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Women are transforming the workplace **P.42**

INSIGHT

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Predictions 2010

Six ideas that will shape the world

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A decade into the new millennium, here are six trends to watch – from Africa's possible emergence as the next breadbasket, to Russia's strange leadership hunt, to the evangelical boom in Latin American pews.

STORY BY JINA MOORE
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
PHOTOS: EPA/WASHINGTON POST

There are no iPods in this report. There are also no digital e-readers, no flat-screen televisions, no snowblowers, or lawn mowers that will, we are promised, "revolutionize" some part of American life next year. When we asked experts across the globe to flash forward and imagine the big forces shaping 2010, we found something better: sheer surprise.

Africa, the perennial land of famine, may be the next breadbasket. Europe, where France banned the head scarf in state schools and the Swiss outlawed minarets, will emerge more tolerant of Muslims. Chinese babies will have siblings, and the new Russian political elite will be chosen, "Idol"-style, through a nationwide talent hunt.

If it sounds improbable, consider this: In 1950, Popular Science published an article describing the America of the next century. In a lot of ways, it was pretty off. We do not, as predicted, dissolve brewing hurricanes by setting oil ablaze on the ocean waters beneath them. Nor do we sell our disposable rayon underwear to chemical factories that wish to make candy out of it.

More telling, though, may be how eerily familiar the rest of the vision is. The editors predicted men would use a chemical to wipe beards from their faces (men don't, but some women do precisely this to their legs).

They thought women would melt disposable dishes under hot water, instead of washing them (recycling Chinet might come close, and the inflation-adjusted price tag is within \$1). And they got it just right with one particular cartoon: A household matriarch shops, over the phone, for items she sees on television.

“The future is not a place,” says Patrick Tucker of the World Futurist Society. “It changes every day as we add to it and subtract from it with our actions, which is why it doesn’t actually exist. It’s a phantom we continue to pursue.”

Sometimes, we have good signposts. If recent trends hold, for example, senior citizens will play more video games, and teenagers will pick up more books. Birthrates in the United States will go down, and life expectancy in Burundi will go up. Fresh water will get scarcer everywhere, and desert land, drier.

If money is no object, and imagination no obstacle, some say it’s possible to see corporations buy up artificial islands and become countries, or our cellphones play matchmaker at the coffee shop, alerting us to a nearby customer with a digital profile that matches our interests.

That’s the fun stuff, but the decade of the ’10s is also serious. As climate change continues to make contentious politics, rising temperatures could bring a 50 percent increase in armed conflict to Africa. Meanwhile, warlords will feel the increasingly tight grip of the International Criminal Court, which will finally define the crime of aggression, the last of the three crimes under its jurisdiction, at meetings in Uganda in 2010.

Closer to home, the year’s big issues – the environment and the economy – may get, well, closer to home. After a year of national and international flourish for environmentalism, eco-activism will look more local, says Elaine Kamarck, a lecturer in public policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, Mass.

The national political “system as a whole appears to be failing,” she says, “so I think you’ll see more grass-roots environmentalism.” It’s already started, she adds, pointing to the push back against clothesline prohibitions in some of the country’s 300,000 private communities.

We may not all be environmental activists, but when it comes to that other broken system – the economy – we’re all consumers. What we buy probably won’t change that much, but our purchasing power may be in for a boost.

“We’re not going to see any movement on iPods, big-screen TVs, or even real estate,” says Elizabeth Warren, chair of the Congressional Oversight Panel and a professor of contracts law at Harvard University. “I think the big shift is going to come in credit.”

That’s if the Consumer Financial Protection Agency, which Ms. Warren advocates and President Obama has endorsed, gets through the Senate in 2010 (it passed the House in less-sweeping form in 2009).

It faces stiff opposition from, among others, the banking industry, but if it succeeds, Warren says the agency will “watch out for consumers on credit products, the same way there are agencies that watch out for the safety of toasters, refrigerators, car seats, water – all the things that consumers touch and taste, smell and feel.”

Whether good credit will mean we’ll all need an android shopping assistant when we go to the mall – all the rage in Japan – remains to be seen. But the 21st-century country that 1950s America envisioned should give us faith – and pause – as we imagine 2010.

As philosophers and pundits weigh in on what the next year, and the decade it announces, will bring to the world, we can be certain of one thing: They are bound to be right – and wrong. ●



From famine to the world’s next breadbasket?

Foreign interests buy up cheap agricultural land across Africa to grow tomorrow’s food. But will any of it benefit Africans?

In Western eyes, Africa is a land of hunger – a place of famines and starving children, emaciated limbs, and desperate United Nations feeding campaigns.

Soon, however, the United States and Europe might be forced to change this view. Thanks to a rush of outside investments, Africa is poised to become the world’s next breadbasket – a situation prompting sharp debate among many international aid and food agencies.

Over the past year, dozens of private investors and foreign governments, including those of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, South Korea, and China, have snatched up hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland in Africa. Though their goals vary, many involved with the acquisitions say they want to secure farmable land to protect their home countries against what they see as inevitable future food shortages.

And when it comes to open, arable land – and governments willing to make a deal – Africa is the world leader. Saudi Arabian investors, for instance, have poured hundreds of millions of dollars into farmland in Ethiopia, according to groups like GRAIN, a nonprofit that supports small farmers and has been tracking these international land acquisitions.

China has invested \$800 million in rice production in Mozambique, and Jordan has secured tens of thousands of acres for livestock and crops in Sudan. In September, the South Korean government announced that it will develop 250,000 acres of farmland in Tanzania, at least half of which will go to South Korean businesses raising grains and producing processed food such as cooking oil and starch.

Corporate investors are also getting involved. London and Wall Street firms have shown new interest in farmland investment vehicles. Given the state of the global financial market – and the 2008 food crisis during which wheat and other food staple prices soared to record highs – food and land seem safe long-term investments, says Devlin Kuyek, a researcher with GRAIN.

Proponents of the land deals say this spate of investment is a global win-win. Land-scarce countries in the Gulf, Asia, and elsewhere have a new way to pro-

tect themselves from food shortages, and Africa gets much-needed capital and expertise to turn its rich agricultural potential into actual food.

Recently the UN and the Washington D.C.-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) have given lukewarm backing to the land acquisitions, as long as both sides follow codes of conduct.

“Foreign investment can provide key resources for agriculture, including development of needed infrastructure and expansion of livelihood options for local people,” Jachim von Braun, IFPRI’s director general, wrote earlier this year.

But Mr. Kuyek and others are skeptical. To them, the land rush seems like yet another wave of African resource extraction – one that will benefit foreign governments and large corporations at the expense of Africans and small farmers.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development and the World Bank have backed reports showing that “the most reasonable and most appropriate way to invest in food systems is to invest in small farmers,” Kuyek says. “But here, we’re just getting big industrial agriculture.”

Others worry about the impact on human rights. The details of the land deals – made among high-ranking government officials with little consultation of local peasants – are often murky. And in many cases, land that officials have said was “unused” was actually managed in traditional ways.

“Outsourcing food isn’t new,” says Alexandra Spielfoch, director of the trade and global governance program at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “There are all sorts of historical examples of foreign direct investment. In the colonial era, there were cash crops in colonies.

“What’s particularly disturbing is the scale of the more recent investments – large tracts of arable land are being bought up with these ridiculously long leases – 50 to 99 years ... in countries that are already unstable.”

Tensions related to a South Korean land purchase are blamed for the ousting of Madagascar’s government earlier this year. More recently, African civil society groups and a number of African leaders have spoken out against what they call land grabs. ●



CHINA

BY PETER FORD,
Christian Science Monitor



Will China ease its one-child policy?

A growing number of critics urge Beijing to relax the one-child policy to counter an aging population.

It might seem an innocuous move to outsiders but in China it was a game-changer. Authorities in Shanghai began encouraging newly married couples in the city to have two children.

The rationale: Under China's vaunted one-child policy – a cornerstone of economic and social planning for decades – the population has been aging too rapidly. Indeed, Shanghai, which has always had a relatively youthful populace, now has the same proportion of retirees as an average city in the United States or Europe.

The move last summer by the city of Shanghai marked the first time since 1979 that officials have exhorted couples to have more offspring. More important, it symbolizes a sharpening debate in the world's most populous country over one of Beijing's most fundamental totems.

A growing chorus of critics is warning that unless the government changes course, the nation's one-child policy will drive the Asian powerhouse into a demographic dead end. They see China growing old before it grows rich.

Officials are beginning to take note. Spooked by the prospect of only 1.7 active workers for every pensioner by 2050, they are quietly chipping away at Beijing's signature population edict.

They have another reason to worry, too – forecasts that within 30 years, 15 percent of marriage-aged men will be unable to find brides. The combination of the one-child policy and the Chinese preference for male offspring has proved deadly for female fetuses: 120 boys are born for every 100 girls – the highest ratio in the world.

"This will cause a grave humanitarian disaster," predicts Mu Guangzong, a professor at Peking University's Institute of Population Research.

The one-child policy has always been controversial abroad and unpopular at home. More than 70 percent of Chinese women would like to have two or more children, a study released earlier this year by the National Family Planning Commission found.

It is nonetheless a policy to which the govern-

ment has attached fundamental importance since it was written into the Constitution in 1978. Officials say it has prevented 400 million births, and raised living standards for the children that were born.

Maybe. But among the unintended consequences, or ones that were simply ignored, is a population aging twice as fast as America's. There will be 400 million people over 65 by 2040 – a quarter of the population – estimates Chen Wei, an expert at Renmin University's Population and Development Research Institute.

Not only will their pensions and healthcare become a "very severe burden on the government budget," Professor Chen warns, but there will also be fewer working-age citizens to support them. And those still working will be older, and thus less productive, than today's labor force.

The government is working on several fronts to head off disaster. It is setting up a rudimentary pension system for rural dwellers who still do not have any social security. It is paying lifetime grants to parents with only girl children. It is encouraging Chinese farmers to value their womenfolk more highly.

It is also listening to experts such as Hu Angang, a government adviser, who argues that "now is the right time for us to change the family planning policy. The longer we wait, the higher the cost will be."

Still, any changes in policy will likely be incremental. Under the edict in Shanghai, for instance, the only couples who can have a second child are those who are only children themselves. The next step, says Chen, will be to allow couples to have two babies if either the mother or the father are only children.

"That will happen soon," he says, perhaps when the next Five Year Plan is launched in 2011. Within a decade or so, he adds, China will have a two-child policy.

Yet for now, the one-child policy is sacred enough that no one predicts it will be ditched wholesale. "The regime has staked its credibility on the correctness of the one-child policy," says Susan Greenhalgh, an expert on Chinese population issues at the University of California, Irvine. "It would be very, very difficult politically to announce that it has been abandoned."

Robot revolution moves

The world's leader in robotic tech everything from cooking pancakes

It looks a little like C-3PO from the "Stars Wars" movies, minus the gold sheen and the attitude. Robovie-II, a Japanese robot with swinging arms and an inquisitive demeanor, has strolled the halls of an Osaka mall to help customers shop.

