again, political and gender divide here - the political and gender divide is huge. Among Republican men, for example, 61 percent say they believe Kavanaugh. Among

Democratic women, 56 percent say they believe Ford. So big stakes ahead of this hearing on Thursday, when we've got almost 6 in 10 people saying that if Kavanaugh is not telling the truth, he should not be confirmed.

MARTIN: I mean, Donald Trump, when he was running for president in 2016, talked an awful lot about the Supreme Court, trying to convince people who were a little bit lukewarm on him that, hey, I'm the guy who's going to appoint conservative justices. So now as we approach the midterms, I mean, did you ask Americans - do we know if this nomination is going to be a factor in how they vote?

MONTANARO: Yeah. And a lot of people are saying that it is becoming a voting issue. More people are saying that they're likely to vote for someone who opposes Kavanaugh's nomination than supports it by a narrow 5-point margin. And you know, with Republicans losing - white voters with a college education are slipping away from them. You know, this is a group that says they're going to be closely watching these hearings.

MARTIN: Right.

INSKEEP: It's worth noting, Domenico said there's a large number of people who are saying, if Kavanaugh is not telling the truth, it becomes a question of his veracity as well as whatever he may have done in the 1980s. This is a lawyer who was involved in the Ken Starr investigation of Bill Clinton in the 1990s - which also, for many people, became a question not only about his

sexual history but whether he was truthful about it under oath.

MARTIN: Right.

So as we mentioned in that intro that Steve read, Domenico, Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee didn't like the optics so much of a bunch of white guys asking her questions, prosecuting her essentially. So they hired someone else to do it. What do we know?

MONTANARO: They did. You mentioned Rachel Mitchell. She's an Arizona prosecutor, registered Republican. She's in charge of the Special Victims Division of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, which deals with sexual assault cases. And she's dealt with older cases. Chuck Grassley, the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, says that the goal of this is to depoliticize the process and get to the truth. But Democrats are probably not going to be thrilled with this decision.

MARTIN: OK. NPR lead political editor Domenico Montanaro.

Thanks.

MONTANARO: You're welcome.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

MARTIN: OK. The Federal Reserve will likely nudge up

interest rates today.

INSKEEP: Yeah, the Fed controls how much banks are charged to borrow money short-term from the Fed. The Fed raises rates to slow down borrowing and hold down inflation, which has been rising about as fast as people's wages.

MARTIN: All right, NPR's Colin Dwyer is here to make the case as to how this is going to affect us.

Good morning, Colin.

COLIN DWYER, BYLINE: Good morning, Rachel.

MARTIN: First, before we get to the consumer impact of all this, why do so many analysts believe this rate hike is coming today?

DWYER: Well, things have been looking pretty rosy for the economy lately. Jobs reports have given us a stream of good news. Unemployment has been super low. Stocks have been super high. And consumers are more confident than they've been in almost two decades now. That's partly because the Fed has made it so easy on them with interest rates kept very low for a long time now. But now it's time to ease up on the gas pedal, and that's just what the Fed has been doing. It's gently raised rates seven times already in the past three years. And we've seen few reasons to persuade them not to make today number eight.

MARTIN: So there are bright spots and dark spots in the economy at any given time. Things - a lot of indicators are really positive. Where are the dark spots, though?

DWYER: Right. There always are dark spots, of course. We're talking about the economy here. In this case, there are two big questions hanging over this meeting. The first has to do with trade and the rest of the world. Emerging markets have seen their fair share of economic troubles. U.S. and China are in a massive trade dispute. And that's in addition to new tariffs from the U.S. against much of the world.

MARTIN: Right.

DWYER: All of this has some folks nervous. I talked to Diane Swonk, the chief economist at Grant Thornton. And she told me why those jitters matter.

DIANE SWONK: The Fed will always say it's making policy decisions for the U.S. economy and that's their mandate. But the reality is, what happens around the world does not stay around the world. It washes up on our shores as well.

DWYER: She...

MARTIN: Globalized economy and all.

DWYER: (Laughter) I know. Exactly. One thing has an effect on the other always. And in this case, she's also pointing to a second question that the Fed is facing right

now. And that is, why isn't all this news on Wall Street translating to higher wages? I mean, that's not to say that wages aren't growing lately - they are. But it's just not near...

MARTIN: It's been so slow. Right?

DWYER: Right, exactly. It's just not nearly at the rate of the rest of the economy. The rest of the economy is booming at the moment. Wages, meanwhile, have been growing pretty sluggishly. So all of this could mean some storm clouds on the horizon. But at the moment, we've got mostly sunny skies. And that's what the Fed is reacting to now.

INSKEEP: Can I just mention one thing? Even after all of these interest rate hikes, interest rates are still relatively low. They've been extraordinarily low for about a decade now, which means there's a whole generation of consumers that has no experience whatsoever with high interest rates. It'll be interesting to see, as interest rates keep creeping up, how people respond to that.

MARTIN: Right. So what does this mean, Colin, for the average consumer out there?

DWYER: Well, the thing to remember is, this will still be a very small bump. Interest rates will remain pretty low if all things go as we expect. But there will be some changes on the way. And that basically means that this is bad news for borrowers. But it also probably could mean good news for savers. So just get yourself on the right

side of that equation.

MARTIN: All right. Sounds challenging, but we'll make it happen. NPR's Colin Dwyer.

Thanks so much.

DWYER: All right. Have a good morning.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

MARTIN: He was Cliff Huxtable, America's dad; a beloved comic; an American icon. And now Bill Cosby is in prison.

INSKEEP: Walked out of court in handcuffs yesterday. A judge sentenced Cosby to three to 10 years in state prison. He'd been convicted of aggravated indecent assault against former Temple University employee Andrea Constand in 2004. Other women who had accused Cosby of similar assaults were outside the courtroom with their attorney Gloria Allred, who spoke with MSNBC.

(SOUNDBITE OF MSNBC BROADCAST)

GLORIA ALLRED: It's important that the criminal justice system has finally worked on behalf of a victim and that women's words mattered and were valued.

MARTIN: NPR's Eric Deggans joins us now.

So Eric, Cosby is the first celebrity who's actually been

handed down a prison sentence in the #MeToo era. How are you weighing the significance of this moment?

ERIC DEGGANS, BYLINE: Well, it certainly feels like the page has turned regarding how America reacts to allegations like this. Constand tried to get prosecutors to take her case back in 2005, when she first accused Cosby of drugging and assaulting her. But they declined to pursue the case, and she wound up filing a lawsuit against him that was settled. And it felt like America kind of got some kind of cultural amnesia about what happened. And people didn't really talk about it much until Cosby tried to revive his TV career in 2014.

Stand-up comic Hannibal Buress did this bit that became a viral video, talking about how Cosby was a rapist. And that led other women to come forward.

MARTIN: Right.

DEGGANS: And before long, we had dozens of women sharing similar stories. So even though this can feel like a victory for #MeToo, it basically took more than 10 years, accusations from at least 60 women and a prosecution that ended in a mistrial before...

MARTIN: Right.

DEGGANS: ...We got the trial that brought his conviction.

MARTIN: That's a long slog. So...

DEGGANS: Yeah.

MARTIN: ...Did we hear from Andrea Constand yesterday at the sentencing?

DEGGANS: Well, she spoke briefly during the sentencing proceeding on Monday but submitted a longer victim impact statement that was really profound. I mean, she wrote about how she couldn't eat or sleep after the assault, enduring, quote, "psychological, emotional and financial bullying" from Cosby and his legal team during the civil case. She talked about the pain of having her character insulted during the prosecutions. She wrote, quote, "Bill Cosby took my beautiful, healthy young spirit and crushed it."

So you know, through this process, she endured a lot. But she also kind of became the instrument through which other women who have accused Cosby could feel like they got some measure of justice.

MARTIN: So after the sentencing, a spokesman for Bill Cosby had a lot to say. He called the trial racist and sexist. He also talked about Bill Cosby's history within the civil rights community. Let's listen to that.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ANDREW WYATT: Dr. Cosby has been one of the greatest civil rights leaders in the United States for over the last 50 years. He has also been one of the greatest educators of men and boys over the last 50 years.

MARTIN: I mean, that's true. Isn't it, Eric?

DEGGANS: Yeah. And you know, it was interesting to listen to what Wyatt said. He had a lot of heated rhetoric. He compared Cosby's case to the Supreme Court nominee, Brett Kavanaugh, who also faces allegations of sexual assault from his past, saying both of these men were victims of a, quote, "sex war."

I think Cosby's status as a hero feels kind of generational. Younger black folks may have less of an attachment to him. I'm a member of the TV Critics Association, and we voted to rescind a Career Achievement Award we gave him in 2002. I think there's a sense that we have to hold two ideas in our head now.

MARTIN: Yeah.

DEGGANS: You know, someone who was one of the world's most successful entertainers is also now a convicted sex offender who is serving a jail sentence.

MARTIN: We should just say Cosby's spokesman, his full name there - Andrew Wyatt.

DEGGANS: Yeah.

MARTIN: NPR's TV critic Eric Deggans.

Eric, thanks so much for sharing your reflections on this. We appreciate it.

DEGGANS: Thank you.

(SOUNDBITE OF DIPLOMATS OF SOLID SOUND'S
"BAILOUT!")

What To Expect From The Fed

Morning Edition, · NPR's Steve Inskeep speaks with David Wessel, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, about the Federal Reserve's final day of meetings and what to expect.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

If the analysts have it right, the Federal Reserve is raising interest rates today again. They've gone up a couple of times already this year, several times in recent years as the Fed works to manage inflation. And yet interest rates are still, by historic levels, pretty low. So what's going on here? David Wessel is director of the Hutchins Center at the Brookings Institution. Good morning, David.

DAVID WESSEL: Good morning, Steve.

INSKEEP: So what's driving the interest rate hike?

WESSEL: Well, basically, the economy is doing very well. The Fed officials have kept interest rates extraordinarily low. They've put their foot on the gas pedal for a quite a while now. With inflation now creeping up to their 2 percent target, unemployment at an 18-year low of 3.9 percent and headed down, they don't think the economy any longer needs this extraordinarily low interest rates. So they're pulling their foot off the gas pedal. They're

not yet touching the brake, but some Fed officials are saying it's time to touch the brake.

INSKEEP: Well, a couple of things here. One, we discussed how inflation has gotten to the point - still pretty low, but - gotten to the point where it's eating the average person's wages, right? Wage hikes.

WESSEL: Right. So wages, on average, are only now slightly above inflation. A lot of workers seem to be getting bonuses rather than wages. But that's not beginning to compensate for all the years at which wages have risen much more slowly for the average person than inflation. In fact, the Census Bureau recently said that the typical man who worked full-time last year earned less adjusted for inflation than his counterpart did in 1999...

INSKEEP: Wow.

WESSEL: ...Using the official inflation measure.

INSKEEP: And yet we're at this point where they need to squeeze the economy a little bit. Do President Trump's tariffs, which are beginning to hit soon, factor into this? Because these are tariffs on just about everything, ultimately, that the United States buys from China. Does that raise prices enough that the Fed has to consider that part of inflation?

WESSEL: Well, the Fed doesn't have to worry much about President Trump's tariffs in the short-run. After all, they haven't had that much effect on the overall

economy, just on some pockets. The United States still produces most of what it consumes and consumes most of what it produces. But over time, the Fed does have to worry, will the tariffs slow the economy so they stop raising interest rates so much, or will they add to inflation, as you suggest, and force them to raise interest rates more rapidly than they've planned?

INSKEEP: One other thing I'd like to ask about, David Wessel. Interest rates went down around the time of the financial crisis. They were down around zero, effectively, for a very long time. And by now, we have a whole generation of consumers that effectively has no experience with high-interest rates, no experience with high inflation. What's it mean now that we're heading into a new phase?

WESSEL: Well, I don't think they have to worry about high inflation. We're nowhere near that. But you're absolutely right on the interest rates. This is a group of people, people in their 20s and 30s, who seem to have a lot of debt. And for a lot of them, whether it's a car loan or an adjustable rate mortgage or, in some cases, student loans, the interest rate on their loans has been relatively low. It's going to start going up. That's going to pinch. On the other hand, some people who have savings may enjoy the fact that the bank's finally going to start paying them more than nothing on their savings.

INSKEEP: (Laughter) Which has been the experience for a lot of people. But you're saying that the really low car loan or the really low house loan, that's going to get a

little harder?

WESSEL: Absolutely. And as I said, these people have lots of debt and they don't have a lot of assets. They're much less likely to own a home than their counterparts were a generation ago.

INSKEEP: David, thanks very much.

WESSEL: You're welcome.

INSKEEP: That's David Wessel of the Brookings Institution.

Trade War: "The Fruit Of A President's Folly"

1A, · On Sunday, The Des Moines Register [ran a four-page advertising supplement "paid for and prepared solely by China Daily, an official publication of the People's Republic of China."](#)

Its message? That the trade war's impact on soybean farmers in Iowa is "the fruit of a president's folly."

It calls the trade war with Trump the "fruit of a president's folly." pic.twitter.com/shDAOZIC3X

— Jennifer Jacobs (@JenniferJJacobs) [September 23, 2018](#)

China has purchased ads in U.S. newspapers before. But what to make of the four-page spread, in light of the escalating trade war?

From *Axios*:

This isn't the first time the state-owned China Daily has bought ad space in a U.S. publication. It has frequently done so in [The New York Times](#) and [The Washington Post](#), among others, but its shrewd targeting of *The Des Moines Register* appeals directly to America's heartland, which data suggests [has the most to lose](#) [sic] from an extended trade war.

We'll discuss the significance of China's latest trade tactic, and how the trade war is impacting farmers across the U.S.

Show produced by [Morgan Givens](#), text by [Kathryn Fink](#).

GUESTS

Shawn Donnan, Senior writer, Bloomberg; former world trade editor, Financial Times; [@sdonnan](#)

Phil Levy, Senior fellow on the global economy, Chicago Council on Global Affairs; former senior economist for trade for President George W. Bush's Council of Economic Advisers and former member of Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice's Policy Planning Staff (2003-2006); [@philpilevy](#)

Ryan Findlay, Chief Executive Officer, the American Soybean Association; [@farmit](#)

April Hemmes, Soybean and corn farmer in Iowa; board member, United Soybean Board; [@aprilhemmes](#)

For more, visit <https://the1a.org>.

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Michael Kors Buys Italy's Versace Fashion House For \$2.12 Billion

By Bill Chappell

NPR.org, September 25, 2018 · Fashion company Michael Kors is buying Versace, the Italian luxury brand founded by Gianni Versace in 1978, for \$2.12 billion. The two fashion houses made the announcement Tuesday, one day after speculation spread about a potential deal.

Donatella Versace, the artistic director of the Milan-based fashion house who helped lead the company after her brother's death in 1997, said it's the perfect time for the company to join with Michael Kors.

"It has been more than 20 years since I took over the company along with my brother Santo and daughter Allegra," Donatella Versace said in a [news release](#). "I am proud that Versace remains very strong in both fashion and modern culture."

On social media, fans of the Versace brand were less enthusiastic.

"STAY AWAY FROM VERSACE," one woman [wrote in reply](#) to a Michael Kors tweet, as rumors of the deal spread Monday afternoon.

When Versace's Twitter account [posted a photo of new handbags](#) as news of the deal emerged, the top response asked how the company could be "tweeting about

handbags at a time like this?" Another user wrote simply, "Don't sell to Michael Kors."

But sell it did. In addition to a mountain of cash, Versace and her brother and her daughter will receive 150 million euros (about \$177 million) worth of shares in the newly united company. When the deal closes, Michael Kors Holdings Limited will change its name to Capri Holdings Limited.

"We are excited to have Versace as part of our family of luxury brands, and we are committed to investing in its growth," said John D. Idol, the Michael Kors chairman and CEO. "With the full resources of our group, we believe that Versace will grow to over U.S. \$2 billion in revenues."

Outlining that plan, Kors said it wants to get Versace products in more stores — from around 200 now to a goal of 300. It would also put more emphasis on Versace's creation of accessories and footwear — products that it said could bring in 60 percent of revenues, up from 35 percent currently.

The combined company is also projected to change the geographic footprint of Michael Kors Holdings. The fashion brand wants to reduce its reliance on business in the Americas and raise its exposure in Asia.

Designer Michael Kors founded his fashion and design company in 1981 in Manhattan, where it's still based. It blossomed with an emphasis on expensive handbags and

a commitment to selling its products in department stores. The Versace purchase continues its attempts both to diversify its offerings and to benefit from high-end luxury sales.

In addition to its flagship line, Michael Kors also includes luxury shoemaker and accessories brand Jimmy Choo — which it bought last summer, [for \\$1.2 billion](#).

U.S. Tariffs On China May Force California Company To Move Production Overseas

All Things Considered, · NPR's Audie Cornish talks with Daniel Emerson, CEO of bike light manufacturer Light & Motion, about why the latest round of tariffs on goods from China may force him to move his production overseas.

Transcript

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

The latest U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods took effect today, making it more expensive for Americans to buy yet more products from China. We're going to hear now from the CEO of an American company who's trying to figure out what to do now. Daniel Emerson runs Light & Motion. It's a company in Marina, Calif. They sell lights for bikes and scuba divers, among other specialty uses. In fact, his lights were recently used in the dramatic rescue of the Thai soccer team trapped in a cave. Here in the U.S...

DANIEL EMERSON: Local law enforcement and FBI use our lights to inspect the hulls of ships coming into our ports. We're the exclusive light of the Weather Channel. Hurricane Florence, when you see an - a broadcaster standing in driving rain being lit, it's our lights that are

lighting them.

CORNISH: The problem he has is that most of the parts that he uses to make his lights come from China.

EMERSON: Our electronics, which are the most expensive part of the light, are sourced primarily in China. We used to make them in the United States, but China's just too attractive. Batteries - all of our lights have batteries, and batteries come out of Asia, mostly Korea and Japan. And then all the customized parts, the specialty parts that make our lights unique, are built with specialized tooling that all resides in China.

