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FT Weekend Magazine

THE BATTLE TO CONTROL THE INTERNET

By Madhumita Murgia
and Anna Gross



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Cover illustration by Alexander Glandien



HANNAH STARKEY

'A dog walk through nature is a very reassuring thing to do'

Photographer Hannah Starkey with Digby, p26



'If you block pain, you block joy and the capacity to experience all feelings'

Psychotherapist Julia Samuel, p32



'It was one of the finest risottos I'd ever made; alone, I gave it my full attention'

Fuchsia Dunlop's bunker food, p36

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SIMON KUPER

OPENING SHOT

Health workers replace soldiers as our heroes



Every evening at eight, my family and I stand on our balcony and join the applause for French medical workers. The clapping sounds tinny: much of Paris is self-isolating in country homes, so the city has emptied out.

The applause is the newest global ritual, spreading from Italian balconies to Brazilian favelas. And it echoes an ancient ritual: the military parade, when people lined roads to cheer their victorious soldiers. More broadly, the cult of the health worker is replacing the cult of the soldier. This switch had long been brewing and will probably outlast the pandemic. In the long term, health services in many countries may get more of the funds of which they have been deprived for years. Medics could become a privileged caste.

The cult of the soldier goes back at least to Achilles. Nations in the 20th century named streets after soldiers and spent fortunes on their forces: in both world wars, British defence spending peaked at nearly half of gross domestic product. Fallen soldiers were likened to crucified Christs. Some survivors parlayed their status as defenders of the nation into political power. From 1940 to 1970, France was mostly ruled by Marshal Pétain and General de Gaulle. The ancillary cult of the nurse cast her in a supporting role, tending to the male warrior.

But the cult of the soldier has faded in recent decades. British defence spending was surpassed by funding for health in about 1990. Worldwide, health spending has soared since and today averages 9 per cent of GDP in developed countries.

Now soldiers are being automated away. The British army is shrinking to its smallest size since the Napoleonic wars. Even Americans have cooled on warriors. Donald Trump sensed this quicker than others. During his 2016 presidential campaign, he attacked the family of the slain soldier Humayun Khan and disparaged the war hero John McCain for having been captured.

Defence probably remains the most popular function of the state, but even before the coronavirus pandemic it was being redefined to mean defence against illness. That befits an era of ageing populations, when healthcare is unprecedentedly efficacious and wars between states have almost disappeared. The three most trusted professions in Britain last November were nurses, doctors and dentists, according to a survey by Ipsos Mori. Politicians ranked bottom.

The pandemic has turbocharged the cult of the medic. Now the Christ who dies for our sins is the health worker. Italian newspapers lead with photographs of fallen medics. The state's main purpose has become providing healthcare workers with equipment: British factories that were once charged with making bombers are now making ventilators. Meanwhile, national militaries are being recast as auxiliary health services.

Medics have acquired the prestige to change a country's behaviour. Everywhere, they tell us

to stay home. In Iran, male and female doctors posted videos of themselves dancing together, calculating that the religious police would have to suck it up.

Health researchers are also emerging from obscurity. In late February, when Europe was still sleeping, I visited the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, an unremarkable building in Bloomsbury. Somebody pointed out two older academics who worked on trachoma and said: "Because of them, thousands of people around the world are not blind." Hardly anybody out-

'A survey in November revealed that the three most trusted professions in Britain were nurses, doctors and dentists'

side the building knew their names. Now health researchers have become heroes. Nations hang on their words. Leaders borrow their prestige, posing with them at press conferences and casting themselves as commanders-in-chief of health services. The trials of a vaccine against coronavirus will be the most watched in medical history. There aren't many anti-vaxxers in a pandemic.

This crisis will probably last at least two years, and the cult of the health worker much longer. Look at how a previous global threat with horror-movie qualities, the attacks of September 11 2001, pushed states to create enormous permanent security establishments with unprecedented spying powers. Then compare the numbers. About 135 people in Britain have been killed by terrorists since 2001; more than 7,000 British soldiers have died in conflict since 1945; but 20,000 British deaths from the coronavirus would be the "best-case scenario", says Sir Patrick Vallance, the UK government's chief scientific adviser. Political issues get prioritised partly for their importance but more so for their emotional salience to voters. The coronavirus scores on both counts.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development projects that health spending will keep rising long term. Expect states to raise salaries and hire medical mercenaries from poorer countries, increasingly in the form of teledoctors. There will also be more ancillary healthcare jobs, such as neighbourhood walk leader or geriatric playground monitor, and reserve guards of nurses and paramedics. Health services might even grow bloated and over-resourced, like the American military. Anyone arguing for spending cuts will be met with the retort, "Remember the coronavirus."