It could detect people who were walking aimlessly and steer them toward their destination. A more recent version of the robot has helped the elderly buy goods at a supermarket.

The arrival of the android shopping assistant, even though still experimental, is a reminder that the robot revolution in Japan is increasingly moving from the factory floor to the home, the hospital, the local restaurant, and even the rice paddy.

Long a leader in industrial robotics – Japan is home to almost half the world's 800,000 factory robots – the country is now pioneering uses of automated help for the consumer. Along the way, it is redefining the relationship between man and machine.

Already, the country has robots that clean, pour drinks, function as security guards, play pool, dance, care for the elderly, act as pets and companions, serve sushi – everything but write this story.

"We see robots as media just like a mobile phone," says Norihiro Hagita, director at ATR Intelligent Robotics and Communication Laboratories in Kyoto. "And just like a mobile phone, robots would be indispensable in future."

Several factors are driving Japan's thrust into consumer robotics. One is the country's savvy with technology. But a bigger reason is demographics. As the country's population ages, robots are considered one solution to a shrinking workforce.

Take the healthcare industry alone. In the near future, the government health and welfare ministry estimates that the country will need as many as 50,000 more healthcare workers a year. This is one reason Toyo Riki Co. Ltd., a company that has designed industrial robots for nearly a half century, began making communication robots a few years ago.

It has one machine that helps patients with physical rehabilitation. Another welcomes visitors as



JAPAN

BY TAKEHIKO KAMBAYASHI,
Christian Science Monitor

from factory to home
nology is creating machines that do
to guiding shoppers at malls.

a “guard” at a hospital entrance. “We want robots to master [or learn] craftsmen’s skills, as very few young people are willing to do so,” says Narito Hosomi, president of Toyo Riki.

Other companies are developing “partner” robots that will act as companions to the elderly, carrying on simple dialogue. Secom, a security- service company, manufactures a robot called “My Spoon” that helps handicapped people eat a meal.

In other cases, robots are being developed to perform dirty and dangerous tasks. One machine helps fight fires. At the National Agricultural Research Center in Tsukuba, researchers are working on a robot that plants seeds in rice paddies. It combines a GPS guidance system with an automated harvester.

Still, devising robots for uncontrolled environments, ones that operate outside a factory, isn’t easy – or cheap. The autonomous rice planter, for instance, has come down from its original price tag of \$200,000 a decade ago. But it still costs \$90,000.

More recently, the Japanese have been touting robots for use in the kitchen. At recent expos, Toyo Riki showcased a robo-chef, spatula in hand, that flipped pancakes. Other robots served sushi and sliced vegetables. Researchers envision them handling repetitive jobs in restaurants and in homes.

Japan is “doing a great job on manipulation and hardware – the ability to make robots do what you want to do,” says Curt Stone, an expert at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

All of which underscores one other point about the Japanese: Unlike the US, which has focused much of its attention on developing advanced robotics for use in industry and the military – and which has often viewed them as a threat to jobs – the Japanese embrace them with an almost spiritual reverence. Last month, a robot exhibition in Tokyo drew 100,000 visitors.

“Many Japanese people got familiar with manga characters in their childhood,” says Mr. Hosomi, referring in particular to the famous Japanese cartoon Astro Boy, about a youthful robot with a big heart. “I think that contributes a sense of affinity to robots.”

Beyond the minaret ban:



EUROPE

BY SUSAN SACHS,
Christian Science Monitor

Some European nations more tolerant of Muslims
While a backlash persists in some nations, others are including Muslims in
debates on national identity.

Muslims attended the recent installation of the dome of the Grand Mosque in Strasbourg, France. Across Europe, Muslims are becoming more assertive, prompting, and, in some cases, participating in, full-throated debates over national identity.

Call it a continental midlife crisis, or just a new symptom of the familiar angst about immigration and globalization. Either way, the new decade will find Europeans in a full-throated debate over how to define their national identities in light of the heightened visibility of their fast-growing Muslim populations.

The debate over Islam in Europe has been largely owned by anti-immigration populists, as it still is in some countries, or it has focused on terrorism.

In the future, it may increasingly be a two-sided discussion, one conducted not just by the doubters and the fearful but also by newly assertive European-born Muslims who have set down roots and are eager to defend them.

Until very recently in France, for example, public discussion of issues concerning Muslims featured a familiar cast of non-Muslim academics and politicians talking about crime and alienation out in the ghettos, far from where they lived and worked.

But that pattern is changing. In November, the right-wing government ordered up a nationwide series of public hearings, set to run until next spring, on what it means to be French.

In a remarkable shift, the mainstream newspapers and television channels are featuring an array of Muslim business owners, professionals, educators, and political activists who insist they have something to say about national identity.

“The media didn’t notice how society had changed and that people of different communities, not just Muslim but also black, could be invested, could be thoughtful, and could have something to say as witnesses and active participants,” says Marc Cheb Sun, the editor of Respect magazine in France.

Rather than shying away from a debate on national identity, he adds, French Muslims want to influence it. “It’s a real subject,” says Mr. Cheb Sun, the French-born son of an Egyptian father and an Italian mother. “We are always pressed to prove our Frenchness, and I want it known that I have the right to be proud of all my multiple origins.”

Being part of the debate on national identity, rather than its targets, will still be difficult for Muslims in many European countries like Denmark and the Netherlands, where resurgent anti-immigrant parties have put Muslim communities on the defensive.

The success of the Swiss referendum in November to ban minarets revived the discomfiting question of whether they might ever be considered an “us” rather than a “them.” How Europe defines citizenship will continue to be tested as countries wrestle with nationalist demands to ban the Muslim head scarf and the face-covering niqab, and freeze mosque construction.

Muslims will stay at the center of those debates because they will be more visible.

Now an estimated 5 percent of Europe’s population, they are expected to account for 10 percent by 2020, according to a study by the Pew Research Center in Washington. Their political weight could grow accordingly.

Germany is a case in point. Since 2000, children born in Germany to immigrant parents have German citizenship. But at the age of 18, they have to formally decide between the nationality of their parents and that of their birth country. Those who choose to be German could influence how that identity is defined.

“You can assume that on the political landscape, there could be several hundred thousand of such voters, maybe more, for this or that view,” says Siddik Bakir, a Turkish-born and German-educated scholar at St. Antony’s College at Oxford University in England. “So they become part of the political discussion, wanted or unwanted. And they would have a voice.” ●



LATIN AMERICA

BY SARA MILLER LLANA,
Christian Science Monitor

New face of religion in Latin America

Evangelicalism sweeps through churches, leading some to say that Latin America is emerging as the new center of Christianity.

A man bursts through the aisles, practically leaping, clapping his hands in the air and shouting “Alleluia” each time he is moved to do so, which is often. No one in the Methodist Pentecostal Church of Chile looks askance at the emotional display. For one thing, similar eruptions of prayer and song blend into one cacophonous and frenetic hour of worship.

Welcome to the new face of Christianity in Latin America, where Pentecostal and “charismatic” Christians from mainline churches, forced to change or face irrelevance, have spread from the Amazon to the Andes, from the most precarious houses of worship in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to sprawling stadiums in the region’s capital cities.

While Pentecostalism was first introduced to Latin America by American missionaries in the early 20th century, the movement here is now more vibrant than ever, drawing legions of the faithful and destitute to pews in a way that would make many churches in the United States and Europe envious. The same is happening in Africa and Asia.

In fact, there is a sense today that these three regions are emerging as the new stronghold of Christianity. Pastors and religious scholars even imagine a reverse-missionary scenario, in which Latin Americans coax disillusioned Americans and Europeans back to mainstream churches.

“The first missionaries came from Europe to the US to Latin America,” says Pastor Eduardo Duran, a leader of the Methodist Pentecostal Church of Chile, the oldest in the nation at 100. “In the near future there could be a role reversal, in which our church will have more influence in the Anglo world.”

While the number of Christians has been growing unabated in Africa and Asia, it is flourishing in Latin America as well – changing the intensity and affiliation of worship. Roman Catholicism was once a virtual monopoly in the region.

Now, according to the World Christian Database, Pentecostals represent 13 percent of Latin Americans, and charismatics another 15 percent. In 1970 the

number of “renewalists” – the umbrella term used to describe both movements, which believe God acts directly in their lives through the Holy Spirit – was just 4 percent.

It is Latin America, with its relatively strong cultural institutions and similarities to the West, which Paul Freston, a religion and global politics expert in Brazil, says could become the bridge between the old Christian and new Christian worlds. “It could help bring people into the faith or back into the faith, or revitalize the influence on those people who are already practicing Christians,” he says.

Already, Hispanic immigration to the US has brought Latino-style worship to storefront churches from New York to Los Angeles. “Latin America immigration is basically sustaining the Catholic Church in the US,” says Andrew Chesnut, a religion expert at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Evangelicals have exerted growing influence in political spheres as churches, which first drew members among the poor, have become more attractive to the middle and upper classes. Chile remains deeply Catholic, but a quarter of the Catholics are now charismatic.

And the Protestants there tend to be among the most “pentecostalized,” Pew says.

“Charismatic Christianity has attained nothing less than hegemonic status in Latin American Christianity,” says Mr. Chesnut. Mauricio Ramirez, a Pentecostal in Santiago, describes the appeal simply: “It is cold outside,” the store owner says, “and the Pentecostal church is like warming up next to a fire.”

One impact of all this might be to make Christianity more conservative worldwide. True, Pentecostals in Latin America are hard to pigeonhole: They tend to be more liberal than their US counterparts on economic policy, but just as conservative on homosexuality and abortion.

Yet any change will come slowly. Mr. Freston says there is a time lag between the shift in numbers and “the shift in influence, the ability to take control and create the impression of being the center of the Christian world.”



‘American Idol,’ Kremlin

Russian officials handpick a ‘Golden bureaucracy.’

Call it “American Idol,” Kremlin-style. Only this version isn’t intended to find the next Carrie Underwood. It’s a nationwide talent hunt to identify the next generation of Russian leaders – ones that are modern-minded, uncorrupted, and presumably forward-thinking.

The “Golden 100” initiative is the pet project of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who sees it as a way to revivify Russia’s tired and torpid bureaucracy.

In one sense, it might be the ultimate social engineering project: A government trying to reinvent itself by finding replacement parts for its own political machine.

While many critics dismiss the initiative as a mere gimmick, Mr. Medvedev has invested a lot of prestige in the project and some of tomorrow’s Russian leaders may emerge from the anointing process.

“There is a critical shortage of capable, professional managers at all levels in our country,” says Yury Kotler, a council member of the ruling party, United Russia, who has been put in charge of the project.

“We don’t have many years to wait for a changing of the guard, from old-style bureaucrats to new leaders.

“So our idea is to find people ... who are already out there in the civil service, business, political parties, academia, and other fields. We will put them into accelerated circulation.”

That includes people like Alexei Andreyev, who heads a business consultancy in the western city of Novgorod. He was accepted into the program earlier this year and has since risen to the upper echelon of winners.