CORNISH: Right now, are you having to pay higher prices for them?

EMERSON: Yeah. The way the tariff works is you have a shipment come in. It lands at the Port of Oakland. The U.S. government says, oh, this is \$100,000 of parts. Please write us a check for \$10,000 if you want to get your parts. We end up writing very large checks to the U.S. government, and we cannot continue to run our business if that continues.

CORNISH: Can you imagine in the long run these tariffs helping you at all?

EMERSON: These tariffs are going to destroy our business and force us to move offshore. I think of tariffs as a wall built around the United States. And if your business is inside that wall, it becomes very difficult to

bring parts in. And it also becomes very difficult to move parts out. The smartest thing for us to do, which is what the law is telling us, is to move all of our production outside that wall. That allows us to sell internationally without any barriers or added costs. The most galling thing about the tariffs is the administration has created a tunnel under this wall that allows my Chinese competitors to bring all their products into the United States tariff-free.

CORNISH: What do you mean by that?

EMERSON: If you look at the list of what is being tariffed, it's all parts, mostly, at least in my bike light, scuba diving light and cinema and photography light space. I have a - many, many, many competitors out of Asia and China in particular that are not being tariffed at all. A finished flashlight will come into the United States tariff-free under the new tariffs. Meanwhile, my business that builds in the United States, all of the parts we buy are being tariffed.

CORNISH: It sounds like you're in a real flex moment. You sound quite calm, given the enormity of what you're saying about your business.

EMERSON: Well, you know, there's an emotional side to this, and there's the business side. I don't make the rules. The rules have changed. I need to adapt.

CORNISH: Where do you plan to move production?

EMERSON: Well, as I talked about, this tunnel underneath the tariff wall - there are countries like Taiwan or the Philippines who enjoy what's called most favored nation status. And products from those countries coming into the United States are tariff-free. What that means is I'll still get all of my parts out of China. I'll just ship them to another country, like the Philippines, assemble them there and bring them into the United States without tariffs.

CORNISH: Daniel Emerson is CEO of Light & Motion, a lighting manufacturer in Marina, Calif. Thank you for speaking with us.

EMERSON: Thank you, Audie. It's a pleasure to be on your program.

(SOUNDBITE OF BLOCKHEAD'S "ATTACK THE DOCTOR")

EU Is Unreceptive To Britain's Plan To Stay In Europe's Single Market

By Frank Langfitt

Morning Edition, · British Prime Minister Theresa May's hopes of persuading her peers in the European Union to keep the U.K. in the bloc's single market were dashed at an informal summit in Germany.

Transcript

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

The U.K. keeps trying and the EU keeps saying no. British Prime Minister Theresa May presented a plan this week to her peers in the European Union aiming to keep the U.K. in Europe's single market. They weren't so receptive, though. President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, told reporters that May's suggested framework for economic cooperation will not work.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER: No deal is not my working assumption, but would it happen, then we are prepared because the commission has prepared, in detail, all the elements of - consequences of a no deal - which could be entailed by a no deal. So don't worry. Be happy, don't worry.

MARTIN: Be happy, don't worry - quoting Bobby McFerrin there. Time's running out, though. European officials have set a deadline of mid-October. NPR's Frank Langfitt joins us now from London. Hey, Frank.

FRANK LANGFITT, BYLINE: Hey. Good morning, Rachel.

MARTIN: A lot of people trying the same thing, getting the same answer, hoping for a different result here.

LANGFITT: Yeah. It - basically, it's been like covering a loop, where it just - it's this - it's a game of pingpong. It just goes back and forth with no real result. And what Prime Minister May is asking for here is frictionless access for goods into this market of over 500 million consumers, but still being outside of the EU. And, of course, what they're asking for - the U.K. is asking for is a big benefit of membership without actually being a member.

And after a while, understandably, Europe is kind of exasperated and also feels that the Brexiteers (ph) here in the United Kingdom may have sold a bill of goods to the British people. Emmanuel Macron - he's the president of France, of course - he said that, quote, "those who said that you can easily do without Europe, that it will all go very well and there will be lots of money are liars." So very strong words out of Salzburg yesterday.

MARTIN: So what does the U.K. do? I mean, do they have any leverage to extract any concessions from them?

LANGFITT: You know, Rachel, they don't have a lot. The U.K. is a proud country. It's the world's sixth-largest economy. But the EU is many times larger. And if you're in Germany, you're a car maker, you don't want to see new trade barriers. You want to be able to sell into the U.K. But so far, Europe is mostly unified in terms of its response to the U.K.

And, essentially, what the U.K. has is primarily what I would call negative in - negative leverage. They've basically been saying, if you don't give us what we want, we're going to crash out of the EU with no deal. That's going to hurt...

MARTIN: And they're like, fine, do that.

LANGFITT: Well, no, they're not, like, fine because it will hurt the European economies, but it's going to hurt the U.K. a lot worse.

MARTIN: Right.

LANGFITT: So that's not a really good negotiating position.

MARTIN: Theresa May's party conference is just over a week away.

LANGFITT: Yep.

MARTIN: I mean, it's impossible to ignore kind of the political repercussions of all this. She has been able to

hold onto power thus far. Is that going to...

LANGFITT: Extraordinarily, yes.

MARTIN: ...Sustain?

LANGFITT: You know, I don't see her going any time immediately even though this was treated in the papers this morning as a humiliation for her. And there continues to be talk of dumping her as leader. The idea of changing horses in midstream in something so massively complex as Brexit seems crazy. She's also proved very durable, much more so than anybody really thought.

And if you have a leadership battle here, that would actually create more chaos in the sort of Brexit negotiations. It also could end up triggering a general election here. If the Conservative Party - they could lose that election. They could lose the government - their control the government. And then the Labour Party leader, his name is Jeremy Corbyn, he could become prime minister. He's a socialist, and that has to be the conservatives' worst nightmare. So, again, this sort of negative leverage that Prime Minister May has, you know? If you don't do this, things could get a lot worse.

MARTIN: NPR's Frank Langfitt in London. Thanks so much, Frank.

LANGFITT: Happy to do it, Rachel.

Footing The Bill For Climate Change: 'By The End Of The Day, Someone Has To Pay'

By Colin Dwyer

Morning Edition, · By all accounts, Florence was a massive, wet monster of a storm — and an expensive one, too. Its historic deluge swelled inland rivers and wrecked homes across the Carolinas, racking up costs that early estimates set as high as \$22 billion.

When the floodwaters recede, residents will face some tough decisions about how — or even if — they can rebuild. It's likely that fewer than 10 percent of households hit by Florence have flood insurance, according to [actuaries at Milliman](#), and others may discover their homeowners insurance policies [cover less than they'd assumed](#).

But Florence isn't a fluke. Scientists have predicted that climate change will continue to [exacerbate massive storms](#), and that it will continue to cause conditions [ripe for wildfires](#) and other natural disasters.

As the risks of these disasters grow, the insurance industry is adapting with them — and consumer advocates, regulators and insurance researchers alike fear that the brunt of the bills will increasingly fall on the shoulders of low-income homeowners.

Munich Re has laid out the challenges of a changing climate. As one of the world's largest reinsurers, the company insures other insurers in cases of catastrophe, so it has good reason to keep track of catastrophes such as Florence. It has been doing so [for nearly four decades](#).

"When I look back to the 1980s, we recorded 200 to 300 events — catastrophe events — annually, and today we are close to about 1,000 events," says Munich Re's chief climatologist, Ernst Rauch, who has been doing this research for the reinsurer for 30 years.

That means a lot of losses that insurers must be prepared to cover. Last year alone, it meant [roughly \\$135 billion](#) in insured losses — including a record amount in California, where wildfires drove [nearly \\$12 billion in insurance claims](#) in just a three-month span.

That huge sum is just one reason why wildfires keep California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones up at night.

"The climate scientists tell us that we're going to continue to see temperatures rise, and that will contribute to more catastrophic weather-related events," Jones says. "In California, what this has meant is loss of life, loss of property, business interruption, community devastation associated with wildfires."

It's Jones' job to be sure that insurance companies are ready to cover these losses. But it's also his job to protect the folks who actually *suffer* these losses. And that's

becoming even harder these days, especially in areas that insurers consider risky for wildfires, such as Mendocino County, where California's [biggest fire on record](#) consumed an area the size of Houston earlier this year.

Jones' office found that in these areas, complaints about price increases shot up from 2010 to 2016, the last year for which it has data. And across a two-year span, he saw a [15 percent increase](#) in the number of homeowners in these regions who found that their insurer would not renew them at all. As a result, more homeowners have been turning to California's state-created insurer of last resort, the FAIR Plan, which can often be even pricier.

Jones calls that plan his "canary in the coal mine," and he's watching it closely. The numbers do not reflect a crisis yet — but still, he says, "it's a growing problem."

"People are finding insurance, it's just that they're finding it increasingly challenging in some areas to find insurance," Jones explains. "And those areas which were traditionally thought to be of a lower risk are now being treated by the insurers as a higher risk."

And the state expects this situation to get worse. In California's latest climate assessment, officials predicted the area burned by wildfires will [increase dramatically](#) in the coming decades.

It's not just California. Hurricanes, droughts, floods — with global temperatures expected to rise, consumer advocates expect insurance pains to rise with them.

But looking ahead, that pain may not be evenly distributed.

"The insurance companies will take care of themselves," says Bob Hunter, director of insurance for the Consumer Federation of America.

He says these companies have come up with a variety of ways to handle the risks of climate change — from developing more accurate prediction models and relying on reinsurers such as Munich Re, to raising premiums or "hollowing out" policies by reducing their coverage.

"Rich people can afford richer policies," Hunter says. "You have to pay a lot for that, but if your house gets destroyed, you're going to get totally rebuilt. But poorer people who can't afford that are going to buy slimmed down policies — some of them won't even know they're slimmed down until the event happens."

"And then, the very poor will be priced out. Those are the people who will probably — not probably, *will* — get hurt the most," he says.

That's a point voiced not just by advocates, but also by regulators and some researchers in the insurance industry.

"If you think beyond the next 10, 20, 30 years, then climate change could play a major role when it comes to the issue of affordability or availability [of insurance] in certain areas," says Rauch, Munich Re's climatologist,

who predicts these bills "will become, sooner or later, a social issue."

"Because by the end of the day," he adds, "someone has to pay for the increasing risk caused by climate change."

31 Percent Of U.S. Households Have Trouble Paying Energy Bills

By Sasha Ingber

NPR.org, September 19, 2018 · Nearly a third of households in the United States have struggled to pay their energy bills, the Energy Information Administration said in a report released Wednesday. The differences were minor in terms of geography, but Hispanics and racial minorities were hit hardest.

About one in five households had to reduce or forgo food, medicine and other necessities to pay an energy bill, according to the [report](#). "Of the 25 million households that reported forgoing food and medicine to pay energy bills, 7 million faced that decision nearly every month," the report stated.

More than 10 percent of households kept their homes at unhealthy or unsafe temperatures.

The data come from the federal agency's most recent energy consumption survey in 2015. That year, expenditures for energy were [at their lowest](#) in more than decade, according to the agency.

"We only conduct the Residential Energy Consumption Survey every 4-5 years," survey manager Chip Berry told NPR by email. "This is the first time in the history of the study (goes back to late '70s) that we have [measured]

energy insecurity across all households, so there's not much in the way of historical comparison."

The study found that about half of households experiencing trouble reported income of less than \$20,000. More than 40 percent had at least one child.

And people of color were disproportionately affected: about half of respondents who reported challenges paying their energy bills identified as black. More than 40 percent identified as Latino.

"It's not shocking, because the communities of color disproportionately face all the highest burdens, whether it's housing, lack of jobs or education," Tracey Capers, executive vice president of the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, a community development initiative in New York, told The Associated Press.

[A 2016 study](#) by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and Energy Efficiency for All found that African-American and Latino households "paid more for utilities per square foot than the average household." Housing for the low income also tended to be less energy efficient, researchers found. Families in that group were at higher risk for respiratory diseases and stress.

"Households can spend more than 20 percent of their total income on their electricity needs," George Koutitas, CEO and co-founder of Gridmates, a crowdfunding platform told NPR. Gridmates funnels donations to utility companies for struggling customers' energy bills.

Low-income heat assistance programs, he says, only go so far. Weatherization programs that insulate a home "take a lot of time and they are not very responsive." Bill assistance alternatives, he says, are underfunded and have been canceled.

Citing lack of need and fraud, the Trump administration called for an end to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program last [fall](#) and [winter](#).

"Please I beg you to bring back this assistance with electricity," a woman in northern Texas wrote, after a state assistance program called Lite-Up Texas ran out of money, [according to The Texas Tribune](#). "I am going to freeze during this cold season."

Technology

Facebook Says Hackers Accessed Information Of 50 Million Users In Latest Data Breach

By Alina Selyukh

All Things Considered, · Facebook announced a new data breach on Friday. Hackers accessed the information of 50 million Facebook users, as Facebook remains under pressure for misuse of users' personal data.

Transcript

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

We learned today that Facebook has had a new security breach, and the company says it affects almost 50 million accounts. As a precaution, Facebook is logging off those accounts and about 40 million more. The company says no passwords were stolen, but NPR's Alina Selyukh reports the full scope of the attack is unclear.

ALINA SELYUKH, BYLINE: Facebook says hackers exploited three separate security gaps to gain access to the code that allowed them to take over millions of user accounts. The security gaps came together in the feature called View As which allows users to see how their profile page looks to someone else. The hackers were able to get what's called access tokens. These are digital keys that, for example, let you stay logged in on the

Facebook app without having to re-enter your password. The most important thing that we don't know is to what extent the hackers actually used their access to the accounts. Here's Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

MARK ZUCKERBERG: The investigation is still very early. So we do not yet know if any of the accounts were actually misused.

SELYUKH: Zuckerberg said so far, the company has not found evidence that hackers had access to any private messages or posted to any accounts, though he added that this could change as the investigation continues. Here's Guy Rosen, Facebook's executive who oversees safety and security.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

GUY ROSEN: We haven't yet been able to determine if there's specific targeting. It does seem broad. And we don't yet know who is behind these attacks or where they might be based.

SELYUKH: Zuckerberg pointed out several times how quickly his team acted given frequent accusations that Facebook moved too slowly on the Cambridge Analytica security scandal. Facebook says with this data breach, engineers discovered it on Tuesday, notified the FBI on Wednesday, made fixes on Thursday and notified the public today.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: It definitely is an issue that this happened in the first place.

SELYUKH: On the call, reporters posed one question to Zuckerberg several times in different ways. Why should people keep trusting Facebook? Zuckerberg seemed to search for an answer before resorting to one of his regular phrases.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: Security is a bit of - it's an arms race.

SELYUKH: He said the breach underscored how constant the hack attacks are and, without addressing the trust issue directly, said Facebook's security teams were working very hard.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ZUCKERBERG: This is going to be an ongoing effort. And we're going to need to keep on focusing on this over time.

SELYUKH: The same can be said about Facebook's ongoing challenge of convincing federal and state officials that it's not too big to secure the personal data of millions and millions of users. Alina Selyukh, NPR News.

Facebook Says Security Breach Affected Almost 50 Million Accounts

By Camila Domonoske

NPR.org, September 28, 2018 · Updated 5:37 p.m. ET

Facebook says that it has discovered a security breach affecting nearly 50 million accounts and that it's not yet clear whether any information was accessed or any accounts were otherwise misused.

The vulnerability that caused the breach was found Tuesday and was fixed on Thursday night, Facebook says. It was the result of bugs introduced into Facebook's code in July 2017. No passwords or credit card numbers were stolen, the company says.

But as a result of the breach, attackers could gain access to a user's account — hypothetically giving them the ability not only to view information, but also to use the account as though they were the account holder.

"We do not yet know if any of the accounts were actually misused," Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg told reporters Friday. "This is a really serious security issue, and we are taking it really seriously."

The company said it is working with the FBI and conducting an investigation, which is "still in its early stages."

Facebook does not yet know who carried out the attacks or where they were based. The company knows the attackers attempted to access profile information but not whether they succeeded; it does not yet have evidence that the attackers accessed private messages or if they posted to accounts.

The attack involved stealing "access tokens." Facebook explains:

"[A]ttackers exploited a vulnerability in Facebook's code that impacted ['View As'](#), a feature that lets people see what their own profile looks like to someone else. This allowed them to steal Facebook access tokens which they could then use to take over people's accounts. Access tokens are the equivalent of digital keys that keep people logged in to Facebook so they don't need to re-enter their password every time they use the app."

Nearly 50 million accounts are known to be affected and have had their access tokens reset. An additional 40 million accounts have had their tokens reset as a "precautionary step."

"As a result, around 90 million people will now have to log back in to Facebook, or any of their apps that use Facebook Login," Facebook says. "After they have logged back in, people will get a notification at the top of their News Feed explaining what happened."

Many users have not yet seen a notification, but that does not mean they were not affected; users "will receive those" in the future, Facebook said Friday afternoon.

The "View As" feature has also been temporarily turned off, pending a security review.

The vulnerability that made the attack possible was caused by multiple bugs in Facebook's code interacting. At some point, attackers discovered the vulnerability and began exploiting it.

On Sept. 16, Facebook noticed a pattern of unusual activity on the site and launched an investigation.

On Tuesday, the company uncovered the flaw that made this attack possible. It involves three problems with the video uploading feature, explained Guy Rosen, vice president of product management at Facebook. First, the uploader was sometimes appearing on posts prompting people to send "Happy Birthday" messages, even in "View As" mode. (The uploader should not have shown up in "View As" mode at all.)

Second, the uploader was incorrectly generating an access token with permissions for the Facebook app. And third, instead of generating the access token for the person's own Facebook account, it was generating the token for a friend whose name they had plugged into "View As."