He says it’s already helped him advance his idea of establishing an industrial park near Novgorod, by opening local officials’ doors and attracting investors.

“This gives me a lot more opportunity to influence the process of innovation and modernization



RUSSIA

BY FRED WEIR,
Christian Science Monitor

-style: the hunt for talented leaders
100' group of young people to shake-up an aging

in my own region," he says.

Stanislav Molchanenko, a political aide working on the Stavropol council, in southern Russia, was a veteran of United Russia's auxiliary youth group who went on to become a party functionary.

But since being singled out by Medvedev's initiative, he's moved up and now oversees the "Golden 100" project locally, tasked with finding other talented young people.

"This gives me the opportunity to find undiscovered stars who need a boost, and then to help them pass through bureaucratic barriers to get better jobs so they can be useful to society," he says. "This really works."

Other rising stars include Andrei Turchak, a youthful parliamentarian who has been appointed governor of the important western Russian region of Pskov.

Another is former law professor Garry Minkh, who has been named as the Kremlin's official emissary to the State Duma.

In all, Mr. Kotler says he has 20,000 names of worthy candidates in his computer, about 1,300 of whom have passed a rigorous process of testing and interviewing.

A final list of 300 fully vetted people – more than the original "Golden 100" – has now been compiled.

In selecting candidates, Kotler insists no political loyalty test is involved, nor any job guarantees extended. Winners are expected to network among themselves, generate ideas, and use their Kremlin seal of approval to push for reforms.

"There are no tangible rewards," says Kotler. "But officials know that these people have gone through a lot of hoops. They have what amounts to a letter of recommendation from [top leaders]."

Still, critics see the plan as a desperate attempt to shake things up without introducing any real bureaucratic reforms.

"Public politics in Russia are severely restricted," says Nikolai Petrov, head of the Moscow Carnegie Center's civil society program.

"We do not have real, competitive elections, or transparency in government, or open institutions through which talented people can rise on their own merits.

"But leaders recognize the system isn't working, so they propose this substitute method."

Others consider it just a stunt.

"The work of actually reforming the bureaucracy and fighting corruption is hard and slow, but you can't just pretend to do it," says Igor Nikolayev, an expert with FBK, an independent Moscow political consultancy.

"This is just going to bring forward a new generation of people who are ready to say and do whatever it takes to advance their careers. Who needs that?"

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Bidding farewell to a life in columns

BY JIM HOAGLAND, WASHINGTON POST

Listen up, Israel: Not now. Obama, don't let the winds of public opinion twist you around your own axle. Yo, Putin, stop shielding the murderers, including those who rid you of meddlesome lawyers. Sarkozy, your energy and irreverence are dazzling. But what about a little more stick-to-itness, cher ami?

Lord, this has been fun. If disorienting at first. For 25 years I worked as a reporter and news editor and was paid to keep my opinions out of the newspaper. For the past two decades, The Washington Post paid me to put my opinions where its money is -- to tell the high and mighty, and the merely highfalutin, what I thought of their actions and policies.

Both incarnations offered the chance to continue an education that I began in a three-room, seven-grade schoolhouse in rural South Carolina. Being a working journalist allowed and required me to study politics, diplomacy, finance and, most of all, human nature. Writing for a newspaper is like taking a short college exam every day you work.

The constants are the trade's unbendable limitations on time and space, expressed in an iron law of meeting the deadline whatever the condition of body or mind. "At least nobody is shooting at us right now," foreign correspondents of old would tell each other as we headed down to the burned-out post office in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, or the censor's office in Cairo or Jerusalem, to file our dispatches by telegraph.

A new year seems to be the right moment to reconfigure the constants. Instead of having the deadline shape the idea and force it into 750-word segments, I now want the idea to shape the deadline.

I'll still be opinionating at you from time to time as a contributing editor for The Post while working on a book and other projects. In this last regularly scheduled Sunday column, let me thank you, readers, for your support and interest, and my mentors and colleagues at The Post for their immense contributions to a happy professional life.

Odd idea, that. Daily journalists are among the

most individualistic of beings, surviving on the instant ego gratification of a prominent byline, beating the competition or producing a well-designed page.

And yet -- putting together a newspaper is the most intensely collaborative effort humans undertake this side of war, sex or baseball. Writers, edi-



Photo by Bill O'Leary

tors, publishers, salespeople and others engage in a ferocious daily give-and-take as the daily miracle of publication approaches. All hands clap, more or less together, or no hand claps.

Journalism is about now, not about then. So I offer a few contemporary thoughts rather than reminiscences as I move along to prove that old journalists never die, they just scribble away.

First a bit of advice (as if they did not get enough from a hectoring world) to Israeli leaders contemplating attacking Iran's nuclear program: Not now. The regime in Tehran uses an iron fist to confront the just anger and disgust it has provoked in Iran's population. The fanatics in power prefer to break rather than to bend. Let this revolt take its own course before you act.

There are no people in the world more generous, warm, bullheaded, aggravating, inspiring and infuriating than the Israelis, unless it is perhaps the Arabs. I will miss regularly telling you both what to do, knowing there is not a snowball's chance that you have not already thought of it and decided not to do it if you can possibly avoid it.

My salvo to Barack Obama in the opening paragraph comes out of great respect and hope for his presidency. He can be a great leader if he stops pay-

"Lord, this has been fun. If disorienting at first."

ing so much attention to media-obsessed aides who mistake politics for policies and manipulation for statesmanship.

Obama's vacillating reactions to the now sustained protests in Tehran continue to be unsettling. He seems to respond not to the pace and magnitude of the protests themselves but to the amount of coverage they receive here and the potential they create for him to be criticized.

In the case of the Nigerian would-be bomber, there were also echoes of tailoring official reactions to media exposure and partisan attack through the president's sudden burst of public anger and Bush-like vows to punish terrorism's masterminds. But these are flaws that this talented president can easily overcome once he sees them.

As for Vladimir Putin and Nicolas Sarkozy . . . What? I'm out of space? Sigh. Gotta go. (But you do see what I mean now, don't you?)

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Bills from Boston lawyers: IT'S ABOUT TIME



Any of the many 32963 residents who have worked for large law, consulting or accounting firms know all about time sheets.

These are one of the daily joys of professionals who bill by the hour. Each day, you fill out a form accounting for your time, specifying how many hours you spent working for each client, and describing (in most cases as cryptically as possible) what you did during those hours.

Those time sheets form the basis of the monthly bills that law and consulting firms render to clients.

Clients tend to ask to see the time sheets when they receive a bill that they think is higher than it ought to be for the work performed.

What clients often find when they look at the time sheets is that their worst suspicions were justified. Most any lawyer who has gone through a divorce has horror stories over the bills he or she received from a fellow lawyer.

It would appear, however, that no one in Vero Beach city government ever thought it might be a good idea to review the time sheets of the Boston lawyers who billed the city more than a quarter of a million dollars for their work on Vero's electric utility debacle.

With the exception of one month, September 2007, when the lawyers appear to have sent their monthly invoice for \$29,543 directly to the City of Vero Beach by mistake, their monthly fees were listed as one-line items for reimbursement on the invoices sent to the city by Boston utility consultant Sue Hersey.

So last month, our reporter Lisa Zahner asked the city government for the time sheets of the Boston lawyers for their work on selection of the Orlando Utilities Commission as Vero's new power provider. City Clerk Tammy Vock thereupon asked Hersey to provide the time sheets that supported the quarter of a million dollars she had billed us for the legal work, and requested that she ship them on down by December 21st.

Hersey first tried to stonewall, emailing Vock that "the information requested by Lisa is confidential. Please contact (attorney) Meabh Purcell at the Dewey & LeBeouf law firm to determine how you

can obtain the details that are being requested while still maintaining confidentiality."

Well, that's a new one on us. A consultant telling her client that the time sheets for work an attorney billed to the client contain material that is "confidential" and can't be shared with the client.

It clearly must have struck Scott Mueller, a partner at Dewey & LeBeouf, as absurd as well, since a week later, copies of the time sheets made it to Vock's office.

As it happens, the time sheets tell us fairly little. Most of the entries by the five lawyers who billed time to Vero Beach were cryptic notations like: "Review and discuss transmission agreement – 1 hour" and "Transmission agreement calls and discussion – 1 hour."

During July 2007, those "reviews" and "discussions" – which cost the City of Beach up to \$585 an hour – added up to \$81,467.25. You might have thought that kind of a one-month bill would have warranted a closer review by someone in the Vero Beach City Attorney's office. But no, those time sheets were never requested.

The other not-so-amusing charges passed on to Vero Beach in these monthly bills were fees for what your normal business would consider overhead. Goodness knows, you wouldn't want the cost of operating a law firm to come out of the professional fees.

During this period, the City of Vero Beach cheerfully reimbursed Dewey & LeBeouf \$1,747.03 for on-line research, \$1,314.75 for word processing, \$577.37 for photocopying, and even \$70.67 for proofreading (a fine irony there; we get to pay extra to make sure the word processing we paid for doesn't have errors).

Probably the most interesting entry on the time sheets, however, was Meabh Purcell's entry for July 12, 2007: "Draft contracts for sale of Vero Power Plant – 2 hours." We have no idea what that was about, and there was no further reference in the time sheets to exploring sale of the Vero Power Plant.

It would have been worth the \$940 these two hours cost us to learn what actually was taking place – or not taking place -- during this unexplained 120 minutes. ●



Update: 32963 shopping contest winner

With a number of beachside shops reporting that the month of December was a bit better than expected, we are hopeful a factor in this good news may have been our **First Annual Vero Beach 32963 Holiday Shopping Contest**.

We also are pleased to report that we have a winner -- a resident of Central Beach who emailed us last week that she had purchased gifts from 9 different beachside retailers in the four weeks prior to Dec. 24th. This narrowly edged a resident of Marbrisa, who bought gifts from 7 different barrier island merchants during the contest period.

The winner, who asked to remain anonymous, then inquired whether in place of receiving our top prize of dining certificates for use at 32963 restaurants, we would be willing to make a \$500 contribution to the annual fund raising drive for the AIDS Research and Treatment Center run by Dr. Gerald Pierone Jr.

We are happy to make the requested contribution to Pierone's AIDs clinic – one of the area's more noble causes which has been generously supported over the years by many 32963 residents – and we would urge others who may wish to contribute to visit the clinic's website at www.ARTCTC.org.

To all who participated in this year's holiday shopping contest, a heartfelt thanks for supporting our island merchants. We are hopeful we will have many additional entrants in the **Second Annual Vero Beach 32963 Holiday Shopping Contest** this coming December.

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Talk to us about news stories by calling 226-7924
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With President Obama declaring a “systemic failure” of our security system in the wake of the attempted Christmas bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner, familiar arguments are again being made about what can and should be done to reduce America’s vulnerabilities.

Several of these arguments are based on assumptions that guided the U.S. response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks -- and unfortunately, they are as unfounded now as they were then. The biggest whopper of all? The paternalistic assertion that the government can keep us all safe without our help.

1. Terrorism is the gravest threat facing the American people.

Americans are at far greater risk of being killed in accidents or by viruses than by acts of terrorism. In 2008, more than 37,300 Americans perished on the nation’s highways, according to government data. Even before H1N1, a similar number of people died each year from the seasonal flu.

Terrorism is a real and potentially consequential danger. But the greatest threat isn’t posed by the direct harm terrorists could inflict; it comes from what we do to ourselves when we are spooked. It is how we react -- or more precisely, how we overreact -- to the threat of terrorism that makes it an appealing tool for our adversaries.

By grounding commercial aviation and effectively closing our borders after the 2001 attacks, Washington accomplished something no foreign state could have hoped to achieve: a blockade on the economy of the world’s sole superpower. While we cannot expect to be completely successful at intercepting terrorist attacks, we must get a better handle on how we respond when they happen.

2. When it comes to preventing terrorism, the only real defense is a good offense.

The cornerstone of the Bush administration’s approach to dealing with the terrorist threat was to take the battle to the enemy. But offense has its limits. Going after terrorists abroad hardly means they won’t manage to strike us at home.

Just days before the attempted bombing of Northwest Airlines Flight 253, the United States collaborated with the Yemeni government on raids against al-Qaeda militants there. The group known as al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula is now claiming responsibility for having equipped and trained Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who allegedly tried to blow up the flight.

At the same time, an emphasis on offense has often come at the expense of investing in effective defensive measures, such as maintaining quality watch lists, sharing information about threats, safeguarding such



5 myths about keeping America safe from terrorism

BY STEPHEN FLYNN, WASHINGTON POST

critical assets as the nation’s food and energy supplies, and preparing for large-scale emergencies.

After authorities said Abdulmutallab had hidden explosives in his underwear, airline screeners held up flights to do stepped-up passenger pat-downs at boarding gates -- pat-downs that inevitably avoided passengers’ crotches and buttocks. This kind of quick fix only tends to fuel public cynicism about security efforts.

3. Getting better control over America’s borders is essential to making us safer.

The inspectors at our ports, border crossings and airports play only a bit part in stopping would-be attackers. This is because terrorist threats do not originate at our land borders with Mexico and Canada, nor along our 12,000 miles of coastline.

They originate at home as well as abroad, and they exploit global networks such as the transportation system that moved 500 million cargo containers through the world’s ports in 2008. Moreover, terrorists’ travel documents are often in perfect order. This was the case with Abdulmutallab, as well as with shoe-bomber Richard Reid in 2001.

Complaints about porous borders also sidestep the disturbing fact that the number of terrorism-related cases involving U.S. residents reached a new high in 2009.

4. Investing in new technology is key to better security.

Not necessarily. Placing too much reliance on sophisticated tools such as X-ray machines often leaves the people staffing our front lines consumed with monitoring and troubleshooting these systems.

We would do well to heed two lessons the U.S. military has learned from combating insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan: First, don’t do things in rote and predictable ways, and second, don’t alienate the people you are trying to protect. Too much of what is promoted as homeland security disregards these lessons.

5. Average citizens aren’t an effective bulwark against terrorist attacks.

Elite pundits and policymakers routinely dismiss the ability of ordinary people to respond effectively when they are in harm’s way. It’s ironic that this misconception has animated much of the government’s approach to homeland security since Sept. 11, 2001, given that the only successful counterterrorist action that day came from the passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 93.

These passengers didn’t have the help of federal air marshals. The Defense Department’s North American Aerospace Defense Command didn’t intercept the plane -- it didn’t even know the airliner had been hijacked.

This misconception is particularly reckless because it ends up sidelining the greatest asset we have for managing the terrorism threat: the average people who are best positioned to detect and respond to terrorist activities. We have only to look to the attempted Christmas Day attack to validate this truth. Once again it was the government that fell short, not ordinary people.

A concerned Nigerian father, not the CIA or the National Security Agency, came forward with crucial information. And the courageous actions of the Dutch film director Jasper Schuringa and other passengers and crew members aboard Flight 253 thwarted the attack. ●

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code 32963 have asked if it can be mailed to their homes. We will be happy to mail each issue of Vero Beach 32963 to you anywhere in Florida for a one-time payment of \$59.95 (which doesn’t even cover our postage and handling).

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BY THE ECONOMIST

WOMEN ARE TRANSFORMING THE WORKPLACE

At a time when the world is short of causes for celebration, here is a candidate: within the next few months women will cross the 50 percent threshold and become the majority of the American work force.

Women already make up the majority of university graduates in the OECD countries and the majority of professional workers in several rich countries, including the United States. Women run many of the world's great companies, from PepsiCo in America to Areva in France.

Women's economic empowerment is arguably the biggest social change of our times. Just a generation ago, women were largely confined to repetitive, menial jobs. They were routinely subjected to casual sexism and were expected to abandon their careers when they married and had children.

Today they are running some of the organizations that once treated them as second-class citizens. Millions of women have been given more control over their own lives. And millions of brains have been put to more productive use.

Societies that try to resist this trend -- most notably the Arab countries, but also Japan and some southern European countries -- will pay a heavy price in the form of wasted talent and frustrated citizens.

This revolution has been achieved with only a modicum of friction. Men have, by and large, welcomed women's invasion of the workplace. Yet even the most positive changes can be incomplete or unsatisfactory.

This particular advance comes with two stings. The first is that women are still under-represented at the top of companies. Only 2 percent of the bosses of America's largest companies and 5 percent of their peers in Britain are women. They are also paid significantly less than men on average.

The second is that juggling work and child-rearing is difficult. Middle-class couples routinely complain that they have too little time for their children. But the biggest losers are poor children -- particularly in places like America and Britain that have combined high levels of female participation in the labor force with a reluctance to spend public money on child care.

These two problems are closely related. Many women feel they have to choose between their children and their careers. Women who prosper in high-pressure companies during their 20s drop out in dramatic numbers in their 30s and then find it almost impossible to regain their earlier momentum. Less-skilled women are trapped in poorly paid jobs with hand-to-mouth child-care arrangements.

Motherhood, not sexism, is the issue: in America, childless women earn almost as much as men, but mothers earn significantly less. And those mothers' relative poverty also disadvantages their children.

Demand for female brains is helping to alleviate some of these problems. Even if some of the new theories about warm-hearted women making inherently superior workers are bunk, several trends favor the more educated sex, including the "war for talent" and the growing flexibility of the workplace.

Law firms, consultancies and banks are rethinking their "up or out" promotion systems because they are losing so many able women. More than 90 percent of companies in Germany and Sweden allow flexible working. And new technology is making it easier to redesign work in all sorts of family-friendly ways.

In America three out of four people thrown out of work since the "mancession" began have been male. And the shift towards women is likely to continue: by 2011 there will be 2.6 million more female than male university students in America.

All this argues, mostly, for letting the market do the work. That has not stopped calls for hefty state intervention of the Scandinavian sort. Norway has used threats of quotas to dramatic effect. Some 40 percent of the legislators there are women.

All the Scandinavian countries provide plenty of state-financed nurseries. They have the highest levels of female employment in the world and far fewer of the social problems that plague Britain and America. Surely, comes the argument, there is a way to speed up the revolution.

But if that means massive intervention, in the shape of affirmative-action programs and across-the-board benefits for parents of all sorts, the answer is no. To begin with, promoting people on the basis of their sex is illiberal and unfair, and stigmatizes beneficiaries.



But there are plenty of cheaper, subtler ways in which governments can make life easier for women. Welfare states were designed when most women stayed at home. They need to change the way they operate. German schools, for instance, close at midday. American schools shut down for two months in the summer.

These things can be changed without huge cost. Some popular American charter schools now offer longer school days and shorter summer vacations.

Barack Obama needs to measure up to his campaign rhetoric about "real family values."

Still, these nagging problems should not overshadow the dramatic progress that women have made in recent decades.

During the Second World War, when America's menfolk were off at the front, the government had to summon up the image of Rosie the Riveter, with her flexed muscle and "We Can Do It" slogan, to encourage women into the work force.

Today women are marching into the workplace in ever larger numbers and taking a sledgehammer to the remaining glass ceilings.

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YEMEN: A GROWING WORRY FOR THE WEST

Struggling to fend off many threats, Yemen's government has looked increasingly beleaguered. Yet over the past few weeks it has taken the initiative, scoring what amounts to a hat trick.

In concert with neighboring Saudi Arabia, Yemen's air force has hammered rebellious tribesmen in the north. Some reports claim that the leader of the uprising, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, was among those who have been killed.

Security forces have also raided al-Qaida targets in the south and center of the country, killing several commanders and arresting others, in their most sustained offensive yet against the jihadists.

That campaign parried a third dangerous challenge. Foreign donors have grumbled that their crucial support for the government has not been matched by action, even as evidence accumulates that Yemen's rugged fringes have become a secure base for jihadist terrorism.

Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Nigerian student who tried to down an American airliner with explosive underpants on Christmas Day, had been in Yemen since August. Al-Qaida's local affiliate claimed responsibility for his failed attack.

Yet in the context of Yemen's complex politics, all these apparent gains come with caveats. Despite the army's superior firepower and help from the far better armed Saudis, little headway appears to have been made on the ground in the north.

The Houthi rebels, an alliance of tribesmen who complain of state neglect and discrimination against the minority Zaydi Shiite sect, have pressed their claims in a bitter, five-year-long guerrilla war that has generated more than 175,000 refugees.

The involvement of Saudi Arabia, a regional Sunni power whose dominance Yemenis tend to resent, simply adds to their grievances. Some Yemeni commentators, meanwhile, worry that a mooted cease-fire, whose terms Houthi had apparently agreed on, could be postponed by his as-yet-unconfirmed demise.

Others in the region fear that the Saudi intervention may draw the Iranians indirectly into the fray; they have already been accused, so far without independent corroboration, of arming and financing the Houthis.

Bolder action against al-Qaida may, however, have produced more solid gains. The government claims that five separate raids, including air attacks on Dec. 17 against an alleged training camp in Abyan province and others on Dec. 22 and 24 that targeted jihadist conclaves in Shabwa province, have killed at least 60 fighters.

It says a further 29 are now in custody, including members of a suicide cell that had planned to hit the British embassy.

Several of the alleged al-Qaida people killed in the bombing raids belonged to the Awlaki tribe, so were kinsmen of Anwar al-Awlaki, a fugitive American-born Yemeni preacher who is accused of inspiring a killing spree by a Muslim American major in Texas in No-

vember.

These are big blows to al-Qaida, considering that Yemen itself has, by the government's own tally, suffered some 61 al-Qaida attacks since 1992.

Until recently, the state had shied from all-out conflict with the jihadists, adopting instead a carrot-and-stick approach that created such embarrassments as the suspiciously easy escape of 23 al-Qaida convicts from a maximum-security prison in 2006.

But early last year the group's Saudi branch, many of whose members had fled to safety in Yemen, formally accepted Yemeni leadership under a new name: al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

Since then it has launched numerous small-scale attacks against Yemeni security forces and has struck in Saudi Arabia too. And it appears to have secured tribal protection as well as some political backing from groups in southern Yemen which demand a repartition of the country, which was formed from two chunks in 1990.