From there, the attacker could use that account access to

"pivot" to another account — that is, log in as that friend and mine *their* friend network for more accounts to attack. Each token would allow the attacker to access a user's Facebook account.

By mid-September, the attack was being used on a "fairly large scale," Rosen said.

Facebook has been on the defensive over issues of user privacy and data security in recent months, after the [Cambridge Analytica scandal](#) broke in the spring.

"It's an arms race," Zuckerberg said Friday, repeating a phrase he [often deploys](#). "We're continuing to improve our defenses, and I think this underscores that there are constant attacks by people who are trying to take over accounts or steal information from our community."

Sen. Mark Warner, co-chair of the Senate Cybersecurity Caucus, called for a "full investigation" into the breach.

"This is another sobering indicator that Congress needs to step up and take action to protect the privacy and security of social media users," Warner said in a statement Friday.

Vishaan Chakrabarti: How Can We Design More Welcoming Cities?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 3 of the TED Radio Hour episode [Building Humane Cities](#).*

About Vishaan Chakrabarti's TED Talk

Architect [Vishaan Chakrabarti](#) says many modern cities feel cold, austere, and anonymous. He advocates for designing more vibrant and inclusive cities that are reminiscent of the scale of older cities.

About Vishaan Chakrabarti

Vishaan Chakrabarti is an architect seeking to redefine urban life around the world. He believes well-designed cities can create more prosperous, inclusive, egalitarian societies.

He is the author of [A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for Urban America](#).

Chakrabarti is a professor of architectural design and urban theory at Columbia University. He is also the founder of [Practice for Architecture and Urbanism](#), an architecture studio that supports and advances urbanization.

SEC Sues Elon Musk Over Tesla Tweets

By Jasmine Garsd

Morning Edition, · The Securities and Exchange Commission is suing Elon Musk over statements he made on Twitter about taking Tesla private.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

Elon Musk, the CEO of the electric car company Tesla, is being sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission, the SEC, all of which started with a tweet. NPR's Jasmine Garsd reports.

JASMINE GARSD, BYLINE: On August 7, Elon Musk tweeted that he was thinking of taking Tesla private at \$420 a share. That sent Tesla's stock skyrocketing. Problem is, Musk didn't actually have any firm backers to go private.

JAMES COX: This cost several people and institutions hundreds of millions of dollars.

GARSD: Professor James Cox specializes in corporate and securities law at Duke University.

COX: We don't want prominent executives making statements about their company that have no factual

basis.

GARSD: Musk backed down on the plan and kept Tesla a publicly traded company. The SEC didn't let it go. It's now coming after Musk for allegedly misleading investors. The lawsuit says Musk set the share price at \$420 on a whim because he had recently learned the number's significance in marijuana culture and thought his girlfriend would find it amusing.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

ELON MUSK: I mean, it's legal, right?

JOE ROGAN: Totally legal.

MUSK: OK.

GARSD: It's not such a bizarre allegation, given Musk's recent behavior, like when he recently went on comedian Joe Rogan's podcast and apparently smoked pot. The interview had some strikingly sad moments, like when Musk stared blankly into space and talked about the pressures he's under.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

MUSK: I don't think you'd necessarily want to be me.

GARSD: Investors were worried. Gene Munster works at Loup, a venture capital company that follows Tesla. He says the last couple of months...

GENE MUNSTER: To call it a roller coaster is an understatement.

GARSD: In the lawsuit, the SEC seeks that Musk be barred from serving as an officer or director of a public company. Munster says that's what many investors have wanted all along. He'd like to see Musk as a chief visionary.

MUNSTER: Where he doesn't have investor-relations responsibilities. After what happened today, I think it's less likely because the SEC really is out for blood here.

GARSD: It's a tough spot for the company. To many devoted fans, Tesla is inextricably linked to the charismatic and innovative Elon Musk.

ERIK GORDON: A real fundamental question here is, do we have a real company, or do we have Elon Musk Incorporated?

GARSD: Erik Gordon is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.

GORDON: Through all of these sort of troubles and shenanigans with Musk, the company has said, well, yeah. But he needs to be CEO. He probably can't be CEO anymore, so they're going to have to change their tune, and they're going to have to convince investors that the company is OK without him as CEO.

GARSD: In a public statement following the lawsuit

announcement, Elon Musk called the SEC's actions unjustified. He wrote, quote, "I have always taken action in the best interests of truth, transparency and investors." Jasmine Garsd, NPR News, New York.

You've Been To Mars And A Comet; Japan's Space Agency Invites You To An Asteroid

By Ruben Kimmelman

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Want to see what it would be like to stand on a asteroid? Well, if you were not a human but rather a seven-inch-diameter, just under 3-inch-tall, hopping robot?

A video released Thursday and taken by one of the two bouncing rovers currently on the surface of the asteroid Ryugu — over [200 million miles away from Earth](#) — shows you just this.

"Enjoy 'standing' on the surface of this asteroid!" Japan's space agency, JAXA, wrote on [their Twitter post containing the video](#).

Part of a collection of media released by the agency, the video shows the rocky surface of the asteroid and the sun moving across the sky, as seen from the asteroid.

As seen in the night sky from Earth, the asteroid — and the small rovers on it — are currently moving across the constellation [Virgo and positioned between the planets Mercury and Venus](#).

The video, which is composed of 15 frames, was captured on Sept. 23, along with the other media

[published by JAXA](#) on Thursday.

A series of photos taken by the same rover that captured the video confirms a "hop" by the robot, according to the Japanese team, which is a big deal for them.

"We were able to confirm that Rover-1B hopped!" JAXA wrote in [their tweet containing the photo series](#).

The gravity on the surface of asteroids like Ryugu is very weak. Rovers that move by wheels or tracks would float upwards as soon as they started to move. So the [rovers hop instead](#).

"Within the rover is a motor that rotates and causes the rover to "hop" (jump up) during the rebound," JAXA says on its website.

That hop propels the rovers off the ground for up to 15 minutes and allows the rover to move up to almost 50 feet horizontally along the asteroid's surface.

As quoted on JAXA's [site](#), project manager Yuichi Tsuda was at a loss for words when the rovers' on-asteroid hopping ability was first confirmed on Sept. 22.

"I cannot find words to express how happy I am that we were able to realize mobile exploration on the surface of an asteroid. I am proud that Hayabusa2 was able to contribute to the creation of this technology for a new method of space exploration by surface movement on small bodies," Tsuda said.

According to the JAXA website for the mission, the two hopping rovers that have captured the media are called Rover-1A and Rover-1B.

The rovers were stored within a container called MINERVA-II1. The container was launched from the spacecraft Hayabusa2 last week and that spacecraft is currently orbiting the asteroid.

MINERVA stands for Micro Nano Experimental Robot Vehicle for Asteroid. The twos in MINERVA-II1 and Hayabusa2 come from the fact that this is a successor mission. However, the first [Hayabusa failed to land its hopper](#), the original MINERVA, on the surface of the asteroid Itokawa more than a decade ago.

"The image taken by MINERVA-II1 during a hop allowed me to relax as a dream of many years came true," Takashi Kubota, a spokesperson for the project was quoted as saying on the project's website.

Both the series of hopping photos and the video were taken by Rover-1B, which, despite having the designation of being the "B" rover, seems to have stolen the show.

However, Rover-1A did capture an image which displays the shadow of its own antenna and pin.

The pins on the rovers have a few roles: they increase friction when hopping, protect the solar cells that power the robots when landing, and a few of the pins have a sensor that can measure the asteroid's surface

temperature directly.

Because Ryugu is a primitive asteroid, [NPR's Bill Chappell has reported](#), studying it could help scientists understand the evolution of Earth as a planet and learn more about how the solar system works.

While the Rover-1B might think it is the center of the solar system following its video premiere, both rovers and their asteroid host are currently in between the orbits of Earth and Mars more than 100 million miles away from the sun.

SEC Sues Tesla CEO Elon Musk

By Vanessa Romo

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Updated at 9:32 p.m. ET

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission is suing Tesla CEO Elon Musk, alleging securities fraud a month after he announced that he planned to take the publicly traded electric-car company private.

"Musk's false and misleading public statements and omissions caused significant confusion and disruption in the market for Tesla's stock and resulting harm to investors," the [lawsuit](#) says.

The SEC is asking the court to ban Musk from acting as an officer or director of any publicly traded company. In addition to being at the helm of Tesla, he is also the CEO and founder of SpaceX.

Musk denies the allegations of wrongdoing and insists he did not mislead investors.

"This unjustified action by the SEC leaves me deeply saddened and disappointed. I have always taken action in the best interests of truth, transparency and investors," Musk told NPR in an emailed statement.

"Integrity is the most important value in my life and the facts will show I never compromised this in any way," he added.

Separately, a statement issued by the company said: "Tesla and the board of directors are fully confident in Elon, his integrity, and his leadership of the company, which has resulted in the most successful US auto company in over a century. Our focus remains on the continued ramp of Model 3 production and delivering for our customers, shareholders and employees."

The case stems from an Aug. 7 tweet in which Musk [boasted](#) that he could take Tesla private at \$420 a share — a significant premium over its price at the time — and that funding for the switch was "secured."

That brief tweet was enough to send the stock soaring — up by nearly [11 percent](#) by the end of the day.

Musk later posted that the only thing he needed to take Tesla private was a shareholder vote.

The SEC complaint says, "Musk had not even discussed, much less confirmed, key deal terms, including price with any potential funding source."

It alleges the 47-year-old "knew or was reckless in not knowing that each of these statements was false and/or misleading because he did not have an adequate basis in fact for his assertions."

As NPR's Sasha Ingber [reported](#):

"Musk said [later] his tweet was prompted by [Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund](#), which

brought up the possibility of taking the company private. Tesla later admitted that it did not have the funding for the deal, and less than three weeks after his tweet, Musk walked back the prospect of going private.

"Short-sellers who had anticipated that Tesla's stock would fall said Musk's tweet was meant to manipulate the shares, according to the Associated Press."

In a [statement](#) on Tesla's website following the initial tweet, Musk provided an explanation for setting the stock price at \$420, writing that he had calculated the price per share based on a "20% premium over the stock price following our Q2 earnings call (which had already increased by 16%)."

The court documents note the calculation resulted in a price of \$419, but that Musk later admitted he had added the extra dollar — \$420 — "because he had recently learned about the number's significance in marijuana culture and thought his girlfriend 'would find it funny, which admittedly is not a great reason to pick a price.' "

Tesla stock was down nearly 10 percent in after-hours trading.

Netherlands Proposes Legislation To Ban Use Of Phones On Bicycles

By Camila Domonoske

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · The Dutch government is considering a proposal to ban the use of smartphones and other "mobile electronic devices" on bicycles.

Infrastructure Minister Cora van Nieuwenhuizen published the draft legislation on Thursday, [NL Times reports](#). If approved, it could go into effect in the summer of 2019.

It is already illegal to use a phone while driving a motor vehicle in the Netherlands, the news site says. Offenders face a fine of more than \$250.

Biking is a widespread form of transportation in the Netherlands, and extending the telephone ban to bikes has been discussed for several years.

In 2015, then-Infrastructure Minister Melanie Schultz van Haegen concluded that it would be impossible to enforce a ban on phone use on bikes, [according to](#) a 2016 story from Dutch News. But the following year, the government began reconsidering its position.

Van Nieuwenhuizen said a change in the law is necessary in part because people are spending more and more time on their phones, [The Guardian reports](#):

"Cyclists were excluded from the initial ban because of their lower speeds, Van Nieuwenhuizen said. 'But in fact, using a phone is just as dangerous on a bike as it is in a car,' she said. 'The fact is that whenever you're on the road you should be paying full attention and not doing anything at all on a phone.'

"The increasing popularity of electric bikes meant cyclists' average speed had risen, the minister added, while the country's 22,000 miles of cycle lanes and paths had become more crowded."

There are more bikes than people in the Netherlands, and bike rides account for more than 25 percent of all trips made by Dutch residents, according to [government statistics](#). That is by far the highest percentage of any country, the government says.

Several years ago, researchers set up cameras in The Hague and found that 20 percent of bicyclists were using phones, mostly to listen to audio, as CityLab has [reported](#).

Last year, the transport ministry said devices played a role in 20 percent of accidents involving people under 25, according to [Dutch News](#). But as [Holland Cycling notes](#), there is some disagreement over how directly phone use on bikes is linked to accident rates.

In 2015, a teenage boy died after being hit by a car while

he was looking at his phone. His father, Michael Kulkens, became an outspoken advocate for banning phone use on bikes.

"The woman who killed my son is absolutely blameless and her life has been turned upside down as well," Kulkens said in 2016, as [The Stack reported](#).

Kulkens has celebrated the news of the new proposed law, as Agence France-Presse [reports](#):

" 'I had to stop my car at the side of the road and the tears welled up in my eyes when I heard on the radio that the ban on the bike is coming,' De Telegraaf newspaper quoted [Kulkens] as saying.

" 'In my mind, I said: "We did it Tommy-Boy. We did it." ' "

Europe's Copyright Reforms Are More Than (Just) A Boring Policy Change

By Andrew Flanagan

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Earlier this month, British pianist James Rhodes received a notification from Facebook. A short video he had recorded and uploaded of himself playing a passage of Bach's Partita No. 1 had been flagged by Facebook's copyright identification system as belonging to Sony Music, resulting in 47 of the video's 71 seconds being muted.

"Stop being a**holes," Rhodes [tweeted](#) in response.

Of course, Bach has been dead for some time now — 268 years, but who's counting — and his compositions have been public property longer than any of us have been alive.

Recordings of those compositions, however, do not belong to the public, and Facebook had confused Rhodes' performance with one owned by Sony. (Speaking to NPR, Rhodes confessed a hope that his recording was confused with one from a notable player, at the very least.) If you consider what is asked of big tech's copyright-protection efforts, the mix-up wasn't entirely unreasonable. Facebook's identification system exists to prevent copyrighted material from being used — particularly in videos — in ways its owners might object to. As with its analogues on other platforms like

YouTube and SoundCloud, the technology uses "fingerprints" of copyrighted material — movies, television and music, but not just — to police users' uploads to the platform. These filters compare the contours and cartographies of each file's data and if they match the "fingerprint" of copywritten material, the owner is notified.

It took about five days for those 47 seconds of Rhodes' recording to eventually be unmuted, and only after he launched a campaign to call attention to the mistake. The tones and timbres of pianos are all broadly similar, and even though the breadth of possible interpretations of a composer's work is wide, it's not inconceivable that one player's would sound deceptively like another's, especially if, instead of listening deeply, one was cursorily scanning code-based refractions of the recordings' idiosyncrasies for similarities.

None of this is exactly new. Two years ago, the well-known producer Four Tet [criticized](#) SoundCloud for what he took to be an overbearing takedown of his work (in that case, his official remix of another artist's song). YouTube's own system, called Content ID, has had a similarly [spotty history](#). In July, when Facebook [flagged](#) the Declaration of Independence as hate speech, a Facebook spokesperson explained: "We process millions of reports each week, and sometimes we get things wrong." (Facebook declined to comment when asked about the muting of Rhodes' upload.)

Companies like Facebook and YouTube don't monitor

their networks for copyright infringement out of an abundance of feeling for creators, or the people they pay to manage their works (labels, publishing companies, managers and so on). They do so to protect themselves under the good graces of "safe harbor," a [legal provision](#) that shields Facebook and YouTube and other companies similarly situated from legal liability over the things their users upload to their servers. Companies that host user-uploaded content are spared from being legally on the hook if those users post things that don't belong to them, as long as those companies make a reasonable effort to tamp down on those posts or uploads. The relative imprecision of the language establishing safe harbor — particularly [in the U.S.](#) — as well as the stipulation that copyright owners are responsible for requesting takedowns has lent these companies a fairly large umbrella under which to shield themselves from a shower of lawsuits. It might lead to other benefits as well. Some record labels assert that, in the case of YouTube, the rule has allowed the company an [unfair high ground](#) in negotiations with them.

On Sept. 14, the European Commission (E.C.), the legislative core of the European Union (E.U.), took a major step toward attempting to fix that situation, which is viewed as imbalanced by some (mainly copyright holders and their advocates) and as existentially necessary by others (companies like YouTube). The Commission voted to approve [a directive containing a slew of extremely controversial new rules](#) around how tech companies who operate in the E.U. are required to

police content uploaded to their servers.

The rules — which will only take effect once the European Union's 28 member states each ratify them independently — will require companies to continue monitoring those services for infringement. But removing these infringements *speedily* will now be required by law, and removes the requirement that copyright owners need to report that their work was posted without their permission, placing that responsibility instead on the platforms themselves. The new policy also requires tech companies to provide content creators with transparency as to how their copyright-protection systems work. (As it stands right now, it's not even clear what criteria must be met in order to *use* YouTube's Content ID system.)

"The proposal solely addresses the services as they are the ones distributing the content and, most importantly, making a profit out of it," the Commission explains on a [question-and-answer page](#). "The measures taken by the services and agreements concluded by them with rights holders would benefit the users, which can upload their content with more confidence that the relevant rights are respected." What that means, essentially, is that if you post a video of yourself dancing to a song, that post is on the up-and-up, legally. At least, that's the idea, since the law so strongly encourages these platforms to reach reasonable agreements with copyright owners.

(Facebook declined to comment about the passage of the E.C.'s new copyright directive.)

And so, of course, a controversy.

Cory Doctorow, a co-founder of the popular blog *Boing Boing* and vocal critic of copyright law, characterized the effect of the E.C.'s vote as the continent having "[lost the Internet](#)" in a post for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a tech advocacy organization. Doctorow concluded that the directive's passage signals bureaucrats' misplaced confidence in technologies like Content ID, and that the policy will stifle the open Internet and hurt individual creators by forcing them to fend for themselves. (Which, it could be argued, they are doing currently anyways.) In [a blog post](#) written before the directive's passage, YouTube chief business officer Robert Kyncl delivered an ultimatum of sorts: the directive could "potentially undermine [YouTube's] creative economy, discouraging or even prohibiting platforms from hosting user-generated content."