Yet though the offensive against al-Qaida shows a new determination, it also carries risks. America has admitted to providing only intelligence and logistical support for the bombing raids. But local witnesses say they have also sighted American drone aircraft or cruise missiles.

So further fighting against al-Qaida could provoke a wider civil conflict, which in turn could undermine a regime that has rattled many of its own people by throwing in its lot with the West.



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In the aftermath of the Great Recession

By Robert J. Samuelson
Washington Post

One insistent question at the start of a new decade involves the lingering effects of the old: What scars will the Great Recession leave?

We are already seeing some. Americans are moving less than at any time since World War II, reports demographer William Frey of the Brookings Institution. People are tied to existing homes, can't get loans for new ones and won't move without job commitments, Frey says. Only 1.6 percent of Americans are now moving across state lines, half the rate of a decade ago.

With a grim job market, the young also seem more cautious. A new survey by Fidelity Investments found that a quarter of workers ages 22 to 33 want to stay with their present employer until retirement; in 2008, that was only 14 percent.

John Irons of the liberal Economic Policy Institute worries that many young Americans, lacking tuition funding, will delay or abandon attending college, lowering their long-term earning power.

So the Great Recession's nastiest scar could be an era of economic frustration, characterized by slower growth and contentious competition for scarce resources. Stunned by huge wealth losses in stocks and real estate, Americans save more and spend less. Businesses suffer from weak demand. Hiring remains sluggish.

Worse, the slowdown coincides with an aging population, which could compound the effect. In 2020, the projected number of Americans 55 and older will reach almost 100 million, 29 percent of the total population. That's up from 59 million, or 21 percent, in 2000.

"Younger people . . . tend to be more innovative, more willing to take risks, more willing to do things differently," Stanford University economist Paul Romer says in an interview for the book "From Poverty to Prosperity" by Arnold Kling and Nick Schulz.

As noted, today's turmoil could make even the young more risk-averse. Or older and middle-aged people could increasingly dominate corporate hierarchies and university research grants, as Romer worries. An aging society could become a stand-pat

society, protective of the status quo and resistant to change.

Against this glum prospect, the standard rebuttal evokes history. The U.S. economy is amazingly resilient, the argument goes. It has been a consistent job creator: 21 million in the 1970s, 18 million in the 1980s, 17 million in the 1990s, 12 million in the past decade through 2007. (Lower gains reflect slower labor-force growth, not less dynamism.)

A "can-do" culture -- combining intense ambition with a flexibility to adapt and an instinct for innovation -- ensures that the economy will ultimately rebound strongly. The harsh recession may have actually improved the long-term outlook by purging high-cost firms and forcing efficiencies. Productivity (output per hour worked) has risen 4 percent in the past year. Profits are already up 21 percent from their low; surviving firms will soon expand.

Which vision will prevail?

The answer may hinge on two things: trade and entrepreneurship. Most economists see stronger exports as a substitute for weaker consumer spending. Unfortunately, that depends heavily on economic growth and trade policies abroad. By contrast, entrepreneurship is a sleeper issue that depends on what Americans do.

If you doubt its importance, consider this: All net job creation from 1980 to 2005 came from firms that were five years old or less, according to a study by economists John Haltiwanger of the University of Maryland and Ron Jarmin and Javier Miranda of the Census Bureau.

In any one year, that may not be true; but over time, mature firms lose more jobs than they create. "It's not small firms but young firms that count," says economist Robert Litan of the Kauffman Foundation, which sponsored the study.

If Americans don't continue to create firms -- not just high-tech start-ups such as Facebook but construction companies, florists, restaurants, dry cleaners, engineering firms -- the economy may languish. Beginning a business is a risky, exhausting, chaotic process.

Every year, there are roughly 500,000 to 600,000 company "births" and almost as many "deaths." Half of new firms don't make it to year five, says Litan.

Some harbingers of growth look unpromising. In 2009, disbursements by "venture capital" firms -- in-

vestors in start-ups -- to first-time recipients hit an all-time low since statistics were begun in 1995. True, VCs support only a tiny fraction of new firms, mostly high-tech start-ups. But "angel investors" -- friends and family of entrepreneurs who support many more -- have also suffered huge losses in stocks and homes. They, too, have less to invest.

There's a warning here for the Obama administration: Complex regulations or high taxes may discourage start-ups and job creation. As for broader questions, the answers may remain murky for years.

Has the mix of economic trauma and aging made us prudent -- or merely fearful? Has economic resilience survived -- or given way to a stand-pat society?

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Ten predictions for the 2010 economy

BY MARK TRUMBULL, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Here's a gleaning of predictions from financial forecasters. They offer interesting and sometimes provocative views, and some of them will surely be wrong. With that "buyer beware" label attached, here's some financial food for thought:

1. The recovery will be stronger than the consensus expects. Michael Darda, chief economist at MKM Partners in Greenwich, Conn., is forecasting real growth in gross domestic product (GDP) to average about 4 percent for the six quarters that end in December of 2010, thanks in part to improved credit conditions. This also makes him an optimist on job creation. He says the US should start adding jobs early in the new year.

2. Consumer spending will grow about 2 percent. Asha Bangalore and other forecasters at the Northern Trust Co., say this isn't anything to write home about. "Consumer spending will continue to be constrained by sluggish labor market conditions, reduction in net worth, and tight credit conditions," they write. But it beats a decline in the arena that drives so much of economic growth.

3. Treasury bonds will perform well, but sell antiques. Economist Gary Shilling in Springfield, N.J., says the battered economy still faces deflationary pressures, because so much factory capacity is idle and so many people are out of work. He says reliable old Treasury bonds will do well as investors seek safety, as will

some dividend-paying stocks like electric utilities. His "sell" list includes tangible assets from commodities to art and antiques.

4. Treasury bonds won't perform so well. Many financial firms are predicting at least a modest rise in bond interest rates in 2010, as the recovery gains traction. A rise in rates tends to push down bond prices. The bear case for bonds: Governments will be issuing lots of new debts, while investors will be wary about rising rates and the rising risk of inflation.

5. Businesses will start investing ... a bit. Forecasters at IHS Global Insight say new factories aren't needed yet, in general. "But businesses are flush with cash, and we do expect increased spending on replacement investment to pull equipment purchases higher in 2010."

6. Commodity prices will move sideways. That's another opinion from IHS Global Insight, based on its view of 2.8 percent GDP growth for the world economy (and 2.2 percent for the US). Even with China revving up to nearly 10 percent GDP growth, the firm doesn't see another commodity boom getting under way just yet.

7. Central banks will remain in "accelerator" mode. Manoj Pradhan and fellow analysts at Morgan Stanley say the Federal Reserve and many central banks will focus for some time on continuing to provide monetary fuel for recovery from recession, such as low short-term interest rates. "We expect the BBB (bumpy, below-par, boring) recovery ... to keep the AAA (ample, abundant, augmenting) liquidity regime in place for a while," Prad-

han writes. But he adds that inflation risks will begin to resurface in both developed and developing nations.

8. A bear market in gold? Maybe not. Economist Ed Yardeni says that gold, often viewed as a hedge against inflation, tends to move in tandem with government debt levels. So if the economy recovers, will that bode well for tax receipts and poorly for gold? Mr. Yardeni, who runs a research firm in Great Neck, N.Y., says not to worry too much about a sudden return to fiscal health. An omnibus appropriations bill for 2010 is laden with earmarks for new spending, he notes.

9. The US will outpace Europe and Japan. This forecast, from Moody's Economy.com, is based on expectations that the US recovery will gradually gather self-sustaining momentum, clocking 5 percent annualized growth by late 2011 and then retreating back toward a more typical 3 percent pace by 2013. Japan, by contrast isn't seen getting its GDP growth above 2 percent for four years.

10. The rest of the US should take a page from Pennsylvania. Some 2 million more manufacturing jobs have disappeared during the recession, and may not be coming back. Pennsylvania is a state once rich in manufacturing jobs that has increasingly been flexible enough to add education service-sector jobs to offset its losses. "Labor market weakness will persist for longer than we would like, but adjusting to new economic realities will smooth the transition from recession to recovery," write John Silvia and his colleagues at Wells Fargo. ●

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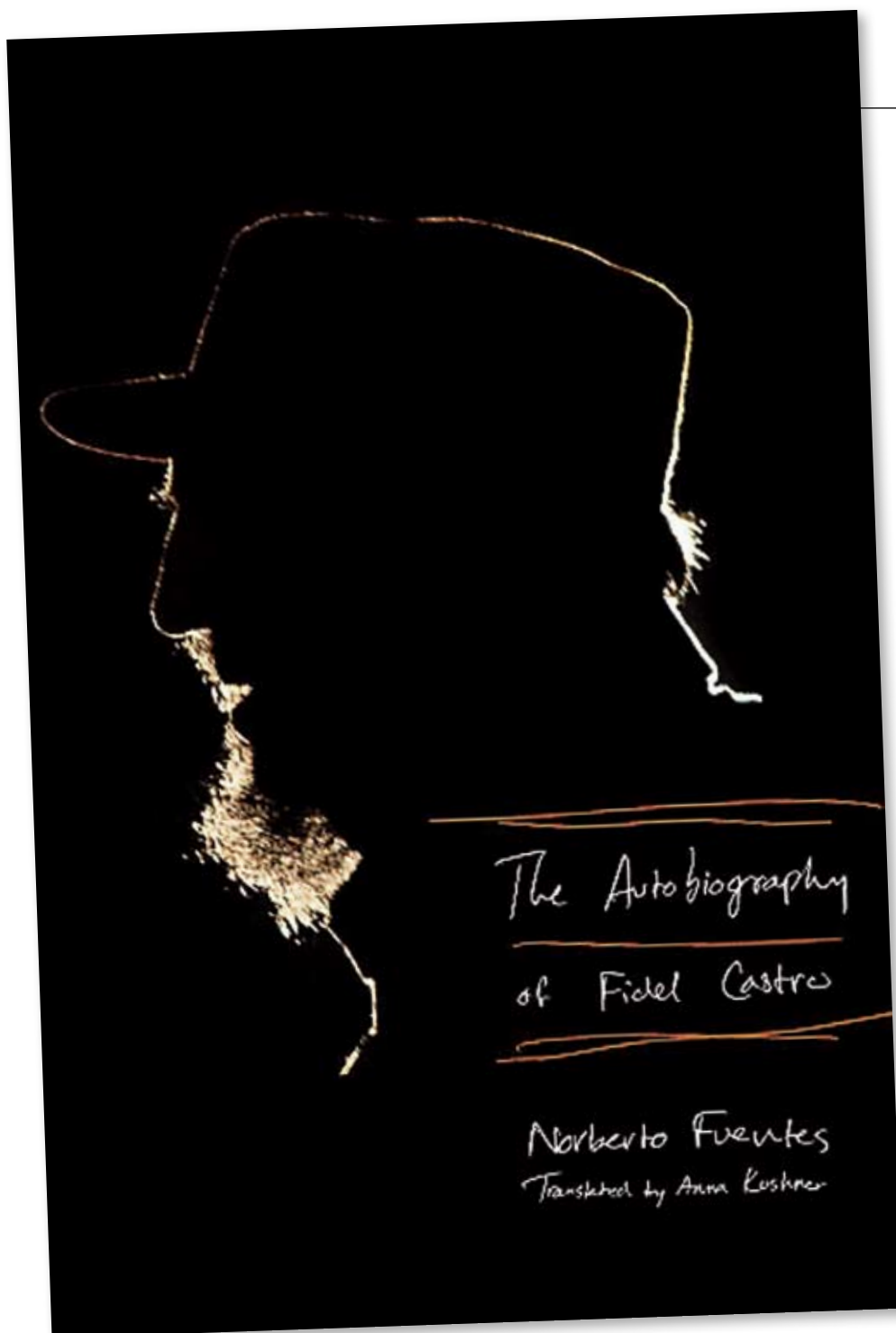
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got him as far as the late Pedro Alvarez Tabío, one of Castro's gatekeepers, who listened in earnest as the editor outlined the project.