On the other side of this debate is Helen Smith, executive chair of the Independent Music Companies Association, who asserted in [an op-ed for *Politico*](#) that its effect would be the opposite. Smith believes that tech companies' hegemony gives them unfair leverage in business negotiations, and that with the new rules — particularly the directive's preference for companies to reach licensing agreements with creators and pay them fairly — "artists will have a say and capture more revenue no matter how big they are or where they come from."

The directive could have the effect of increasing the number of erroneous takedowns such as the one

experienced by Rhodes, since technology companies now have a more dramatic incentive to ratchet up the policing of copyright infringement on their platforms. Trolls could [misuse reporting systems](#). But the new rules also come packaged with much broader implications for the interplay of art, commerce and fandom on digital spaces whose doors are open for public sharing. There's no good answer, and no magic technology, that will equally please creators, the tech companies who profit from those creators' creations and the corporations that have decades of experience doing the same.

In the "[Information Wants To Be Free](#)" corner, you have advocates like Cory Doctorow, who is of the opinion that regulations on the Internet can have a stifling effect on freedom of expression. They want to preserve the web "as a place where we can fight the other fights" like "inequality, antitrust, race and gender, speech and democratic legitimacy," as Doctorow put it in a recent [podcast](#). (Doctorow obliquely references a 2004 [copyright dispute](#) around Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land," which Guthrie, in an unconfirmed statement, said he didn't "give a dern" if others performed.) Doctorow's point is that creativity is best when it's unanchored from profit motive, and thus available to be copied freely. (Doctorow himself walks the walk, making his novels [available](#) for no charge.) James Rhodes' recent experience with music that wasn't even protected by copyright isn't exactly encouraging in this regard.

Meanwhile, some copyright holders are very much

interested in being paid for their creations. Lisa Alter, a visiting professor at Yale Law School and practicing attorney who specializes in music copyright, tells NPR: "Obviously, whenever there's something new, there will be a period of time where systems are worked out and glitches, but I don't see those insurmountable in the year 2018." As to situations like the one Rhodes experienced with his Bach video? "Could there ever be a erroneous takedown? Sure, but then you let them know and they should put it back up," she says. "But I don't see it being an epidemic. And the technology will get better, the filtering system will improve."

And somewhere else entirely you have creators, a group so varied in approach and purpose and motivation that it's ludicrous to try and divine their desires in even the broadest sense. Some want to make things and give them away. Some want to make things and use those things to make money. But all have the same thing in common that most everyone else does: A reliance on both technology and the law, and a significant hill to climb to affect either in any meaningful way.

"I mean, who really cares about YouTube's bottom line or the major labels' bottom lines," asks Rhodes in a phone call to NPR. "They're always going to fight for their own self-interest and they're not really going to fight for the benefit of the artist, are they?"

Uber Pays \$148 Million Over Yearlong Cover-Up Of Data Breach

By Bill Chappell

NPR.org, September 27, 2018 · Uber is paying \$148 million to settle claims over the ride-hailing company's cover-up of a data breach in 2016, when hackers stole personal information of some 25 million customers and drivers in the U.S.

Instead of reporting the stolen data [as required by law](#), Uber paid the hackers \$100,000. That was in late 2016; it wasn't until November 2017 that Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi revealed that hackers had downloaded the names, email addresses and mobile phone numbers of 57 million Uber users around the world. The figure included 600,000 of the company's drivers, whose names and driver's license numbers were also at risk.

Uber paid the hackers when the company was still run by its former CEO, Travis Kalanick — who [resigned in the middle of 2017](#) in the face of numerous accusations about the burgeoning start-up's culture and ethical practices.

"Uber's decision to cover up this breach was a blatant violation of the public's trust," California Attorney General Xavier Becerra [said in announcing the settlement](#). "The company failed to safeguard user data and notify authorities when it was exposed."

Attorneys general from all 50 states and the District of Columbia filed a lawsuit over the breach. They announced the settlement on Wednesday, saying that in addition to the penalty, Uber agreed to bolster its data security practices and to give quarterly security updates to the states for the next two years.

Uber's chief legal officer, Tony West — who joined the company just as the hacking case was made public — said that paying the settlement was part of Uber's focus on "taking responsibility for past mistakes, learning from them, and moving forward."

When Uber revealed the breach, it said the hackers had targeted data stored on a third-party, cloud-based service and that the information that was exposed did not include trip location history, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, Social Security numbers or dates of birth.

The San Francisco-based company says it contacted the hackers and "obtained assurances" that the downloaded data had been deleted.

As NPR's Yuki Noguchi reports, "By not reporting the breach for a year, regulators say the company left its drivers vulnerable to financial fraud and identity theft. This settlement comes as Uber prepares to sell shares to the public for the first time next year."

As part of its response to the data breach, Uber fired Joe Sullivan, its chief security officer. After the hack became

public, Sullivan defended the company's handling of the issue, [saying Uber had paid a "bug bounty"](#) to the hacker, rather than a ransom for stolen data. It was part of an ongoing security program and not, Sullivan said, a cover-up. But others, both at the company and at regulatory agencies, disagreed.

Uber is still facing lawsuits from private parties and from some cities over its handling of the 2016 breach.

In July, the Federal Trade Commission [began sending checks totaling nearly \\$20 million](#) to Uber drivers in 19 cities, after finding that they were misled by exaggerated claims of the income they could make. Those payments stem from a separate 2017 settlement.

Tracking Down Fake Videos

All Things Considered, The Defense Department is working with outside experts on detection and prevention efforts for fake videos. NPR's Audie Cornish speaks with Dartmouth College computer science professor Hany Farid.

Transcript

MARY LOUISE KELLY, HOST:

Also in all Tech Considered, we continue our look this month at the many ways tech can be used to influence or undermine democracy. Today - deep fake videos.

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

The Defense Department considers them enough of a concern that it's working with outside experts on ways to detect them and prevent them from being made. Hany Farid is a computer science professor at Dartmouth College involved in the project. Welcome to ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.

HANY FARID: It's good to be here.

CORNISH: We're talking about videos on the radio, so I'll need a little explanation. And here is a clip of a video that you've chosen for us. And we'll play it first, and then you can tell us what's going on.

(SOUNDBITE OF VIDEO)

JORDAN PEELE: (As Barack Obama) We're entering an era in which our enemies can make it look like anyone is saying anything at any point in time, even if they would never say those things. So, for instance, they could have me say things like - I don't know - Killmonger was right. Ben Carson is in the sunken place. Or how about this? Simply - President Trump is a total and complete dip-[expletive].

CORNISH: So that sounds a little bit like President Barack Obama. But what were we really looking at?

FARID: And if you watch the video, it very much looks like President Obama. So what that is is a very sophisticated and technically new type of fake that we are seeing come out and that is being generated not by a talented artist sitting down frame by frame manipulating content but allowing a computer to generate the fake content for you. So what that video is is actually the actor Jordan Peele doing a very good Obama impersonation. And then the computer synthesizes the video, in particular the mouth of President Obama, to be consistent with what is being said.

CORNISH: How much of an expert do you need to be to make a video like this?

FARID: If we were having this conversation two years ago, I would tell you you had to be a fairly sophisticated, very good tools, lots of money and lots of expertise. And

what's happening - we're simply making it easier and faster. And so today, lots of people who don't have access to the most sophisticated technology can now do that because all of the source code is available for download. And the expectation is that within the next year or two, it's going to be easier and easier and easier. That's the trend. And the output, the videos that we actually see, are going to be more and more and more sophisticated.

CORNISH: Is this why DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, is working on this issue? Do they consider it a national security priority?

FARID: I think it's a priority on many levels. And I should mention that DARPA started working on this before these types of, what we call, deep fakes really emerged on the scene. I think you're absolutely right that this is a national security issue. You can now create a video of the president of any country saying I've launched nuclear weapons against another country. That content can go viral online almost instantly, and you have a real threat to security. I think it's also a threat to democratic elections when anybody can create video of politicians saying and doing just about anything.

CORNISH: And that you expect to see in upcoming elections.

FARID: I think there's almost no question that we're going to see it in the midterms, and we're already seeing issues in other parts of the world with elections. I think

almost certainly we're going to see this unfold in the next two years. There's almost no question about it.

CORNISH: In the meantime, most of us are not digital forensics experts. What can we do to tell the difference?

FARID: Today, I would say that many of the fakes can be detected visually because they have artifacts, but that's not easy, and it's very easy to mistake an authentic video for a fake video.

CORNISH: And you said artifacts, meaning little visual glitches.

FARID: Yeah, like things don't look quite right. But the problem is that all video has glitches in it because of the compression that is inside of the videos already. So it's a very tricky business. And in many ways, the consumer of digital content should not rely on simply looking at something and being able to tell if it's real or not. We have to rely on good, old-fashioned fact-checking. We have to do our due diligence until people like me get our act together and really are able to distribute forensic techniques that work at scale, but we're not there today. I don't think we'll be there in the next few years. And in the interim, I think we simply have to change the way we consume digital content and become more critical.

CORNISH: Hany Farid, thank you so much for speaking with us.

FARID: It's good to be here. Thank you.

KELLY: Hany Farid is a computer science professor at Dartmouth College. He is working with the Defense Department on ways to stop deep fake videos.

Attorneys General Zoom In On Tech Privacy And Power

By Alina Selyukh

All Things Considered, · Updated at 5:18 p.m. ET

Officials from 14 states' top legal offices and the Justice Department have begun a coordinated conversation about ways to keep tabs on — and potentially rein in — the fast-growing tech giants.

The Department of Justice on Tuesday convened a "listening session" with nine state attorneys general and top deputy attorneys from five other states. The meeting was [originally pitched](#) to focus on allegations of anti-conservative bias on social media.

But the discussion featured a broader group of topics in the tech industry, including the rapid growth of tech companies like Facebook and Google and their handling of user data. The attorneys general also talked about how antitrust laws might be used to set the right standard of consumer privacy.

"The discussion principally focused on consumer protection and data privacy issues, and the bipartisan group of attendees sought to identify areas of consensus," the Justice Department said in a statement after the meeting, which was closed to the press. "Many shared the view that it is essential for federal and state

law enforcement authorities to work together to ensure that these challenges are addressed responsibly and effectively.”

Much of the conversation in recent weeks has focused on Facebook, Twitter and Google, which were recently [called to testify in Congress](#) about the use of their platforms for misinformation campaigns. But at Tuesday’s meeting, “more names were mentioned” than just those three companies, according to California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, who attended the meeting.

“There’s a recognition that privacy has a different definition for everyone these days. What does matter is how the law treats privacy,” which is also unclear, Becerra said. “But clearly ... rarely do you have a discussion about privacy without ultimately having a conversation about antitrust.”

Last week, Louisiana’s *The Advocate* newspaper [reported that](#) Jeff Landry, the state’s attorney general, “would like to see Google, Facebook and other major social media behemoths broken up like the federal government did to Standard Oil more than a century ago.” Landry was also at Tuesday’s meeting; his office did not respond to NPR’s inquiry.

Tuesday’s conversation at the Justice Department did touch on historic cases when the government moved to break up companies, such as Standard Oil and Microsoft, Becerra told reporters after the meeting.

"The subject was raised as part of a conversation about how you deal with the growth and size of companies," said Becerra, a Democrat. "But I don't think there was a specific notion that simply dealing with size would get you the answer you need."

Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson told NPR that the next step for his counterparts was to figure out which states might be interested in a multistate effort focused on consumer protection. He said Tuesday's meeting came out of a presentation he and a few other attorneys general heard in June about how Internet companies collect data.

"One of the things that concerns me a great deal is the amount of data that is taken in so many different areas where I think the consumer has absolutely no awareness, for example mapping locations," said Peterson, a Republican. "One of the most important things is to make consumers aware of what these practices are and how it impacts their privacy."

As NPR [reported previously](#), state attorneys general can have broad oversight power over social media, thanks to their consumer protection purview. Already, several of them have been investigating the tech companies. Cases have focused on the collection and use of [private data](#), disclosures of sponsors behind [political advertising](#) and how advertisers might exclude people from seeing ads such as those based on race or religion.

Both Becerra and the Justice Department said the

attorneys general plan to continue this thread of conversation in the coming months. The National Association of Attorneys General has a fall meeting scheduled for November.

Instagram Co-Founders To Step Down

By Dina Kesbeh

NPR.org, September 25, 2018 · Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, co-founders of Instagram, have announced their plan to leave the company that produces the popular photo-sharing application.

"We're planning on taking some time off to explore our curiosity and creativity again," Systrom said in a statement on [the company's website](#). "Building new things requires that we step back, understand what inspires us and match that with what the world needs; that's what we plan to do."

[The New York Times](#) notes that the departures call into question Instagram's future during an already rocky time for parent company Facebook, which bought the company in 2012.

Facebook has come under fire from critics over a number of issues in recent months, including handling user data with perceived carelessness, not preventing foreign interference, and [according to the American Civil Liberties Union](#), allowing employers to discriminate by excluding women and older men from targeted ads on the social media site.

Systrom and Krieger launched Instagram in 2010 out of a small office in the South Park neighborhood of San Francisco, according to the *Times* and Facebook bought

it for \$1 billion just two years later.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg responded to news of the departure of Systrom and Krieger [in a statement](#), saying, "I've learned a lot working with them for the past six years and have really enjoyed it. I wish them all the best and I'm looking forward to seeing what they build next."

News Brief: Brett Kavanaugh, Trump At U.N., Attorney General Sessions

By Rachel Martin and Steve Inskeep

Morning Edition, · The Supreme Court nominee talks publicly for the first time since misconduct allegations were made against him. Trump addresses the U.N. General Assembly. Sessions talks to state attorneys general.

Transcript

(SOUNDBITE OF FOX NEWS BROADCAST)

BRETT KAVANAUGH: What I know is the truth. And the truth is I've never sexually assaulted anyone, in high school or otherwise.

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh spoke publicly for the first time last night since allegations of sexual misconduct were made against him.

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Yeah. In a lengthy interview with Fox News' Martha MacCallum, Kavanaugh denied both the allegation of a sexual assault that happened in high school as well as an incident alleged to have happened at a party when he

was at Yale. And more than a dozen times, Kavanaugh uttered some version of this.

(SOUNDBITE OF FOX NEWS BROADCAST)

KAVANAUGH: I want a fair process where I can defend my integrity and clear my name as quickly as I can in whatever forum the Senate deems appropriate.

MARTIN: Kavanaugh was also adamant he will not withdraw his name from nomination and that he knew President Trump was standing by him.

(SOUNDBITE OF FOX NEWS BROADCAST)

KAVANAUGH: I'm not going to let false accusations drive us out of this process.

MARTIN: The next step in the process comes Thursday, when Kavanaugh will defend himself in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee. And his first accuser, Christine Blasey Ford, will testify under oath as well.

INSKEEP: NPR's Tamara Keith has been following this story for us and will walk us through this sometimes awkward material, which some people will find uncomfortable, we should warn you right now.

Hi there, Tam.

TAMARA KEITH, BYLINE: Good morning.

INSKEEP: So this was an opportunity to hear something

more, I guess, than the blanket denial that Kavanaugh had already issued. What did he say?

KEITH: Well, he continued to issue relatively blanket denials. But he also got into some other ideas, including that maybe, he said, Christine Blasey Ford was confused - that he doesn't dismiss that she may have been attacked. He was asked whether there should be an investigation by the FBI into these allegations before a hearing. And he gave sort of a canned answer about wanting a hearing and a fair process. And he was also asked about his high school years, about wild parties that are described from his time in high school. And he, instead, focused on other parts of his high school life.

(SOUNDBITE OF FOX NEWS BROADCAST)

KAVANAUGH: I was focused on trying to be No. 1 in my class and being captain of the varsity basketball team, in doing my service projects, going to church.

INSKEEP: He volunteered some more information about himself, Tamara Keith. He was asked by Martha MacCallum in this interview about the incident at the party at Yale, which appeared to be a drunken party at Yale, where he was alleged to have committed a number of acts. And he, among other things, said he did not have sexual intercourse in high school or for years afterward, which is not something he'd been asked. But that is what he said. Do you learn anything from this greater and greater description, at least by him, of his early years?

KEITH: And he volunteered that. And he had his wife sitting there during the interview, so it was sort of this awkward moment. But volunteering that he was a virgin for some number of years is not exculpatory. He wasn't accused of having sex in high school. He was accused of other things that would not cause him to lose his virginity.

INSKEEP: Did the question of his drinking come up in this interview, Tamara Keith? And I mention this specifically because now a former roommate of Kavanaugh at Yale has put out a statement saying, I don't know if he did these things. I have no information, but I know that he drank a lot and that he was aggressive and belligerent when drinking.

KEITH: He was very careful in answering questions about that, saying there were 18-year-olds in high school who were legal who brought beer, and maybe people did have more beers than they should. But everyone does things in high school that they regret, was basically his answer on that.

INSKEEP: OK. So all of this is happening amid a - is it fair to say a hardening of attitudes here that Republicans have become ever more determined to go through with this nomination and bring it to a close if they can?

KEITH: I would say decided Republicans. There are still other Republicans who are watching this who will make their decision based on what happens at that hearing. But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell described

this on the Senate floor as a shameful smear campaign that has hit a new low and says that Judge Kavanaugh will get a vote on the Senate floor. President Trump also tweeted support.

MARTIN: It's also unclear just how open those minds are. I mean, Orrin Hatch, who also sits on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said yesterday that it's common for our friends on the other side to, quote, "pull this kind of crap," talking about what he believes to be a Democratic smear campaign against Kavanaugh.

KEITH: Yeah, that second allegation and story really changed positions for some.

INSKEEP: OK. That's NPR's Tamara Keith. Thanks for the update. Really appreciate it.

KEITH: You're welcome.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

INSKEEP: President Trump speaks this morning to a gathering of world leaders in New York at the United Nations.

MARTIN: Yeah. Last year, he memorably referred to North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un as Rocket Man. A lot has changed in the U.S. relationship with North Korea since then, in particular how President Trump talks about the North.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: The relationship is very good. In fact, in some ways, it's extraordinary.

INSKEEP: NPR White House reporter Ayesha Rascoe is covering the speech and is in New York.

Hi there, Ayesha.

AYESHA RASCOE, BYLINE: Good morning.

INSKEEP: Although - I guess we should mention, they had a summit, the leaders of the United States and North Korea. But North Korea still hasn't agreed to give up any of its nuclear weapons. Is it likely that the president is going to describe this as a success?

RASCOE: He is. It seems like the administration really wants to say that because the ties and the relations between North Korea are better now that that is a success story for Trump's foreign policy. But as you mentioned, even though Trump will likely be positive about Kim, there are still real questions about whether anything has actually changed for North Korea outside of rhetoric. Is North Korea really serious about denuclearization? But Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says that Trump is going to be resolute and he's going to stress that you have to keep pressure on this regime and not ease sanctions until they see progress toward dismantling the nuclear program. But you also have CIA Director Gina Haspel saying that North Korea is not just

going to give up their nuclear weapons because they see them as leverage.

INSKEEP: And then there's the question of Iran, where the United States pulled out of a nuclear deal with Iran. Other nations involved want to stay in that deal. What is the administration approach at the United Nations, at this forum, to try to get other nations to sign on to its approach to Iran?

RASCOE: Well, Pompeo told reporters that Trump is going to have really strong words for Iran during this speech. I think what you're going to hear is Trump really outlining all the bad things that he will argue that Iran is doing and basically saying that all these other nations need to get on board. And they need to be isolating Iran if they want to be on America's good side. You will have Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani. He's going to speak later in the day, so he'll have a chance to respond to Trump. And even tomorrow, Trump is going to be chairing this U.N. Security Council meeting on denuclearization that will also talk about Iran. And you could have Rouhani attending that meeting as well. So this could be a kind of tense situation.

INSKEEP: OK. We'll see what happens.

Thanks very much. Really appreciate it.

RASCOE: Thank you.

INSKEEP: That's NPR's Ayesha Rascoe.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

INSKEEP: The attorney general of the United States - and he is still the attorney general of the United States - Jeff Sessions is expected to meet this morning with a group of state attorneys general to talk about the power of the tech industry.

MARTIN: Right. So this all began when conservative politicians and President Trump were alleging that certain social media platforms are suppressing conservative views.

INSKEEP: That was their claim. It's been hard to find evidence of it. But NPR's Alina Selyukh is here to follow what happens now that Sessions is talking with state AGs. What is this meeting about?

ALINA SELYUKH, BYLINE: As you mentioned, the original announcement did talk about the allegations of bias on social media. Twitter, Facebook and Google have been accused of intentionally suppressing conservative viewpoints, which...

INSKEEP: Like, putting them lower in the searches and so forth - or lower in people's social media feeds. Right?

SELYUKH: That was one of the concerns that I believe President Trump has expressed. And at first, it did seem like this meeting was a plan hatched among a handful Republican state AGs. Since then, the Democratic AGs complained that this was politically motivated. They

made the case that there were many other things to discuss about tech companies. Either way, today this meeting will have both Republicans and Democrats.

INSKEEP: So are they still going to focus on the conspiracy theories about social media companies and conservative media?

SELYUKH: I'm sure the anti-conservative bias will be a big topic. The way the Justice Department originally described this conversation was that it was going to be about whether social platforms may be, quote, "hurting competition and intentionally stifling the free exchange of ideas." Facebook, Google and Twitter have all pushed back against this and argued that their algorithms are not political.

But to break it down, there are two different things going on here. The culture and politics of Silicon Valley is really liberal.

INSKEEP: Right.

SELYUKH: There's no way around that. Political contributions from workers there overwhelmingly go to Democrats. But what Trump and others have argued is that technologically, the companies have allegedly rigged their software somehow, otherwise are suppressing conservative views. And for that, they have not offered any evidence. And another thing to remember is, at the end of the day, companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter - they are private platforms. So theoretically, they can set

whatever standards they want for what they allow to be said on their platforms, though, of course, the companies themselves have long fought to be viewed as those neutral public squares.

INSKEEP: Sure. Well, you've just hit on the dilemma there. Right? Because they are private companies, they can do what they want. They have freedom of speech as a company. They can encourage other people to have freedom of speech. And yet, they have this gigantic public presence and public purpose. So now the state attorneys general are going to talk about that with Jeff Sessions. What can the states actually do?

SELYUKH: Well, state AGs can have a fair amount of oversight of social media. They are empowered by pretty broad consumer protection laws. And so actually, in the announcement of the meeting now, that is the topic that's designated, consumer protection and the tech industry.

INSKEEP: Meaning the state attorney general of Idaho, just hypothetically, could go after Google - is that what could happen here?

SELYUKH: Ultimately, even having federal and state attorneys digging under the hood and sort of asking very specific questions about how their algorithms operate can be the kind of attention that the companies do not want. And here's something that's even more interesting to me. The fact that it is now a bipartisan meeting, we might have a conversation beyond the political

allegations of bias and into sort of antitrusts, how big these companies are and how exactly they operate.

INSKEEP: OK. Alina, thanks very much. Really appreciate it.

SELYUKH: Thanks.

INSKEEP: That's NPR's Alina Selyukh.

(SOUNDBITE OF GALACTIC'S "CINERAMASCOPE
(FEAT. TROMBONE SHORTY AND COREY HENRY)")

Sessions To Meet With State Attorneys General About Social Media

By Alina Selyukh

Morning Edition, · U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions meets Tuesday with a group of state attorneys general to talk about the power of the tech industry, and allegations of anti-conservative bias on social media.

Transcript

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST:

Attorney General Jeff Sessions is expected to meet this morning with a group of state attorneys general. Republicans originally wanted a meeting to discuss claims for which there is no evidence of anti-conservative bias on social media. Instead the meeting is likely to broaden into a talk about the role that social media platforms do play in the public square. NPR's Alina Selyukh came by to tell us more.

ALINA SELYUKH, BYLINE: The original announcement did talk about the allegations of bias on social media. Twitter, Facebook and Google have been accused of intentionally suppressing conservative viewpoints, which...

INSKEEP: Like, putting them lower in the searches and so forth. They're lower in people's social media feeds, right?

SELYUKH: That was one of the concerns that I believe President Trump has expressed. And at first it did seem like this meeting was a plan hatched among a handful Republican state AGs. Since then the Democratic AGs complained that this was politically motivated. They made the case that there were many other things to discuss about tech companies. Either way, today this meeting will have both Republicans and Democrats.

INSKEEP: So are they still going to focus on the conspiracy theories about social media companies and conservative media?

SELYUKH: I'm sure the anti-conservative bias will be a big topic. The way the Justice Department originally described this conversation was that it was going to be about whether social platforms may be, quote, "hurting competition and intentionally stifling the free exchange of ideas." Facebook, Google and Twitter have all pushed back against this and argued that their algorithms are not political. But to break it down, there are two different things going on here. The culture and politics of Silicon Valley is really liberal. There's no way around that. Political contributions from workers there overwhelmingly go to Democrats. But what Trump and others have argued is that technologically the companies have allegedly rigged their software, somehow otherwise are suppressing consumer views, and for that they have not offered any evidence. And another thing to remember is companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter, they are private platforms. So theoretically, they can set

whatever standards they want for what they allow to be said on their platforms. Though, of course, the companies themselves have long fought to be viewed as those neutral public squares.

INSKEEP: Sure. Well, you've just hit on the dilemma there, right? Because they are private companies, they can do what they want. They have freedom of speech as a company. They can encourage other people to have freedom of speech. And yet, they have this gigantic public presence and public purpose. So now the state attorneys general are going to talk about that with Jeff Sessions. What can the states actually do?

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INSKEEP: Meaning the state attorney general of Idaho - just hypothetically - could go after Google? Is that what could happen here?

SELYUKH: Ultimately, even having federal and state attorneys digging under the hood and sort of asking very specific questions about how their algorithms operate can be the kind of attention that the companies do not want. And here's something that's even more interesting to me. The fact that it is now a bipartisan meeting, we might have a conversation beyond the political

allegations of bias and into sort of antitrust, how big these companies are and how exactly they operate.

INSKEEP: OK. Alina, thanks very much. Really appreciate it.

SELYUKH: Thanks.

INSKEEP: That's NPR's Alina Selyukh.

SiriusXM To Buy Internet Radio Pioneer Pandora In \$3.5 Billion Deal

By Andrew Flanagan

NPR.org, September 24, 2018 · Satellite radio giant SiriusXM is buying the Oakland, Calif.-based digital radio company Pandora in an all-stock deal valued at \$3.5 billion, the companies announced Monday. The deal is expected to close in early 2019.

The merger would create "the world's largest audio entertainment company," SiriusXM CEO James Meyer said in a conference call. The deal would still need to be reviewed by antitrust regulators and shareholders, he added.

And it comes 15 months after SiriusXM [invested \\$480 million in Pandora](#). That move allowed SiriusXM to appoint three executives to Pandora's board, with one serving as chairman. Just a few weeks after that deal was announced, Pandora co-founder and CEO Tim Westergren [stepped down](#) from the company.

"This is the worst-kept secret of a courtship that's gone on for several years," Meyer said Monday morning. "I've been in conversations with Pandora before Roger [Lynch, CEO] was there and certainly after Roger's been there. We had a conversation 15 months ago and couldn't reach an agreement on value, quite honestly ... when we took that position, I assure you, there was no guarantee

that any further transaction would get done or that we would end up where we've ended up today. What's changed is my confidence in Pandora as an asset, and that confidence is a result of the progress I've seen in the last 12 months."

SiriusXM is the broadcast home of Howard Stern and host to a new show, beginning [Monday afternoon](#), from CNN anchor Chris Cuomo.

The on-demand streaming service Spotify is most often in the news, but in the 18-plus years since its founding Pandora has remained competitive in the music streaming space. Spotify has [55.8 million](#) monthly active users in North America, compared to Pandora's 70 million and SiriusXM's 36 million. However, Pandora doesn't have the global reach that Spotify has. The Swedish streaming company has 180 million total monthly active users worldwide, with 79 million as subscribers.

Notably, Pandora invested a lot of time and money in developing its advertising business and setting up regional offices to cater to local businesses and listeners. That's in contrast to Spotify ([and SiriusXM](#)), whose revenue comes primarily from subscribers, as opposed to advertisements.

While "there will be no immediate change in listener offerings," the companies said, the corporate combination may result in some interesting exchanges between the products to "create unique audio packages."

Liberty Media is the parent company of SiriusXM, and [owns](#) the Atlanta Braves, Formula 1 racing, and a 34 percent stake in concert giant Live Nation — Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino is also [a director](#) on SiriusXM's board. Liberty also owns a 6 percent stake in the Indian music streaming service Saavn.

Arts & Life

Molly Ringwald On '80s Movies And Sexual Assault

Weekend Edition Sunday · Molly Ringwald, 1980s movie darling, discusses the impact of the era's pop culture concerning Brett Kavanaugh's alleged assault of Christine Blasey Ford with NPR's Lulu Garcia-Navarro.

Life, Love and Hockey (Oooh, And Pie) In 'Check, Please!'

By Etelka Lehoczky

NPR.org, September 30, 2018 · *Check, Please!* is a soap bubble. Ngozi Ukazu's comic levitates and drifts insouciantly, belying the massive forces of temperature and pressure that must be held in balance for it to exist. Its story of a college hockey team isn't particularly gripping or dramatic, though there are many flashes of joy. But its quality of suspended animation — of a moment preserved in quivering perfection — gives this comic a tension, and thus an interest, more compelling than its happy-go-lucky façade suggests.

The moment it preserves is partly cultural. *Check, Please!* is very much a thing of our time in its approach to gay identity and romance. Protagonist and narrator Eric "Bitty" Bittle, a gay college freshman, is comfortable in his skin in a way that was impossible to imagine just a few years ago. Even though the onetime figure-skating champion has found himself on a hockey team, he doesn't feel the need to put up a macho front to blend in. (Not that he'd have much luck if he did; Ukazu has made him about 5'4", with a turned-up nose and eyes like dinner plates.) Bitty bakes pies, sings Beyoncé in the shower and says things like, "Goodness gracious!" And his teammates are fine with that. There's no big coming-out scene, no "convert the lone homophobe" drama, no storyline cooked up just to educate the reader about the

gay experience. Bitty doesn't need any of that, and Ukazu gives the reader credit for not needing it either.

Bitty also doesn't talk much about his feelings for his stalwart team captain, Jack. In fact, for much of the book you'd be hard pressed to know those feelings exist at all. When Bitty talks to readers via his vlog, he sticks to hockey practices, games and social life with the team. Only once does he give in and voice what he knows readers are wondering about. "For a while, some of you have been asking about my love life ... I've never had much of a love life," he says. "But I will say this ... Never fall for a straight boy." You'd hardly know he'd done so, up to that point and after it. When romance finally takes center stage at the very end of the book, it seems to come out of nowhere — that's how cagy Ukazu is about it.

There's a quaintness to Ukazu's approach, but because this is a gay teen romance, it has an edge. The fact is, if Bitty were female, her tale would be utterly banal — a 1950s-style exercise in chaste daydreams, unspoken urges and happy endings. But because both writer and reader know the dark realities that — despite all recent progress — gay kids face, Bitty's story has context and portent. Ukazu could have overtly addressed issues like the suicide rate among gay teens. (LGB youth are almost five times as likely to have attempted suicide compared to heterosexual youth, according to suicide prevention organization [The Trevor Project](#).) But by crafting a glowing, antiseptic bubble for her hero to fall in love

inside, she's making a political and artistic choice that's brave in its own way.

It's also convenient. Ukazu is much better at depicting life's ups than its downs; Bitty's world is, indeed, a bitty world. While bad things happen once in a while, they aren't that affecting. *Check, Please!* started as a webcomic, and you can tell — every episode feels like a little pop of sweetness to get desk jockeys through the 3 p.m. trough.

In this case, though, sweetness is much appreciated. Ukazu's art is punchy, assertive and deft. Her style is a bit Disney, true, but she's got pleasing idiosyncrasies. It's fun to watch Bitty grow up from a freshman into a sophomore, though you might feel a pang when he cuts his hair. With Bitty's ever-contagious optimism and Ukazu's sprightly drawings, life inside this soap bubble is as nice as it should be everywhere else.

[Etelka Lehoczky](#) has written about books for The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times and Salon.com. She tweets at [@EtelkaL](#).

Not My Job: Actor Jon Hamm Gets Quizzed On Spam

Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me! · We've invited Jon Hamm, best known for his starring role as Don Draper on the AMC series *Mad Men*, to answer three questions about Spam — the canned meat product with a verrrry long shelf life.

Sexual Assault And Forgiveness

Weekend Edition Saturday, · NPR's Scott Simon asks Atlantic contributor Caitlin Flanagan about this week's Supreme Court testimony and about the possibility of atonement and forgiveness for sexual assault perpetrators.

Transcript

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The vote to confirm Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court, or not, has been delayed for a week to allow for an FBI investigation into several allegations against him of sexual assault and misconduct. Caitlin Flanagan of The Atlantic watched the testimony this week of Christine Blasey Ford and Brett Kavanaugh. She's written about being the victim of a sexual assault in high school and said before Thursday's hearings that she tended to believe Dr. Ford based on her own experience.

Caitlin Flanagan joins us now from NPR West. Thanks so much for being with us.

CAITLIN FLANAGAN: Thanks for having me.

SIMON: We were left with the impression you thought you'd have - that you believed her story to the - and did not believe him.

FLANAGAN: You know, this is just speaking for myself as just one American. I absolutely believe what she's saying. It's one of those stories that sounds very true and very believable.

SIMON: And yet, you've said on Twitter you're not certain that what you consider to be - you used the word, lies, and inconsistencies is enough to keep him off the Supreme Court.

FLANAGAN: Well, what I think is that she's completely believable, but we don't have any evidence. So now we have to take a pause. And I was so very happy when I heard that there will be this FBI investigation because she's come forward in such a strong way, and it's time for the FBI to start talking to some people.

SIMON: I know it's a what if, but what if the FBI comes back after a week and says, you know, we can't make a determination one way or another, but we can tell you that's not what boofing means, that's not what Devil's Triangle means, and the judge lied about this?

FLANAGAN: You know, it's - you get into these legal issues, and we don't know. He certainly - maybe we've looked at him more closely than other candidates, or maybe he is more of a rascal than other candidates have been if - even if he didn't commit this assault.

But it's so interesting. I was talking to my husband this morning, and he's very stirred up about this and upset that he might get confirmed. And I said, well, honey, if

you took out every man in a position of authority in the country who did something like this, we wouldn't have many left.

SIMON: Do you really think that's true? I mean, have most men in this country committed sexual assault?

FLANAGAN: I don't think most men in this country have committed sexual assault of the kind that we're looking at now. But I would say there's an awful lot of men who grew up when the norms were different. And the things we have not reconciled for 50 years is we have not reconciled the sexual revolution with feminism. And they don't sit easily together, and we're not sure where to go forward. And this is another one of these events that's falling into an area that means a lot to an awful lot of women.

SIMON: You were the victim of sexual assault in high school, and your attacker apologized to you - once, yearbook inscription, another time two years later in a chance encounter. And you accepted it, and this made a difference. Recognizing that Brett Kavanaugh said he did nothing, should there be something - some avenue opened in this country, legally or culturally, that would let people apologize for something that they now know is wrong and cruel and gives them shame?

FLANAGAN: Oh, I think about this all the time. You know, I think apologies and forgiveness - they're probably the only things that can ever really heal after a crime like this has happened. But there is a tremendous

risk that a man takes for apologizing right now.