Alvarez replied that he would present the offer to his boss, adding warily that other such proposals were afloat.

I was reminded of this when, on the first page of Norberto Fuentes's fictionalized Fidel autobiography, "Castro" writes that major publishing houses "have stubbornly pursued me for years. . . . I've been courting their offers equally, leading them on."

Consider us led on.

With this book, Fuentes has scooped heavyweight publishers and Castro himself, deftly mimicking the Cuban leader's voice, obsessions and outsize ego. His manias and philosophical passions are front and center. His matter-of-fact brutality and grandiose manipulations shine through.

Fuentes has captured what seem to me Fidel's private thoughts in 572 pages

(a mere half of the original Spanish edition).

Fuentes is either the best or the worst person to fictionalize Castro's life. He was a devoted Fidelista -- slavishly loyal would not be putting it too harshly -- who was privy to numerous private meetings and social engagements with Castro over the first 30 years of the regime.

Fuentes counted many in the government's highest ranks as his close companions. But the rapid conviction and execution of two high-level officials in 1989 caused Fuentes to turn coat, and, after a failed escape and prison time, he was allowed to go into exile -- that is to say, to go to Miami.

With such a background, Fuentes, also the author of a book on Ernest Heming-

way's years in Cuba, is trusted by few on either side of the straits. By writing this "autobiography," he has undoubtedly purged Castro from his system, and he can get on with his life. As for the reader, by Page 100 I felt I was no longer reading Norberto Fuentes but Fidel Castro himself.

"Castro" calls Che Guevara "a little preppy looking for adventure" with a fierce determination that "had nothing to do with authentic convictions, stoicism or will. It was asthma." He writes, "The island was too small for the two of us."

"Castro" describes his brother Raúl, now Cuba's president, as "insecure . . . hits below the belt . . . shadowy," yet writes that "he quickly embraced what was practical and didn't waste his time on cerebral nonsense."

Shortly after describing and rationalizing the death by firing squad of some 500 members of Fulgencio Batista's military -- executions that Raúl oversaw -- "Castro" writes, "I don't think he'll execute anyone else in the time he has left on this earth. . . . He's too old for that type of thing now."

Looking back on his meeting with Vice President Richard Nixon in Washington shortly after taking power, "Castro" thinks: "They don't know me. . . . They don't know what I want or what I'm going to do. From now on it will always be this way."

"Castro" dwells most on the Bay of Pigs attack, the missile crisis, the revolution and his favorite topic, himself. ("I hold myself in very high esteem.") About the Bay of Pigs invasion, "Castro" writes, "If Kennedy had authorized the second air strike, there would have been a straight out war," adding that "there's no doubt they would have wiped us out, but at such a high political cost that not even the United States would have been able to face it."

And when it dawned on him that Cuba was irrelevant to the resolution of the U.S.-Soviet missile standoff, the "comandante" angrily recalls: "Look at that battery of phones. All of them silent. Khrushchev hasn't called."

Castro's revolution was sui generis; nothing like it had ever happened before. Despite his dialectical approach to everything from inviting attractive women, the blonder the better, to assassinations ("I don't recall anyone ever turning down the invitation") to organizing the Communist Party, much of what's transpired since 1959 has been impromptu.

He's been winging it for more than half a century. Yet his Machiavellian philosophy, as laid out by Fuentes, has its own internal logic -- instructive, perhaps, for military and intelligence strategists.

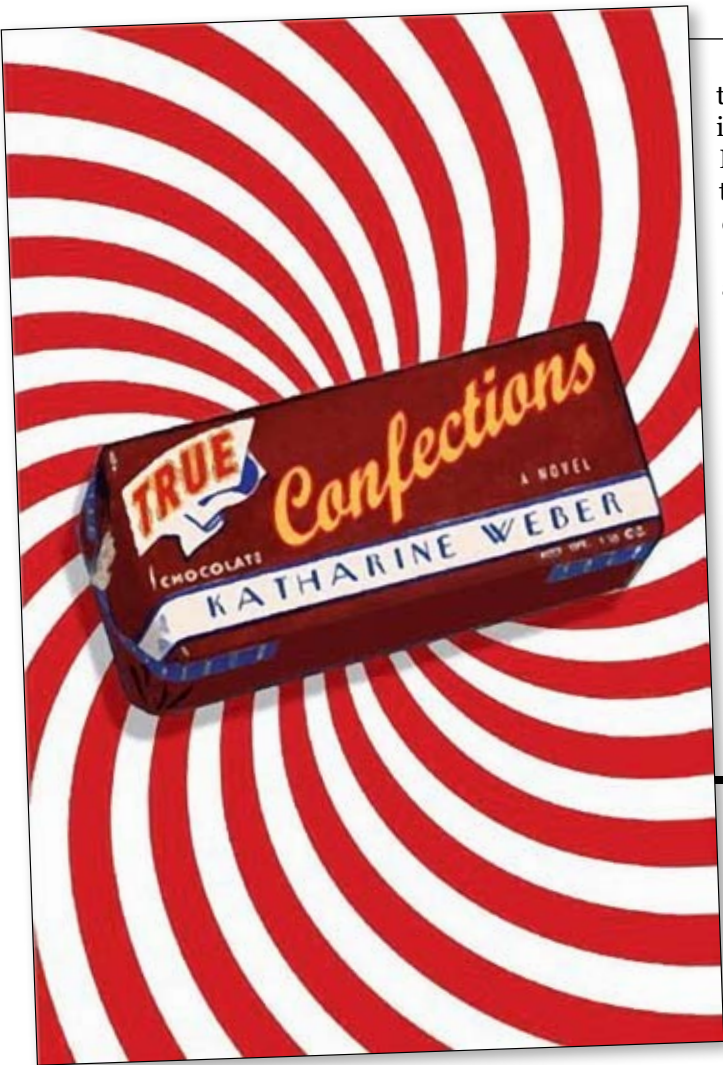
The book can be a slog, and it gets a little sloppy, but you never know if that's Fuentes, or Fuentes channeling Castro, or a question of translation. I vote for the channeling theory. Since Castro has never written his memoirs, Fuentes's version will have to do. Fidel couldn't have written it better. ●

The Autobiography of Fidel Castro
Norberto Fuentes, translated from the Spanish
by Anna Kushner, Norton, 572 pp. \$27.95.
Reviewed by Tom Miller
Washington Post

About 10 years ago, the top editor of a multinational publishing house asked if I could get him into Fidel Castro's office to propose that his company publish the comandante's memoirs. I

Campione & Campione

BOOK REVIEWS



tains red dye made from crushed South American insect carcasses; and that the pioneering Chicken Dinner bar, introduced in the 1920s, was advertised as wholesome. (It was actually regular candy, not chicken.)

Despite being giddy fun, “True Confections” also poses some sly, sophisticated postmodern questions. What do candy manufacturers and novelists have in common? According to Weber, more than you’d think. The candymaker, like the novelist, lives, breathes and dreams her creation.

The small candy factory, like the literary novelist, finds it hard to generate interest for quirky, original products in the world of tasteless, big-box dreck. A novel should give us “that unique blend of sweetness and pleasure and something else, a deep note of something rich and exotic and familiar” that a bite of good chocolate does. “True Confections” certainly delivers that delectability. ●

True Confections
by Katharine Weber,
Random House, 288 pp, \$22.
Reviewed by Lisa Zeidner
Washington Post



Zip’s Candies, established in 1924, is in trouble. After the death of its patriarch and several disastrous candy experiments -- including Bereavemints, which caused “severe graveside allergic reactions” and a slew of lawsuits -- the small factory may be forced to fold or get swallowed up by one of the candymaking giants.

Katharine Weber’s succulently inventive fifth novel, “True Confections,” traces the history of the candy company and its founders, the Ziplinsky family of Hungary and the Lower East Side. Narrator Alice Tannall Ziplinsky only married into the family but, much to the horror of her in-laws, winds up inheriting the lion’s share of the company.

After decades in psychoanalysis, saucy Alice is quite capable of dissecting the family’s neuroses. “In the interest of delineating every branch of this bonsai of a family tree,” she unearths many of the family’s closeted skeletons, including the founder’s involvement with the Jewish Mafia.

As she did in her previous novel, “Triangle,” about the infamous 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, Weber skillfully weaves fact and fiction. She creates not only three generations of a globe-trotting family history, but an entire line for Zip’s Candies.

Little Sammies, Tiger melts and Mumbo Jumbos -- named in tribute to “The Story of Little Black Sambo,” the book that taught its immigrant founder to read English -- cause no end of political-correctness problems for the company as it confronts the incendiary connotations of “white chocolate” and a furor about Third World slave children harvesting cocoa.

Weber blends her fictional world with the very real and equally bizarre history of American candy manufacture, including the fact that our food con-

The last thing Meli Lleshi ever dreamed of -- or wanted -- was to leave her home. An ethnic Albanian, the lively teen knows that generations ago her family lived elsewhere. But as far as she’s concerned, her lovely old town on the banks of the Drin River in Kosovo is the only home she could ever want.

Yet even as she carries on with her life -- going to school, giggling with best friend Zana, watching the storks return from Africa and the cherry trees blossom in the spring -- she can’t help being aware that things are changing around her. Her Serbian neighbors no longer shop in her parents’ store, and her little brother is becoming obsessed with the idea of armed rebellion.

Then, one day, she draws a picture of her teacher, giving him the nose of a pelican. It seems to Meli that the trouble starts at that moment -- and then never ends.

Her brother temporarily disappears and her family is pulled deep into a knot of fear. Soon, they leave their home, first for exile in the countryside and then -- when it becomes apparent that they are not safe even there -- they must finally leave the country.

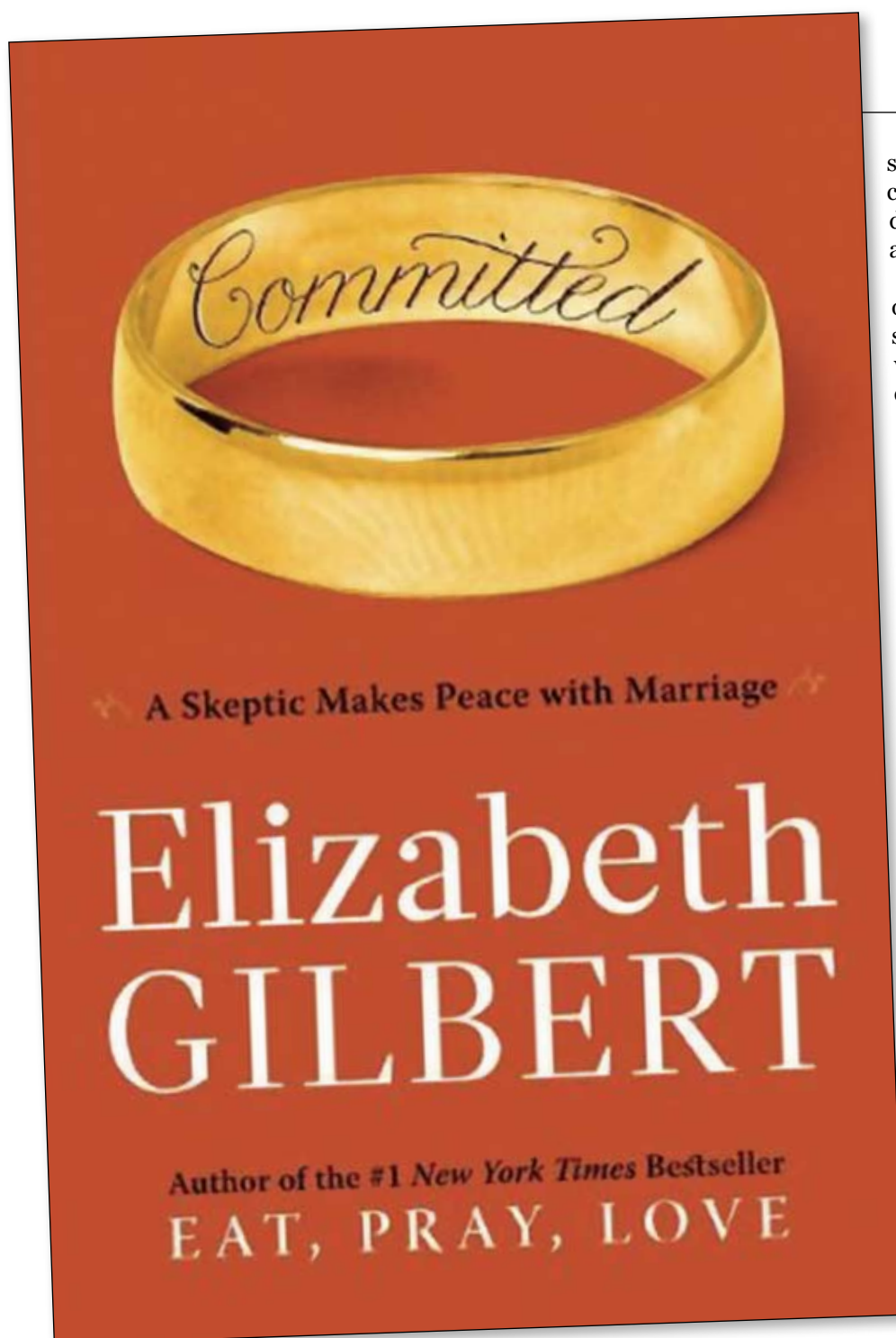
Katherine Pater-

son (author of “Bridge to Terabithia”) says she was inspired to write *The Day of the Pelican* when she got to know a family of Albanian refugees living in Vermont. It is in Vermont that the fictional Lleshis land as well, although en route Meli must endure hunger, loss, fear, and a multitude of adult-sized woes.

“The Day of the Pelican” does double duty as both a gripping read and a lesson in compassion and global conflict. In her quiet way, Meli is a hero, and teen readers safe from conflict themselves may marvel at her humanity. ●

The Day of the Pelican by Katherine Paterson,
Clarion Books, 144 pp., \$16. Ages 9 and up
Reviewed by Marjorie Kehe
Christian Science Monitor





sequel but because the success of "Eat, Pray, Love" drags on the new book like a lead ball and chain.

No one is more aware of that than Gilbert herself. She opens this book with a note to the reader, essentially addressing the difficulty of having to follow up the hugely popular story of a spiritual journey to heal a broken heart that has been translated into 30 languages and is being made into a feature film starring Julia Roberts. Its bestseller ranking is measured in years, not weeks.

Oh, the horror of getting a two-book deal from a publisher, only to have the first unexpectedly tap a profound zeitgeist of millions of (mainly female) readers!

Facetiousness aside, hers is a legitimate quandary for any artist (enviable though it may be to the many of us still on the obscure end of things). From beneath the amiable tone of Gilbert's introduction, a note of anxiety rings:

"It has been a bit of a perplexity for me to figure out how, after that phenomenon, I would ever write unself-consciously again.

Not to act all falsely nostalgic for literary obscurity, but in the past I had always written my books in the belief that very few people would ever read them. For the most part, of course, that knowledge had always been depressing.

"In one critical way, though, it was comforting: If I humiliated myself too atrociously, at least there wouldn't be many witnesses. Either way, the question was now academic: I suddenly had millions of readers awaiting my next project. How in the world does one go about writing a book that will satisfy millions?"

Her solution is not to. "Ultimately I discovered that the only way I could write

again at all was to vastly limit -- at least in my own imagination -- the number of people I was writing for," she also explains in her readers' note, going on to say that a mere 25 female friends and family constitute that presumably friendly audience.

What's odd is that "Eat, Pray, Love" -- the story of the journeys to Italy, India and Indonesia she takes after an icky divorce and the healing she finds -- immediately strikes a more girlfriend-y chord than this rather emotionally distant work ostensibly written to and about those closest to her.

The setup for "Committed" is that two marriage-shy people are forced to put aside their fears of tying the knot if they want to stay together. Felipe, the Brazilian-born gem seller Gilbert meets at the end of "Eat, Pray, Love," has settled with her into a comfortable relationship and resettled in America. That is, until Homeland Security intervenes with the news that Felipe's too-frequent visits stateside are no longer allowed.

If they want to have a life together on American soil, they have to be husband and wife. Gilbert knows that while she enjoys travel, she doesn't want to restart life as an expatriate, and since both of them are veterans of divorce and heartache, *voilà!* We have the substantial conflict that kicks the story into motion.

While the two float around parts of Asia waiting for months for Felipe's paperwork to be processed and approved, Gilbert contemplates the condition of Western marriage, its history, its inherent problems, its economic and sociologic implications, and finally its considerations for the individual. You already know from the subtitle that she makes peace with it, so it's no spoiler to say that in the end the two trade vows. Add in colorful anecdotes about her experiences with locals in the various countries she and Felipe visit, and that's pretty much it.

Along the way, Gilbert neatly and engagingly condenses the high points on a complex array of research on the topic of marriage. While at times her insights into it all appear a bit rote, her story makes breezily accessible much interesting, compelling research that otherwise requires committing to fascinating but denser reading, like Harvard historian Nancy Cott's "Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation" or anthropologist Helen Fisher's "Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Mating, Marriage, and Why We Stray."

Gilbert -- who, before her mega hit, was a well-respected, guy's gal kind of journalist known for penning terrific features in such mags as GQ and Rolling Stone -- seems to have reverted to a comfortable journalistic distance in this book.

The problem is that this is a first-person account and the subject is love, and her life. She tells readers that she loves Felipe, but nowhere does she show a truly unique, poignant moment. She talks of her anguish about marriage, but it is never proved in the actions between them. Gilbert is far too skilled not to be entertaining, but forgive a reader thirsting for more emotion. Marriage is a mystery, the saying goes, and so it remains. ●

Committed
by Elizabeth Gilbert, Viking, 286 pp., \$26.95.
Reviewed by Samantha Dunn
Los Angeles Times

It's impossible to talk about Elizabeth Gilbert's new memoir without first talking about her previous one, "Eat, Pray, Love" -- not because "Committed: A Skeptic Makes Peace With Marriage" is in any literal sense a





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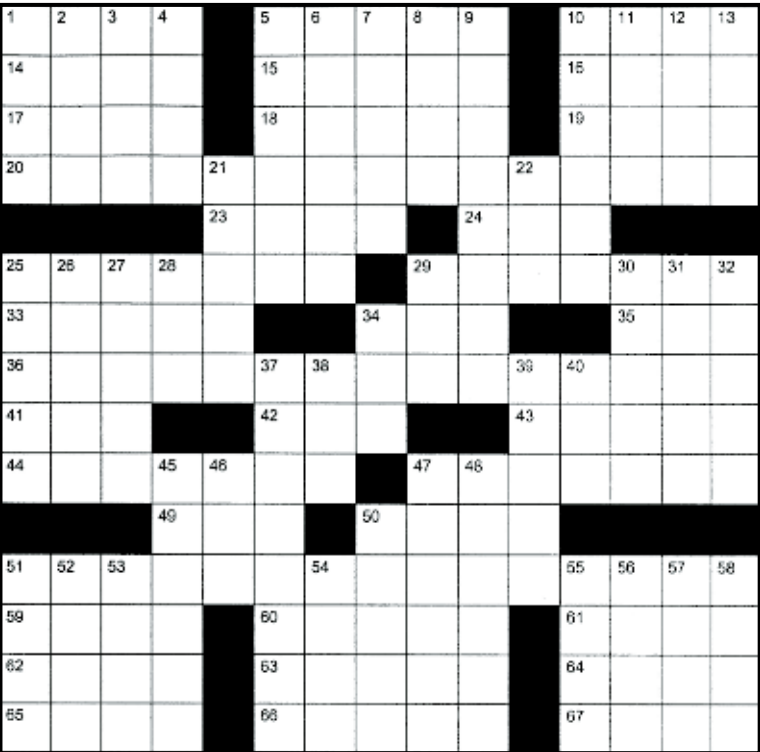
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Crossword

SOLUTIONS TO LAST ISSUE ON PAGE 75

ON YOUR FEET



The Christian Science Monitor | By John Forte | Edited by Charles Preston

ACROSS

- 1 Home of Ruth
5 Woody Allen film
10 Strikebreaker
14 Invisible emanation
15 Summer TV fare
16 Overlay
17 Belgian river
18 Kind of bracelet
19 Mimicked
20 Leaders of movements
23 Notion: Fr.
24 Fr. holy woman
25 Certain fishing lure
29 Missionary in India
33 Eagle's high rise
34 Hasten
35 Abyssinian vizier
36 Showy catches
41 Play part
42 Branch
43 Appliance button
44 Perpendicularly
47 "___ of the Lost Ark"
49 Nothing
50 Calif. lake
51 Maintain a position
59 English anthem composer