You know, this is what Trump has taught us, in a way - is you don't admit it, you don't admit it, you don't admit it, and you go from strength to strength. And, you know, a man might apologize to a woman in a beautiful email, and she might very rightly use this as evidence of what he did to her and take that to somebody that would care about it - maybe at his work, maybe somewhere else.

I think there is tremendous risks to these apologies. So I don't know what to say about that. I know from a spiritual and moral standpoint, it's 100 percent the right thing to do. I don't know if we've really been very honest with ourselves sometimes in thinking about what risk a man poses to himself by doing that.

SIMON: Caitlin Flanagan, contributing writer to The Atlantic. Thanks so much for being with us.

FLANAGAN: Thanks for having me.

A Top Impressionist, Melissa Villaseñor Is Finding Her Own Voice On 'SNL'

By Elizabeth Blair

Weekend Edition Saturday, · In her stand-up comedy, Melissa Villaseñor often begins her shows with a warning.

"I hope you know what you're getting into," she tells an audience at this summer's Just For Laughs festival in Montreal. "This is my voice."

Villaseñor is very proud of what she describes as her Kermit the Frog voice, or sometimes a Mickey Mouse voice.

"I love it," she says on stage in Montreal. "It makes me laugh. It makes me happy. I like waking up in the morning and hearing it, and going, 'Oh yeah. It's gonna be a good day.'"

But Villaseñor's voice is unrecognizable when she inhabits the sounds and mannerisms of famous figures, whether it's the charming eccentricity of [Bjork](#) or the hearty laugh of Hillary Clinton. From Gwen Stefani to Pokémon's Ash Ketchum, Wanda Sykes to Steve Buscemi, her output of celebrity imitations is vast and varied.

Her talent for impressions helped to earn her a spot as a featured player on *Saturday Night Live*. And when *SNL*'s

new season premieres tonight, Sept. 29, this will be Villaseñor's first as a full cast member.

Villaseñor is Mexican-American. Her parents own a fencing company in Whittier, Calif., outside Los Angeles. It was her dad who turned her on to comedy: Rodney Dangerfield, Steve Martin, Jim Carrey.

When she was 12, Villaseñor remembers making her friends laugh by imitating singers such as Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears and Mandy Moore. ("All the pop divas," she says.) She performed in her high school talent show and attended The Laugh Factory's summer comedy camp in Los Angeles.

There's now a seemingly endless catalog of Villaseñor's impressions online: homemade videos, stand-up clips, her [breakthrough performance](#) on *America's Got Talent*, and a series from the Latino comedy studio Más Mejor called [Daily Itineraries](#), where she imagines the personal schedules of various celebrities including Jennifer Lopez and Sarah Silverman.

"She's just got really amazing range," says Ian Jones-Quartey, creator of the Cartoon Network series *OK K.O.! Let's Be Heroes*. Villaseñor voices a number of characters for the show, including a bunny rabbit, a teenage strawberry and a football. "We can kind of just throw her at a situation and she can create something really hilarious."

Jones-Quartey first saw Villaseñor at a comedy club in

LA a few years ago. Then he started watching her videos online. He calls her impression of Owen Wilson "legendary."

Villaseñor says she has affection for all of the celebrities she chooses to mimic.

"They really inspire me and I would say help me feel less alone and make me feel like they're my friend," she says in an interview. "Like, Owen Wilson — he's so soothing and silly and peaceful, and that makes me feel comfort."

After it was announced Villaseñor would be joining *SNL*, the triumph was somewhat diminished. Online commentators noticed she had deleted some old tweets they considered racist.

Other comedians have had their Twitter posts scrutinized. Old jokes by Trevor Noah and Sarah Silverman, for example, were deemed offensive when they resurfaced years later.

Villaseñor says those old Tweets were her "trying to be edgy." But she doesn't regret deleting them.

"I'm flawed like everyone else, and yeah, I just wanted to make sure I was perfect," she says.

The online attacks left her "numb," so she got some advice from more seasoned *SNL* cast members.

"And they're just like, 'You got to get tough and get used to it,'" she says.

It's one lesson among many Villaseñor says she's learned since joining *SNL*. She says when writers like Mikey Day and Streeter Seidell have worked with her on sketches, they'll do impressions of *her*, froggy voice and all.

"Comedians, we just love picking on each other, and it just makes me feel at home," she says.

Melissa Villaseñor is trying to develop original characters for *SNL*. She says that's much harder than doing impressions — but that we might see one this season.

Buffy Sainte-Marie's Authorized Biography Serves As A 'Map Of Hope'

By Scott Simon and Ian Stewart

Weekend Edition Saturday, · [Buffy Sainte-Marie](#), native Canadian singer-songwriter, social activist and member of the Cree First Nation, is now in her 70s and has co-authored the first and only authorized biography that tells her story — a story of a woman whose career has stretched from the coffeehouses of Toronto and Greenwich Village in the early 1960s to concert halls around the world. *Buffy Sainte-Marie: The Authorized Biography* is co-authored with Andrea Warner.

Sainte-Marie was born on a reserve in the Qu'Appelle Valley of Saskatchewan, Canada, but later [taken from her indigenous family](#) to be adopted by a family in Massachusetts.

"It had been going on for generations where native children were removed from the home," Sainte-Marie says. "What happens to children who are kind of lost in the system like that, they're assigned a birthday, they're assigned kind of a biography. So in many cases, adopted people don't really know what the true story is."

But although she doesn't know her exact birthday, she does know she didn't have a choice when it came to finding music. "I didn't play Barbies and I didn't play sports, but when I saw a piano and I figured out what it

could do, I taught myself how to play and I never got up," she says with a laugh.

Sainte-Marie survived an abusive childhood and attended University of Massachusetts Amherst where she continued to hone her love of music. In 1963 at Toronto's Purple Onion Coffeehouse, Sainte-Marie wrote the poignant protest song "Universal Soldier" in response to the Vietnam War. It later became the lead single to her 1964 debut album *It's My Way!*

"He's a Catholic a Hindu an Atheist a Jain / A Buddhist and a Baptist and a Jew / And he knows he shouldn't kill / And he knows he always will / Kill you for me my friend and me for you," Sainte-Marie sings on the song.

From then, Sainte-Marie rose to prominence. She was mentioned in the same company as [Neil Young](#) and [Joni Mitchell](#), but she made a different career choice. As biographer Warner explains, Sainte-Marie discusses in the book how she wasn't looking for the trifecta of fame, money and sex that a lot of other musicians do.

"She had different dreams," Warner says. "She had this goal of bringing truth to her music [and] talking about indigenous realities. It really stuck with me that her dreams weren't coming true and that's how she's continued to advocate and resist and write these songs that have so much power, so much meaning and so much capacity to change the world."

And while Sainte-Marie was releasing her own songs of

protest and social justice, she was also writing music for others. In 1982, her co-writing credit on the song "[Up Where We Belong](#)" from the feature film *An Officer and a Gentleman*, earned Sainte-Marie both an Academy Award and a Golden Globe in the category of Best Original Song. "I'm the only native person ever to win an Oscar," Sainte-Marie says.

Sainte-Marie still releases music, her most recent album being 2017's *Medicine Songs*. Looking back on her career, Sainte-Marie sees her impact as one of overall empowerment, not just protest music. Warner sees Sainte-Marie's early music as an anchor into the '60s, but argues that her new music has a contemporary context that makes it even more important.

"Buffy has sort of mapped a lot of her life experiences through her songs," Warner says. "She's given us an incredible map for hope."

Punks, Up Against The Wall

A new history of punk in East Germany shows how the scene wasn't a posture, but a movement towards liberation.

By Andrew Flanagan

NPR.org, September 29, 2018 · In 1979, a young East German named Micha Horschig made a prediction: The fall of his country's socialist government, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), would take 10 years.

On Nov. 9, 1989, the Berlin wall fell.

Among the many other things to happen in the decade between was the gestation and maturation of punk in the GDR, a movement that would become stained with blood and colored black and blue, and which has now been fascinatingly traced — through extensive interviews and research that took nearly a decade — in Tim Mohr's new book *Burning Down the Haus*.

The sound of punk as it has become known — simple, aggressive, sneering and young — was arguably created in New York in the early-to-mid '70s and quickly found purchase in an economically depressed U.K. (kicked off, in no small part, by an early tour from The Ramones, on loan from the Big Apple). But the passion and depth of punk's character was likely never tested as it was by the mitotic group of young German kids in the '80s, which Mohr follows through first exposures, ridicules, beatings,

imprisonments, forced expatriations and, eventually, liberation.

Life in the GDR was a prescribed one; indoctrination to the party — there was only one — began in grade school and was strengthened through participation in groups like Free German Youth. "Membership in communist youth organizations was not mandatory," Mohr writes, "and yet membership rates hovered around 85 percent." There was "a kind of inherent sense of where the boundaries were." Careers were assigned, attendance to universities parceled out. It was seen, as the book repeatedly points out, to be an "abundance of future," to the point of suffocation. This manifested in a slogan, also oft-repeated: "*Don't die in the waiting room of the future.*" Or, in a lyric from the punk band Planlos ("No Plan"): "We have no plan, and we like it that way."

Exposure to the sights and sounds of punks from the West was an essential bridge to these kids, helping them cross over from an intuitive sense they had that something was fundamentally wrong to the confirmation of it.

Micha Horschig — nicknamed (as most were) A-Micha, the "A" for the anarchist politics he both devoured and spread — became, as Mohr writes, one of the central punks in the East German movement. But, two years before he made that eerily precise "10 years" prediction, A-Micha came to punk through an encounter that many future punks in East Germany would share — he heard The Sex Pistols for the first time. In A-Micha's case, it

was through a portable cassette player a roommate during a hospital stay played for him. The experience was formative. Malcolm McLaren's "[sexy young assassins](#)" had, through a surreptitious network of cassette taping and copying reliant on radio signals beamed over the Wall from West Germany, (probably unknowingly) set off an elemental defiance well beyond that band's flash-in-the-pan existence. It would play a central role in preparing a society to slowly uproot its faith in, and eventually upend, a regime whose nearly unprecedented tactics of repression would come to be known more fully in the wake of its downfall.

The disproportionately violent and repressive response these social outliers were met with by the party — for dressing differently and considering, in poetry and lyrics, the low ceiling of expression they were living under — was, essentially, the kickoff.

The party's tactics, besides beatings, included thinly veiled threats against family members (since work was assigned, it could be unassigned), arbitrary stops in the street for identification that would, because the punks didn't resemble the photos on them, lead to detention and interrogation, which would then lead to increased surveillance, which would then give authorities reasons for more detentions or formal charges leading to substantive jail time. Years, for some. All of these strategies were, eventually, directly connected to the famously pervasive surveillance and misinformation tactics of the *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*, or

Ministry of State Security — better known as the Stasi. The ministry penetrated every level of East German society, monitoring parties, concerts and individual punk bands themselves, as Mohr reports. The Stasi retained about [189,000](#) "unofficial collaborators" — one for about every 100 citizens — and employed 85,000 regular employees.

One scene from *Burning Down the Haus* is particularly illustrative of the absurdly defensive position the party adopted when dealing with the punk youth movement in its midst. On May 21, 1983, a group of 30 or so punks inscribed "Fascism never again — Berlin punks" on a wreath they intended to lay in memorial at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The peaceful protest, Mohr writes, served multiple purposes, countervailing the attempts of the state security apparatus to paint punks as neo-fascist right-wingers, and letting the state hoist itself by its own petard, in public: "It was a crazy scene: a group of youth battling riot troops in an effort to be allowed to criticize Nazism, which was the explicit philosophical enemy of the government whose riot troops were beating the kids."

Of course, this revolution didn't exist in a vacuum; the downturn of the GDR economy pressurized the society, while Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* policies — which focused on self-determination, anathema to a communist republic — alienated the country's leadership from its core mission and a central strategic ally. But a complacent public doesn't exist in a vacuum either; the public had

access to food and beer and televisions and all the creature comforts you'd expect in a relatively developed European country at the time. The cost of digging deeper, or aiming higher, was prohibitive for most.

"People look away. It's natural," Mohr argues in his book's early pages, "That's just the way people are. Until they really do come for you. Until you have to defend yourself. Until you bear the brunt of injustice."

Tim Mohr "didn't speak a word of German" in 1992, when he arrived in post-reunification Berlin after graduating college. "Very quickly I found this other scene happening in the central parts of East Berlin, which in many cases were either dilapidated or completely derelict buildings — I think at that time there were over 100 squatted buildings," he explained recently during an interview in the back garden of Community Bookstore in Brooklyn. "Basically the whole [of the former East Berlin] was empty after the fall of the wall, and there was this incredible scene growing there. At first, you're shocked at how stereotypically grey the situation is, and then I was shocked the other way. I just couldn't believe how colorful and vibrant and alive this underground scene was. I immediately realized I wanted to stay there."

The underground he found was a sheathed knife by then, but one that had been sharpened and sophisticated against the full brunt of the East German security forces for the decade-plus previous by the subjects in his book. He describes the squats he found as resting in beautiful, if dilapidated, art deco constructions — "East Berlin was

basically a complete nineteenth-century city standing empty," he told me — converted into functioning as show spaces, cafes, bookstores, residences and community gathering sites all in one.

He spent the '90s making his living as a DJ in Berlin, and eventually met a bartender at one of the clubs he often played at named Micha Kobs, a guitarist in an East Berlin punk band called Planlos. "I didn't realize at the time how important his band was, it turned out to be one of the most important bands." Kobs had squirreled away photos and lyric sheets in a false-bottomed drawer before the collapse of the GDR. "Once I saw these materials, I realized this was what I had been seeking in moving abroad," Mohr told me.

This model of communal — not communist — living continues, Mohr writes near the book's conclusion, in certain spaces in Berlin. But elsewhere in the world, the repression in East Germany — like so many past mistakes repeated — is, to varying degrees, mirrored today. Pyotr Verzilov, a member of Pussy Riot who has used peaceful, art-based protests for years to criticize the Kremlin and Vladimir Putin's leadership, has accused the Kremlin of poisoning him in Moscow on Sep. 13. A crackdown of the dance club and progressive social hub Bassiani in Tbilisi, Georgia — under the auspice of "[drug policies from the stone age](#)," as the club's founder put it — earlier this year resulted in a peaceful two-day rave, recalling the East German punks' wreath-laying at Sachsenhausen 35 years prior. Using artificial

intelligence-powered facial recognition systems, the Chinese government has begun [arresting people at concerts](#) for unspecified reasons.

In societal frames like these, the likelihood of success against repressive regimes are low and the cost of trying remains high — just as they were for the “agitators” of the GDR. Until things get so bad that there’s nothing else worth doing. The trick is knowing when that is, and where.

Robert Redford: The 'Fresh Air' Interview

By Terry Gross

Fresh Air · Redford has announced that he's retiring from acting, and that his role in the new film *The Old Man and the Gun*, will be his last. In 2013, he said it was "sort of weird" being known for his looks.

Transcript

TERRY GROSS, HOST:

This is FRESH AIR. I'm Terry Gross. Robert Redford has said that his new film, "The Old Man & The Gun" would be his final film performance. And then he said he shouldn't have said that. Nevertheless, we're going to take this opportunity to look back on his early years, his childhood and his early acting career. In the new film he plays a man who looks quite dignified and gentlemanly, and has robbed banks all his life, done prison time and broken out of prison. In this scene, after starting a romantic relationship with a woman played by Sissy Spacek, he tells her about his profession and she doesn't believe it.

(SOUNDBITE OF FILM, "THE OLD MAN & THE GUN")

ROBERT REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) So what'd be worse, if I'm lying about this or telling you the truth?

SISSY SPACEK: (As Jewel) Prove it.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) Prove it?

SPACEK: (As Jewel) Yeah.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) You want me to prove it?

SPACEK: (As Jewel) Yeah.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) Well, what do you do if I can't?

SPACEK: (As Jewel) I will walk out that door.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) No, I'm not going to do it.

SPACEK: (As Jewel) I didn't think so.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) Not because I can't - because it's just not my style.

SPACEK: (As Jewel) Not your style. You have style?

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) I do.

SPACEK: (As Jewel) Well, tell me what that is then.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) My style?

SPACEK: (As Jewel) Yeah.

REDFORD: (As Forrest Tucker) OK, well, let's take this

place. This place is not my style. Say it was a bank. And say that that camera up there, that was really a teller's window and that lady standing there was the teller behind the window. And you'd just walk in real calm, and you'd find yourself a spot and you sit down, just like we're sitting here. And you wait. And you watch. And that may take a couple of hours, might take a couple of days even, but you wait. It's got to feel right, the timing has to feel right. And when it does feel right, you make your move. So you walk right up, look her in the eye and you say, ma'am, this is a robbery. And you show her the gun like this.

GROSS: My most recent interview with Robert Redford was in 2013, after the release of his film "All Is Lost" in which he was the only character. New York Times film critic A.O. Scott called it the performance of a lifetime. When we spoke, before talking about his past, we talked about "All Is Lost." He played a man alone on a small yacht in the Indian Ocean. Early in the film, a stray shipping container rams into the yacht, leaving a hole. When a storm hits his life is in jeopardy but he has to remain calm and resourceful. It was an incredibly physically demanding role. There's no dialogue in the film, just voiceover. Here's Redford in the beginning of the film reading a letter he's writing. We don't know who he's writing to.

(SOUNDBITE OF FILM, "ALL IS LOST")

REDFORD: (As Our Man, reading) 13 of July, 4:50 P.M.

I'm sorry. I know that means little at this point, but I am. I tried. I think you would all agree that I tried - to be true, to be strong, to be kind, to love, to be right. But I wasn't. And I know you knew this in each of your ways, and I am sorry. All is lost here, except for soul and body - that is, what's left of them - and a half days ration.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED BROADCAST)

GROSS: Robert Redford, welcome back to FRESH AIR. That's such a stirring opening for the beginning of the film. You read that letter as if it were a poem. Did you want to know your character's backstory, like who he's talking to? You assume it's family. You don't really know anything about who he's writing to, what his life has been like, why he's out in this yacht in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Did you have to know this yourself?