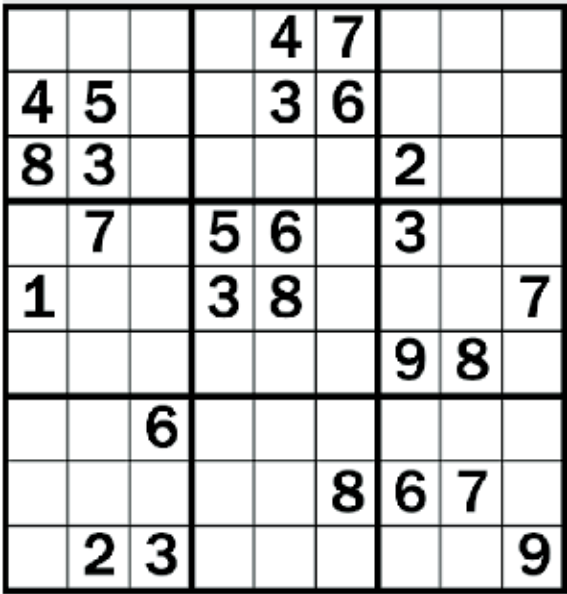
- 60 Haste makes it
61 Mast
62 Natalie's sibling
63 Organic compound
64 Indefinite number
65 Raced
66 Pride sounds
67 Once more

DOWN

- 1 Home run leader Willie
2 Expel
3 Region
4 Farm building
5 Shopping passage
6 PBS newsmen
7 Sultan's decree
8 Street feature
9 Caught in a net
10 Not as fat
11 Ann or Cod
12 State
13 Chambermaid's concerns
21 Had a banquet
22 See 21 Down
25 Adventure stories
26 Canary's need
27 Furious

- 28 Author Anais
29 Can material
30 Delete
31 One who declares
32 Second bananas, for short
34 Radio operator
37 Not as ruddy
38 Essay
39 Previous
40 Guided
45 Set of nine
46 Disencumber
47 List
48 Enrages
50 Diplomat Perle
51 Mineo and Bando
52 Snare
53 Actress Bancroft
54 Nose: comb. form
55 Greek mountain
56 Second word of fairy tale
57 Reputation
58 Sketched

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1

Subject of an essay test

4

He's a pig

8

Child's car-seat features

14

Atoll part

19

Donald's intro?

20

Like some chatter

21

___ Nevada

22

Pablo Neruda's land

23

Make it

26

Run for it

27

Tech support, e.g.

28

Line score in a football shutout

29

Beginning, to a conductor

30

Number of W's in Wagner

31

Hold it

35

Watch it

39

Sunrise *dirección*

40

Genesis place

42

Versailles verb

43

Take it off

47

Uncut

48

Get off it

53

Sorceress on Aeaea

54

Forget it

57

Wave ___

58

Stunt guy

59

Christmas-song verb

60

Cote sounds

63

Red and juicy

64

Sleep on it

70

Fashion guy who wed Gene Tierney

71

Dog with Peter Lorre's voice

72

Cold, as *agua*

73

Sit on it

81

Zest rival

82

Clancy hero

83

Haberdashery selections

84

"Chewy caramels in milk chocolate" brand
- 86

Smitten
- 89

Skip it
- 92

Detector activator
- 93

Lose it
- 96

Space
- 97

Get it on
- 98

Crowd sound
- 99

Contrail source, once
- 100

"So ___ say"
- 103

Beat it
- 108

Go at it
- 114

Wander
- 115

Reason for face painting
- 117

Boris's "bride" of 1935
- 118

Genesis place
- 119

Go for it
- 121

Now you've done it!
- 125

Processor giant
- 126

Pack animals?
- 127

Dick Tracy's sweetheart
- 128

Shade tree
- 129

"The Politics of Ecstasy" author
- 130

How some scripts are written
- 131

Rhapsodic works
- 132

___ sauce

DOWN

1

Insurance city

2

Was furious

3

Bane of uncooked meat

4

Sotheby's action

5

Loathsome

6

Nearly

7

Calm state

8

Hiking heading: abbr.

9

"Angela's Ashes" sequel

10

Take five

11

Alice, to Ralph, at times

12

Ezekiel, e.g.

13

Part of S.D.

14

America's first regulatory agcy.

15

Blacksmith, at times

16

Flushed with anger

17

Nicholas Gage book that became a Kate Nelligan film

18

Succinct

24

Photo ___

25

Palais resident

32

Surrender

33

"The Jeffersons" theme, "Movin' ___"

34

Role for Myrna

36

Ordinal ending

37

Brit. Broadcasting Corp., familiarly (with "the")

38

TV oldie about two agents

41

Come down

43

Hard-to-hit hurler

44

Roman historian

45

Twist-open snack?

46

Rights grp.

47

Motel restrictees

49

___ tea

50

Theater honor

51

Employer of Serpico and Sipowicz

52

Wide shoe size

54

"I haven't a thing ___!"

55

Needing a feeding

56

Overly

59

Game of chukkers

61

La joie d'___ (the joy of giving)

62

Bourbon, for one

65

Deprive (of)

66

They have pressing concerns

67

Excellent, in hip-hop slang

68

Some canned fruit drinks

69

Satisfy a craving

73

"30 Rock" first name

74

Soldier's shout

75

Wellsian race

76

"Narrator" of Harry Chapin's "Cat's in the Cradle"

77

Commodity

78

Utah city

79

Old newspaper section

80

Czech or Serb

81

Slight decrease

85

Ring refrain

87

Quite

88

Space chimp of 1961

90

Slugger Sammy

91

Barflies

92

A giant of a Giant

94

String player?

95

Samuel Butler's utopia

100

Have a word with

101

Showed disapproval

102

Go by

103

Paper ___

104

"Stormy Weather" singer

105

Celebrated Argentine

106

Passover meal

107

Sends

109

Jackie Kennedy, ___

110

Dispenser candy

111

Cutting tools

112

Yo-Yo's thing

113

Foe

116

Abbr. on a letter

120

Tarzan portrayer Ron

121

___-faced

122

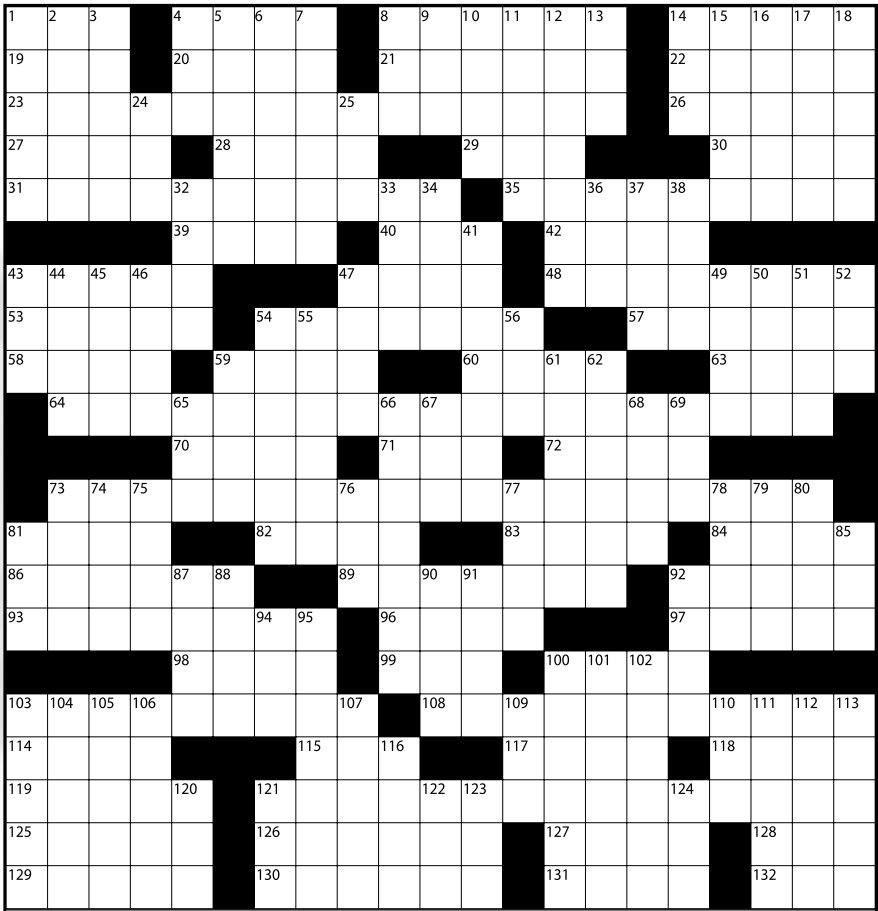
Itsy-bitsy

123

Abbr. on a keypad

124

Abbr. on a ship



WHAT IT IS
By Merl Reagle

Puzzle by telegraph.co.uk

	1	7	4	2		6	8	
					8			
6					9		3	
5						8		
		4				9		
		9						1
	8		6		3			2
			9					
	9	1		8	2		5	

★★★★★

Row →

Three-by-three square →

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

Column ↓

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Remembrance of Things Past By Jay McNamara

Whenever I drive past the 7-Eleven on A1A just north of Vero Beach, I enjoy a Proustian moment, a trip back in time to an experience I had there many years ago.

Marcel Proust, one of the gods in the French pantheon, along with Napoleon, Roman Polanski and Jerry Lewis, wrote about being brought back in time through his memory of a simple madeleine, that small, sweet French cake which he ate as a child. All of us have these memory jogs or jolts which can be generated by stimuli to our various senses.

It could be a sight, sound or smell that evokes experiences from long ago. I have several of these sensory signals including my 7-Eleven one, derived from an incident which occurred in the winter of 1980. It stemmed from the famous Olympic hockey game between the U.S. and the Russian team.

Earlier that year, I had taken my son to an exhibition game between the two teams at Madison Square Garden in New York City. The older, experienced Russian team toyed with the American kids, winning ten to nothing as I remember. The game could have been stopped before the finish out of mercy. No one before, and especially after the game would have given the U.S. any chance against the Russian juggernaut.

Later that winter as I drove in my rental car from Orlando Airport to the barrier island, I searched the radio dial looking for something of interest to listen to, maybe an oldies station. To my surprise, I picked up the broadcast of that historic game, which was played in the afternoon in Lake Placid, the Olympic site. Even more surprising, the American boys were making a game of it. I became glued to the broadcast.

By the time I reached A1A, the game was in its final period. The reception wasn't the greatest, so I turned into the 7-Eleven parking lot to listen to the remainder of the game. Everyone knows the outcome, the "Miracle on Ice." I was so excited that I raced from the car into the store. There was a woman at the checkout. I yelled at her "We just beat the Russians, we just beat the Russians!"

She was non-plussed, most likely wondering what this crazy man was talking about. Just then, from the back of the store came a voice from an unseen man who said, "I'll be damned, I didn't even know we wuz at war."

Back in the car, I smiled as I contemplated the disconnect between myself and the man. He was looking at the big picture and I a narrow one. It gave me new insight into perspective. And, a great Proustian moment that lives on to this day.