REDFORD: In the beginning, I thought I needed to ask questions to the director, J.C. Chandor. But frankly, Terry, I was very drawn to what you did not know about this. I was very drawn to what was not said. There were challenges in there that were very attractive to me. One of them was that I saw the project because there was only a 30-page script, and it was mostly sketches since there's no dialogue. I was attracted to the fact that there was no dialogue. I liked the idea there were no special effects. It was a very low-budget film, very independent in its spirit and its budget. And because I felt that it was more of a pure cinematic experience the way films used to be, maybe even going back to silent films.

High technology has kind of entered the film business, maybe infested the film business. But going to what you're saying, I think, yes, I did ask in the beginning, is there something I should know about this? And the director evaded answering it, and then I realized that this is what was intended. And so I went with that, I liked - yes, I could fill it into a certain degree but not too much beyond.

GROSS: So the director said, referring to the reaction he expected you to have when first reading this script, he said, Redford's either going to say hell yes, this sounds amazing or he's going to say, why in the world would I do that? I have nothing to prove. Why would I put myself through that? And you really do put yourself through a lot in the movie. I mean, you're being pelted by water through much of it. I mean, your yacht is flooded, so, like, you're wading in water. I know you shot some of this in a tank and not in the ocean, but some of it was, I believe, shot in the ocean. So you're out...

REDFORD: Yes.

GROSS: ...In the ocean under the hot sun. You're in storms. I mean, it seems like it was a grueling shoot. Give us a sense of some of the things that you had to endure. Like, when you're in the storm, in one of the storms and, you know, you're being rained on, what are you experiencing? How are you protecting yourself?

REDFORD: Well, it was a real - first of all, it was a real storm because the, yes, as you say, a lot of it was on the

open water. But when we had to get into the really tough stuff, we went into a giant tank where they had these big wave machines, these big cylinders that can cork up the waves to 6, 7 feet that will swamp the boat or maybe turn it over. You had rain, violent rain machines. Then you had wind machines. And you had crew members with fire hoses hitting you with water, heavy streams of water.

So when all of those things are cooking at once, you really are in a storm. So I really did feel, while I was doing this, that I was actually in a storm. And I had to feel like I needed to feel, like I'm really in a storm, what am I going to do? How am I going to - and it became very physical. I also went into this, I guess at my age, wondering, what can I still do? I always - because I was in sports as a kid and, you know, I was athletic pretty much my life, I wanted to - I always enjoyed doing my own stunts when I could.

And I thought, well, at this point in my life, what can I still do? I'm not sure, so it was, in a way, a test. I said, well, let's see what I can do, you know, and I'll do what I can. And then you push yourself and your ego kicks into gear. And you say, well, maybe I should really - let me do this. And, of course, when I did that, J.C.'s ego kicked in. He said, yeah, let's push the guy. So we were pushing each other, I guess.

GROSS: Now, I read that during some of the filming, because of all the water that was attacking you, you got an ear infection and I think temporarily lost hearing, 60

percent of your hearing in one ear. Is that accurate?

REDFORD: Yeah, yeah it is.

GROSS: Is it temporary?

REDFORD: I wish it was. It's sort of permanent.

GROSS: So I hate to put it this way, but if you had it to do over again, would you have saved your hearing and said no to the film?

REDFORD: No, no. The hearing thing isn't that bad. And I would have done what I did. I would have done it all over again. I would be happy to do it again. I may not be able to, but I would be happy to try.

GROSS: You know, when the credits roll, it says cast, Robert Redford - and that's it.

REDFORD: It's embarrassing.

GROSS: You are the cast. And then after that, there's this like long scroll of, you know, camera people and effects people and the people who dealt with the fishes and the people on the ships. And I'm thinking, like, this is a huge group of people working on the film, and you're like the only person ever on camera. That must have been such an odd position.

REDFORD: When I saw that - you know, I've only seen the film once.

GROSS: I'm surprised you saw it. Don't you sometimes not even see your films?

REDFORD: Sometimes, yes. Sometimes, I've not seen - some films I've not seen.

GROSS: But anyway, you were saying.

REDFORD: That's a whole other story. But anyway - when - the first and only time I saw it was at the Cannes Film Festival. And so when the film - because, you know, they boo films there.

GROSS: Yes.

REDFORD: And so when the lights came down, I'm thinking, geez, this could go either way. And I'm sitting here in a tux. How embarrassing to be in a tuxedo and be booed. You know, so I'm sitting there thinking, God, I wonder how this is going to go. So then I saw the screen - cast member, just me alone. And I thought, oh, my, am I really - I'm really in trouble now if they boo at this thing because they're going to be booing me, you know. Anyway, it went the other way. Happily, it went so much the other way. That, in itself, was a shock, a pleasant one.

GROSS: You know, a couple of years ago, there was a biography of you written by Michael Feeney Callan. And I was reading that and was really surprised to learn that, as a child, you had polio. I mean, you're such a physical person. You're so athletic and so physically fit. You needed to be in order to do "All Is Lost." And the

thought of you being paralyzed for a while as a child was shocking to me.

REDFORD: Yeah, it was to me, too (laughter).

GROSS: Sure.

REDFORD: It wasn't a severe case. I think we should - you know, I want to make sure we get this straight. It wasn't an iron lung case. It was a case of mild polio, but it was severe enough to put me in bed for two weeks. And because in those days, polio, before the Salk vaccine was discovered, what hung over your childhood was always the fear of polio because all you saw were people in iron lungs. So yeah, when I got it, it was because of an extreme exertion in the ocean - in this bright sunlight in the ocean. And it was alarming, but it wasn't serious enough to go much further.

GROSS: Were you paralyzed at all?

REDFORD: No, no. I was down. I was - I couldn't move very well, but I was not paralyzed.

GROSS: And - tell me if I'm getting too personal here - so soon after you had the polio, your mother gave birth to twins who died shortly after birth. I'm just thinking that's a lot of trauma at one time.

REDFORD: Yeah, I guess it depends on how you're raised and what your genealogy is. You know, family - you come from maybe a dark - more of a dark family -

immigrated from Ireland and Scotland and didn't talk much, didn't complain - you don't complain much. You don't ask for anything. You bear the brunt of whatever comes your way, and you do it with grace. So when my mom had twin girls that died, there was no talk about it.

And that goes all the way back to when I was a little kid, when I was very close to my uncle, who was in the Second World War. And he was with General Patton's Third Army. He was an interpreter because he spoke four languages fluently. And so I was very fond of him, and he would - on his furlough, he'd come down to play baseball with me and so forth.

Then he went away to war, and he was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. But when he died, I was very close to him. The way the family dealt with it was it just wasn't talked about. It just happened, and you didn't ask a lot of questions. You just - it was what it was. And so I think that was sort of built into a family structure. So as a result, when my mom went through that, there was no talk about it. Everybody moved on.

GROSS: Your mother died when you were 18. She was sick. I'm not sure what she died of. How did that change the course of your life? Did you have to, like, rewrite your plans?

REDFORD: Well, I don't know that it changed anything at the time. She was a wonderful person. She died very young. She was full of life, full of laughter, full of love. She was out there. I mean, she would take chances, and

she was very risky. And she taught me how to drive a car when I was 10, and nobody knew about it. I mean, that kind of stuff. So we had a close relationship, but also, I was of a young mind, just like all the other kids my age were. You didn't want your parents around. You didn't want your parents doting on you. You didn't want attention or anything like that. And you had a mother that wanted to give you that attention, and you kind of pushed it away. I feel bad about that.

GROSS: You went to college. And from what I've read, academics was not your thing so much and that you did a lot of drinking and rode motorcycles...

REDFORD: Yes.

GROSS: ...Or drag races...

REDFORD: Yes, yeah - the whole thing.

GROSS: ...Or whatever.

REDFORD: The whole thing.

GROSS: Right.

REDFORD: Well, not - I don't know about that because that came a little bit later. It was really - I went to college to get out of Los Angeles. I went to college because it was Colorado, and it was the mountains. And I - by that time, I realized that nature was going to be a huge part of my life, that Los Angeles for me was a city that, when I was a little kid at the end of the Second World War, I

loved that - I loved it. It was full of green spaces.

And suddenly, when the war ended and the economy revived, suddenly Los Angeles had no land use plan. It felt like the city was being pushed into the sea that I love because suddenly there were skyscrapers and freeways and smog. And I said, wait a minute - what's - I wanted out. So I went into the mountains into the Sierras and worked at Yosemite National Park and fell in love with nature that way. And I realized that nature was going to be a big part of my life. So I sought land elsewhere that I thought would be kept free of development.

GROSS: You talking about Sundance?

REDFORD: Yeah.

GROSS: We're listening to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford, recorded after the release of his film "All Is Lost." He stars in the new film "The Old Man & The Gun." We'll hear more of the interview after a break. This is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF AMANDA GARDIER'S "FJORD")

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. Let's get back to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED BROADCAST)

GROSS: So not long after shooting "Butch Cassidy," you cofounded a new organization called Education Youth

and Recreation to promote alternative films on university campuses. This was really...

REDFORD: Yeah, that was a big mistake.

GROSS: It was a big mistake? Why was it a big mistake?

REDFORD: Well, because at that time, I was already beginning to feel the urge to do something that would be maybe more supporting more independent-type films. The idea was that we would get some funding together and that we would buy up films that had been either poorly distributed like Billy Friedkin's "Birthday Party" or "Dynamite Chicken" - you know, some of the documentaries because I always love documentaries. I was always extremely positive and supportive of documentaries - and so whatever I could do to promote them, even back then in 1970.

We thought, well, what if we buy up documentaries that were either not distributed or poorly distributed and films that were the same, put them into a package and went for the college market, went right to the colleges and say, OK, we're bringing this to you? Well, what we realized - that no one came - that we assumed that there was a college market. But no - what most of the students wanted to do was to go into town to see "Doctor Zhivago." So there were just very few that wanted to see films like this. They were kind of film buffs, but that wasn't enough to create a college market. So it failed.

GROSS: Did you lose money personally on that?

REDFORD: No. I didn't have my own money into it, but I suspect that over time, if I look back on it, that was probably the...

GROSS: The roots of Sundance?

REDFORD: ...The genesis of what later became - so yeah.

GROSS: It's interesting that back in - what? - the late '60s, early '70s you were already thinking in those - in that direction.

REDFORD: Yeah. And it was different then because, you know, one of the beauties was that I was able to work in both - within the mainstream. In those days, the studios would allow for smaller films to be made under their umbrella. So if I had - like, I wanted to tell stories about the America that I grew up in. And for me, I was not interested in the red, white, and blue part of America. I was interested in the gray part that - where complexity lies and where things get complicated. But I wanted to tell stories about issues that were American like - that had impact on people, like politics and sport and business.

And so I got two of them made. And I wanted to make them like documentaries. So one was "The Candidate," the other was "Downhill Racer" about a ski racer. But in those days, you would do a larger film, but you would also be able to - if you did those films, you could say, well, would you allow me to make this smaller film? And they would do it. So "The Candidate" and "Downhill

Racer" were done at Warner Brothers. At the same time, I would do a larger Warner Brothers film like "All The President's Men" or what have you. So that carried through the '80s until the business changed.

Then suddenly, Hollywood became more centralized. It was following the youth market. Technology was creating more chances for special effects, which would be more of a draw for the youth. And so Hollywood, which basically - Hollywood follows the money. That's what it does. And so it was going that direction. And it was beginning to leave behind those other kinds of films. And so there was this gap there. They weren't likely to be making those films anymore. They were going to be offloading them.

That led to the idea of, well, to keep this thing alive - because this is where new voices are going to be developing or new films can be coming that are independent that are more exciting and more humanistic and stuff like that. So that was what led to the idea of Sundance, first with the labs and then the festival. But if I look back on it and think back in time, probably started way back then with that first venture that failed.

GROSS: Well, yeah, it was interesting. Taking the films to college campuses failed, so you started on your own campus, and people would come to you.

REDFORD: (Laughter) For a guy that never graduated from anything, that's pretty interesting.

GROSS: Do you try to see a lot of the films that come out of Sundance?

REDFORD: I try to, yeah. I sometimes don't get to see all of them. It's been a little - in the beginning, it was more fun. It's not quite the fun anymore it was when it was just starting 'cause you're uphill. You're kind of against the odds. And there's something exciting about that risk. And you're pushing it and pushing it. There's something exciting about it. And then once success comes, then suddenly other elements come into it that kind of load it all up. And then you find yourself doing, like, publicity or interviews or having to meet this top person or that top person. And all that's right. That's proper I guess. But it's not the fun it was when you were standing out there trying to get people in like you were standing outside of a strip joint, you know, and say, hey, you want to come in and see this movie?

GROSS: Listening back to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford, who stars in the new film "The Old Man & The Gun." After a break, we'll talk about his childhood, his early acting career on episodic TV shows and the film that made him a star, "Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid." I'm Terry Gross, and this is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. I'm Terry Gross. Let's get back to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford. He stars in the new film "The Old Man & The Gun." We're looking back on his early years when he got his start as

an actor.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED BROADCAST)

GROSS: You did a lot of episodic TV early in your career in the early 1960s - "Maverick," "Rescue 8," "The Deputy," "Playhouse 90," "Perry Mason," "Naked City," "The Twilight Zone"...

REDFORD: Hey, now Terry - Perry Mason - Now, look...

GROSS: (Laughter).

REDFORD: Do you know what the title of that - that was what, 1959? You know what the title of that was?

GROSS: What?

REDFORD: "The Case Of The Treacherous Toupee."

GROSS: (Laughter).

REDFORD: That was the name of it. I was so excited to have a job, you know?

GROSS: Wait; who had the toupee? Was it - wasn't you, right?

REDFORD: I couldn't remember now. It wasn't Raymond Burr. But somebody did, some blond - but those were your apprenticeship years. And it's always - one of the things that's sort of been weird is to see yourself characterized so often as somebody that looks - well,

that has glamorous looks or is appealing physically. That's nice. I mean, I'm not unhappy about that. But what I saw happening over time was that was getting the attention. And sometime - because I always felt that I was an actor. And that's how I started. I wanted - I was a person who loved the idea of craft and that learning your craft was something fundamentally and good. And I wanted to be good at my craft. And therefore, I would be an actor that would play many different kinds of roles, which I did. I played killers. I played rapists, really deranged characters. But most people don't know about that because that was in television.

So suddenly you're seeing yourself kind of in a glamour category, and you're saying, well, wait a minute. You know, the notion is that, well, you're not so much of an actor. You're just somebody that looks well. And that was always hard for me because I always took pride in whatever role I was playing. I would be that character. Like, you know, if you look at, say, "Jeremiah Johnson" - you know, the character in the wilderness. And within the same year, I was doing "The Candidate." And you put those two together, and you would hope that somebody would say, well, somebody is acting here.

GROSS: I wanted to play a clip from your early episodic TV years and was thinking, well, I'm a big fan of "Route 66." I have the box set.

REDFORD: Oh, really?

GROSS: Oh, yeah, I love that show. I loved it as a kid,

and I love it looking back at it.

REDFORD: As a kid - thanks a lot. What were you - 10?
- when I did my segment?

GROSS: Hey, I was alive then. A lot of people weren't.

(LAUGHTER)

REDFORD: What I liked about "Route 66" was not so much the show as it was the route because I remember hitchhiking as a kid back and forth on Route 66 because there were no freeways then. There were no turnpikes or anything like that. And so Route 66 was the way you got from Chicago to LA or vice versa.

GROSS: So anyway, so I figured, whoa, let's do a clip from "Route 66." And then I'm reading your biography, and I read this line on page 87 - and that you're saying to your agent, I'd rather rot than be remembered for "Route 66" (laughter).

REDFORD: I said that?

GROSS: You're quoted as saying that. What can I say?

REDFORD: Am I? I can't remember the show. Do you have a clip, you say?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. So this is - you don't even remember doing it? - this is from a 1961 episode with Nehemiah Persoff as your father. And it's set in a mill town in a Polish-American community. And, like, you've

gone off to out-of-town college, so you've gotten out of the mill town. But you're back on a college break. And the episode opens with you chasing after your girlfriend, who's running away in the woods. And you're not trying to attack her or anything. You're just trying to catch up to her and to reach her and to communicate with her.

She accidentally kind of falls off this hill and hits her head and dies. You don't know what to do. So you don't call the cops. You don't tell anybody. You try to tell your father, but your father just doesn't want to hear anything. You're having trouble communicating with him. He doesn't want to hear it. Later, the police discover her dead. You're implicated in her death. So here's you trying to explain to your father, played by Nehemiah Persoff, what was really going on with your girlfriend and what was really going on with your relationship with your father.

(SOUNDBITE OF TV SHOW, "ROUTE 66")

REDFORD: (As Janosh) Do you know why she ran - because she said to me, do you love me? Will you marry me? And I couldn't answer her with the truth. I couldn't say, yes, oh, boy, I want to marry you. Before God and the whole world, I do. How can I say that to her and hurt her even more? I wanted to marry her. Would you have stood for it, papa?

NEHEMIAH PERSOFF: (As Jack) If you had to marry her...

REDFORD: (As Janosh) No, I didn't have to. It was never anything like that.

PERSOFF: (As Jack) Then why should I have allowed you? Why you not come to me? Why you not come to me?

REDFORD: (As Janosh) Have I ever, ever, ever been able to come to you, papa, with anything that was my own idea? Haven't you always decided everything for me? Haven't you decided everything for me always - who I am must be, what I must be, how I must be?

I don't remember that at all. I'm not ashamed of it obviously. But I don't - God, that's so interesting. I don't remember - I just don't remember that at all. That's amazing.

GROSS: So your voice sounds, you know, so much different. It's higher.

REDFORD: Well, yeah, I was recently - J.C. and I - J.C. Chandor and I were at a festival.

GROSS: The director of "All Is Lost," yeah.

REDFORD: Director of "All Is Lost" - J.C. and I were at a festival, and they ran clips of my career that I had never seen. They had clips going all the way back all the way up to now. And it was very uncomfortable, very uncomfortable. And I did the last "Playhouse 90" that was ever done. I just thought that was the best show.

When I was a kid, I thought that was the best show on television. And I was fortunate enough to be in the very last "Playhouse 90" that was written by Rod Serling. And I was able to be - I played a young German lieutenant - a very sympathetic Nazi lieutenant. He gets corrupted by - or somebody else tries to corrupt him, but he resists the corruption. And Charles Laughton played the rabbi.

GROSS: Oh, acting with Charles Laughton must have been so interesting. But there's a great story that's told in your biography about the slap.

REDFORD: Oh, yeah, he was intimidating. It was one of my first parts. And there was a scene with George MacCready, who played my commanding officer. And it's during a pogrom, and they're calling out names in the street to be packed into trucks. And then after, we come up to the rabbi's apartment. And there's a tension between the rabbi, played by Charles Laughton, and MacCready. And there's a intellectual challenging involving Nietzsche and God and so forth. So I'm just there clueless. I'm this young, innocent, naive guy. And at one point, Laughton drops something. He drops his Bible. And I reached down to pick it up, which is a no-no.

And MacCready sees this and realizes, uh-oh, this kid needs some training. And the rabbi sees that my instinct is to be compassionate. I reached down to pick up the Bible. And so he looks me in the eye. And the look is like, I see who you really are. I see who you really are. MacCready says, apparently you feel like you have to be

sympathetic to the rabbi. Hey says, therefore, I instruct you to slap him. So then I supposedly slap him - I am reluctantly, but I slap him.

As we were getting ready to do it - it was going to be live. It was going to be live telecast. As we're getting ready in rehearsal, Laughton comes up, and he says, dear boy, you can't give me the slap. What are you going to do? And I said, what do you mean what am I going to - he said, what are you going to do because I can't be hit. I said, you can't be hit? No, I can't be hit. What are you going to do? And I thought, oh, jeez, now what am I going to do, you know? So I go to the director, and I said, what am I supposed to do here? And he said, oh, gee, don't bother me. I've got enough troubles.

So we get on the show, and I'm sitting there. As we're getting to the moment, I'm thinking, who is this guy to tell me what I'm supposed to - what I can't do, what I can do? And I got so riled up, and I was so nervous on top of it that when it came time, I thought, who's he to tell me what I can do or can't do? So I hauled up and really whacked him. And it wasn't a slap. It was a whack. And his jaw - spit came out of his jaw. You know, and he looked at me, and tears came out of his eyes. He looked at me. And when it was over, I thought, oh, boy, you know, I'm going to get a mouthful. So I go to his dressing room to apologize. I'm really sorry. He says, no, you did the right thing. You did the right thing.

GROSS: That's such a great story. And it's so interesting

that you have such a vivid memory of doing that "Playhouse 90" edition and of the Charles Laughton story and no memory of "Route 66" (laughter).

REDFORD: Well, I think it's because "Playhouse 90" was such a big deal as a kid. There were two shows on television - the "Sid Caesar Show" - I forgot the name of it...

GROSS: "Your Show Of Shows"?

REDFORD: "Show Of Shows," yeah. And it would come to Los Angeles via kinescope I think. And "Playhouse 90" - those two shows were the top of the line on drama and comedy. And it made a huge impact on me as a kid. You know, I just thought they were wonderful shows. And the idea that I could be in one and particularly since it was going to be the last one - it was a big honor. It was a real thrill for me.

GROSS: We're listening back to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford, who stars in the new film "The Old Man & The Gun." We'll hear more of the interview after a break. This is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. Let's get back to my 2013 interview with Robert Redford. We've been talking about how he got started acting.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED BROADCAST)

GROSS: So skipping ahead to 1969, you make "Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid" with Paul Newman. And this is the movie that makes you kind of iconic. Had you - did you already know how to ride horses? Did you like Westerns when you were making this?

REDFORD: Yeah. Yeah, I knew how to ride horses. I loved horses. I liked doing my own stunts when I could. When it first came up, because of the age difference between Paul and I, which was like 12, 13 years - and he was really well-known. I was not well-known. I had just done I think the film "Barefoot In The Park." But he had a career obviously that was very high. And so the studio did not want me. The director, George Roy Hill, and I met in a bar on Third Avenue.

And they were putting me up to play Butch Cassidy because I'd done this comedy on Broadway so - you know, nobody thinks very deep about stuff like that. They said, well, if he did a comedy, maybe he should go up for Butch Cassidy. And so we're sitting in this bar. And I told him at the time - I said, yeah, I can do that, but that's not the part that interests me. The - I'm more interested in the Sundance Kid. I feel more comfortable in that role. I feel more - I could connect more to that character. And that surprised George. And then he got kind of sold on that idea.

But the studio didn't want me. And they tried everything to keep me out of the film at that time. It was 20th Century Fox. And I think it was Paul Newman and

William Goldman, the writer, and George that stood up for me against the studio. But the one that really pushed to the side of course was Paul. And when I met Paul, he was very generous. And he said, I'll do it with Redford. I never forgot that. That was a gesture that I never forgot. I felt that I really owed him after that. And then he and I in the course of that film became really, really good friends. And that friendship carried on to the next film, and then it carried on into our personal lives.

GROSS: He was originally supposed to be the Sundance Kid, and you were supposed to be Butch Cassidy.

REDFORD: Yeah, that's right. The original title of the script was "The Sundance Kid And Butch Cassidy." That was the original title that Goldman had written. And Newman was to play Sundance. But he had played that kind of part before. And George was a guy that saw Paul - he saw a side of Paul that many hadn't seen because he had worked with him on television and he knew him personally. He says, no, this guy - he's very nervous. He talks light, tells bad jokes. He - I think I see him as Butch Cassidy. And he saw me as Sundance. So he had to fight for that. So when it was finally done, then they changed the title to "Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid."

GROSS: Would you mind if I played a scene?

REDFORD: Mmm mmm.

GROSS: OK. So this is kind of a famous scene where, you know, you're both bank and train robbers. And at

this point, you're not exactly surrounded, but you're cornered. You're on...

REDFORD: A ledge.

GROSS: A ledge, yeah. And on top of you on this, you know, rocky ledge is the posse that's hunting you down. You got no place to turn. You've got no place to go except for the water that's underneath. And that's - you're up really, really high, and it's a very rocky...

REDFORD: Yeah.

GROSS: ...River or stream. But anyways, as Butch Cassidy is trying to figure out what their options are, what you want to do is, like, shoot your way out. And so you speak first.

(SOUNDBITE OF FILM, "BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID")

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Ready?

PAUL NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) No, we'll jump.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Like hell we will.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) No, it'll be OK if the water's deep enough and we don't get squished to death. They'll never follow us.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) How do you know?

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) Would you make a jump like that if you didn't have to?

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) I have to, and I'm not going to.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) Well, we got to, otherwise we're dead. They're just going to have to go back down the same way they come. Come on.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Just one clear shot - that's all I want.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) Come on.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Uh-uh.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) We got to.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Nope. Get away from me.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) Why?

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) I want to fight them.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) They'll kill us.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Maybe.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) You want to die?

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Do you?

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) All right, I'll jump first.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) Nope.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) Then you jump first.

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) No, I said.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy) What's the matter with you?

REDFORD: (As the Sundance Kid) I can't swim.

NEWMAN: (As Butch Cassidy, laughter) Why, you crazy, the fall will probably kill you.

GROSS: How reassuring.

(LAUGHTER)

REDFORD: Yeah, right.

GROSS: So that's my guest, Robert Redford, with Paul Newman from the 1969 film "Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid." Were you surprised at how famous that scene became?

REDFORD: Yes, I was. I mean, that - I was surprised at the whole thing. I remember when I saw the rough cut - I mean, I loved making the film. I had a lot of fun. I've never had so much fun on a film as I have that one. But when I saw the rough cut of it, I said, wait a minute; what's that song doing in it?

GROSS: Oh, "Raindrops Are Falling On My Head," the background song.

REDFORD: Yeah. I said, wait a minute; what's that all about? I said, what in the hell? I said, raindrop - first of all, it's not raining. Secondly, what's that got to do with anything? I thought, well, that - they're - this killed the film.

GROSS: (Laughter).

REDFORD: It made no sense to me. You know, how wrong can you be? I had to listen to that song on the radio for six months.

GROSS: (Laughter).

REDFORD: But the film - also, Terry, another thing that's interesting about how - I guess the value of word of mouth. I remember when the film came out, George Roy Hill and William Goldman were very upset and depressed because the reviews were mixed to negative. And word of mouth is what made the film build. But when it first opened, it had these mixed reviews. I didn't read them. I remember they were very upset and depressed.

And one of the reasons the reviews - some of the reviews were negative was that - the anachronism of the dialogue, like modern-day talk then. I found that pretty inspiring and fun. It was just fun. But apparently, that - that's what some of the negative response was. But it was

- I guess - overridden by the acceptance of the whole film.

GROSS: By the way, I had the same reaction about "Raindrops Are Falling On My Head" in the middle of the film. I thought...

REDFORD: (Laughter) Did you really?

GROSS: Yeah. (Laughter) I mean, it made absolutely no sense to me.

REDFORD: Well, it's you and me, then. There's two of us.

GROSS: (Laughter) Well, unfortunately, our time is up. It's really been a pleasure to talk with you. Thank you so much for coming back to FRESH AIR.

REDFORD: Well, thank you, Terry.

GROSS: It's been such a pleasure.

REDFORD: Yeah. And your voice is a lot more pleasant than mine.

GROSS: Oh, I wish (laughter).

REDFORD: No, it is. You have a beautiful voice.

GROSS: (Laughter) I wish. Oh, thank you so much. (Laughter) I'll play that back in my mind.

REDFORD: (Laughter) OK.

GROSS: I actually occasionally do that. That was Robert Redford, recorded in 2013. His new film is called "The Old Man And The Gun." This is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF MUSIC)

Hear The Original Interview

'Rafiki': The Lesbian Love Story That Kenya Banned And Then Unbanned

By Eyder Peralta

Weekend Edition Saturday, · Even in the middle of the day, in middle of the week, the theater was completely packed.

Hundreds had come to watch *Rafiki*, a movie about two young Kenyan women who are full of life, joy and wonder. Kena is a great student; she plays football and hangs out with the guys. And Ziki is the free spirit — cotton candy dreads and a smile full of mischief.

At one point, inside an abandoned van, the two realize they've fallen for each other. They touch, they look in each others' eyes. At the theater, you could almost hear the audience holding its breath — and as their lips touched, there was applause.

Over the past week, there has been a small revolution happening across movie screens in Kenya. For the first time, a same-sex love story is playing on the big screen, sparking conversations about freedom of expression, the constitution and finally feeling heard.

After the movie, the theater lobby is buzzing. Alex Teyie, 25, is sitting with a group of friends, discussing what just happened.

"It's like, a queer movie in Nairobi in 2018," she says.

"That's just fantastic to see."

Rafiki is a milestone here, where gay sex is illegal. A few years ago, the film [*Stories of Our Lives*](#), which profiles several LGBT Kenyans, was banned. It was so controversial that some of the filmmakers feared retaliation and legal consequences. So for a long time, they remained anonymous.

The Kenya Film Classification Board used many of the same arguments to ban *Rafiki*. [In a letter](#) banning the film, Ezekiel Mutua, [the outspoken and controversial head of the KFCB](#), said the film "undermined the sensibilities" of Kenyans.

"Rafiki contains homosexual scenes that are against the law, the culture and moral values of the Kenyan people," Mutua [said in a statement in April](#). "The film seeks to overtly promote lesbianism."

The film's director, Wanuri Kahiu, sued the KFCB saying the ban was not only an affront to her constitutional rights but would also keep the movie from being considered for the Oscars. One of the requirements for a nomination is that a movie is screened at least seven days in its home country. While deciding on the merits of the case, Kenya's high court issued a temporary injunction, allowing *Rafiki* to be screened for seven days, from September 23 to 29.

Teyie's friend, Valary Mumbo, says the ruling is bittersweet. She wishes the film were playing for months

so Kenyans in other cities and villages could watch it. But she can't help but feel glee that two theaters were jam-packed on a weekday.

"It's really good to see that Kenyans are waking up," she says. "Yeah, they're good. They are woke."

Over the phone from Los Angeles, Kahiua says they had "won the battle, but we have to continue with the war." *Rafiki* was the first Kenyan movie to screen at the Cannes Film Festival in France and she says she was heartbroken when it was banned at home.

"The case has become larger than the film, because the case is not about *Rafiki*," she says. "The case is about freedom of expression."

In a lot of ways, this is just one instance in which Kenya is coming to terms with one of the most liberal constitutions on the African continent. Courts are currently weighing cases about separation of powers; they are hearing challenges to the country's anti-sodomy laws. And here, the court is going to decide whether Kahiua has the right to tell a love story that challenges some of the country's conservative moorings.

In a statement, the film classification board called the temporary halt on its ban "a sad moment and a great insult."

Kahiua says she is simply a filmmaker who wants to tell a love story with authentic characters. She says she just

wanted to show the beauty and heartbreak that ensues when two black LGBT characters follow their heart.

"That was the point, that it doesn't matter who you are, love is love and that is an absolute universal, basic language," she says.

DeRay Mckesson: The Vest Is Yet To Come

· Host of Crooked Media's Pod Save the People, DeRay Mckesson, talks about X-Men, his signature blue vest, smelly preteens, and his new book. Plus, a new Mystery Guest segment with a "Question Czar."

Drew Philp: How Can 'Radical Neighborliness' Help Struggling Communities?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 5 of the TED Radio Hour episode [Building Humane Cities](#).*

About Drew Philp's TED Talk

In 2009, Drew Philp bought an abandoned house in Detroit and worked with neighbors to fix it up. He discovered the power of 'radical neighborliness' to rebuild his struggling neighborhood.

About Drew Philp

[Drew Philp](#) is a journalist, screenwriter, and teacher. He chronicled his experience of buying an abandoned house in his book, [A \\$500 House In Detroit: Rebuilding An Abandoned Home And An American City](#). It won the 2017 Stuard D. and Vernice M. Gross Award for Literature.

Philp's work focuses on inequity in the Midwest. In addition to writing, Philp has hitchhiked across the United States and has taught at prisons, juvenile institutions, and the University of Michigan.

Liz Ogbu: Can We Gentrify Neighborhoods While Allowing Longtime Residents To Stay?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 1 of the TED Radio Hour episode [Building Humane Cities](#).*

About Liz Ogbu's TED Talk

Architect Liz Ogbu has seen the pain gentrification creates for displaced communities. She wonders how we can create ways for longtime residents to stay and reap the benefits of gentrification.

About Liz Ogbu

[Liz Ogbu](#) is an architect who works in underprivileged urban spaces around the world. Her design firm, Studio O, partners with local communities to create a positive social impact through design. For one of her projects, Ogbu worked with a community battling gentrification in Bayview-Hunter's Point, San Francisco. She partnered with StoryCorps to set up a listening booth where community members could have their stories recorded for posterity.

Ogbu has taught design courses at California College of the Arts, UC Berkeley, and Stanford University.

Ogbu has won many honors for her work, including the 2009 Holcim Global Innovation Prize. She is an Aspen Ideas Scholar and a member of Public Interest Design's Top 100.

OluTimehin Adegbeye: How Can Cities Make Space For Their Most Vulnerable Residents?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 2 of the TED Radio Hour episode [Building Humane Cities](#).*

About OluTimehin Adegbeye's TED Talk

OluTimehin Adegbeye says that in the world's megacities, the most vulnerable get left behind — including in her city, Lagos. But it's these people, she says, that most deserve space in modern cities.

About OluTimehin Adegbeye

[OluTimehin Adegbeye](#) is a writer, speaker, and activist. Her work focuses on addressing issues related to gender, sexuality, and poverty.

Her writing and activism have made her a prominent figure in the Nigerian and African feminist communities.

Currently, she works as a communications officer with JEL, a human rights organization based in Lagos.

Vishaan Chakrabarti: How Can We Design More Welcoming Cities?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 3 of the TED Radio Hour episode* [Building Humane Cities](#).

About Vishaan Chakrabarti's TED Talk

Architect [Vishaan Chakrabarti](#) says many modern cities feel cold, austere, and anonymous. He advocates for designing more vibrant and inclusive cities that are reminiscent of the scale of older cities.

About Vishaan Chakrabarti

Vishaan Chakrabarti is an architect seeking to redefine urban life around the world. He believes well-designed cities can create more prosperous, inclusive, egalitarian societies.

He is the author of [A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for Urban America](#).

Chakrabarti is a professor of architectural design and urban theory at Columbia University. He is also the founder of [Practice for Architecture and Urbanism](#), an architecture studio that supports and advances urbanization.

Richard Berry: How Can Cities Create Opportunities For The Homeless?

By NPR/TED Staff

TED Radio Hour, · *Part 4 of the TED Radio Hour episode* [Building Humane Cities](#).

About Richard Berry's TED Talk

As Albuquerque's mayor, Richard Berry tried a new approach to addressing panhandling: offering work and connecting homeless with city services. He says it's a more humane option more cities can try.

About Richard Berry

[Richard Berry](#) served as the mayor of Albuquerque from 2009 to 2017. In 2015, Berry started the "There's a Better Way" campaign, a work program that tries to combat the city's problem of panhandling and homelessness by offering day jobs to homeless residents.

Prior to that program, Berry launched "Heading Home," a program that provides housing to the chronically homeless. Before serving as mayor, Berry was a two term member of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