Some medics will parlay their status as defenders of the nation into political power. (Already, the European Commission is led by Ursula von der Leyen, a former doctor with a masters in public health.) As cults go, it's not a bad one. **FT**

.....
simon.kuper@ft.com @KuperSimon



INVENTORY MARTIN COMPSTON, ACTOR

Martin Compston, 35, is known for his portrayal of detective sergeant Steve Arnott in the BBC series *Line of Duty*. He made his first film appearance in 2002, in Ken Loach's *Sweet Sixteen*. Recent appearances include roles in Fox Searchlight's *The Aftermath*, Alibi TV's *Traces*, and the 2018 film *Mary Queen of Scots*.

What was your childhood or earliest ambition?

Like every boy from the west coast of Scotland: to be a footballer.

Private school or state school?

University or straight into work? St Columba's High School. My mum made sure I had high grades so I had something to fall back on if football didn't work out. I filmed *Sweet Sixteen* - I saw it was happening and went along to four or five auditions - and then signed for Greenock Morton FC. I realised pretty quickly that in football terms I was never going to have the career I wanted, and that in acting terms there was something I could pursue.

Who was or still is your mentor?

I've been very good at taking on advice but I don't think there's been a mentor. I've always been pretty strong-minded. When I was younger, I took my mum's advice very seriously.

How physically fit are you?

Pretty fit. Though not compared with when I was 17 - I'm not on those levels. Going from being a professional footballer, when you're super-fit, you're always judging yourself against what you were.

Ambition or talent: which matters more to success?

If you've got talent and a work ethic, that's a lethal combination.

How politically committed are you?

I've been politically active my whole life. I was very vocal, particularly about Scottish independence. We were on the periphery of Scottish politics but now we're at a point that it's in our daily conversation, so I feel I can step back.

What would you like to own that you don't currently possess?

At traffic lights in Vegas, this guy pulled up on this mad trike - he looked so cool. I've been saying since that I'm getting one but I've not got the nerve.

What is your biggest extravagance?

My pool table. It's a wee bit over the top but it looks pretty cool.

In what place are you happiest?

Wherever my family is. I'm lucky to have two homes - in Las Vegas, where my wife's from, and also in Greenock. Much of my work is in the UK, so a lot of the time I'm at home in Scotland.

What ambitions do you still have?

There's a part I feel I was born to play and it's an incredible story: I can't believe it's not yet been told. The dream would be to make that come alive. I won't say what - I don't want to jinx it. Until it's out there, it's not real.

What drives you on?

Fear's a very underrated tool.

What is the greatest achievement of your life so far?

There are obvious ones in my personal life but I've tried to keep that private. I once ran a marathon without any training.

What do you find most irritating in other people?

People just expecting stuff to be done for them drives me up the wall.

If your 20-year-old self could see you now, what would he think?

I think he'd think we'd done all right.

Which object that you've lost do you wish you still had?

My wife got me a bracelet with coordinates of my family home in Greenock on it - a wee piece of home I could always take with me. I went to Miami Beach, ended up having a bit of a party - and lost my watch and the bracelet.

What is the greatest challenge of our time?

It would be very easy to batten down the hatches, look after your own, and eff everybody else. But without being too conspiracy-minded, I think that's what the powers that be want: that we turn inwards.

The challenge is to keep people open-minded and caring.

Do you believe in an afterlife?

I wouldn't say I do. People stop living in the moment if they're thinking about what comes next.

If you had to rate your satisfaction with your life so far, out of 10, what would you score?

It swings wildly. Nine today but it could change tomorrow. **TV**

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Interview by Hester Lacey. Martin Compston stars in "The Nest", which continues on Sunday on BBC One and is available to catch up on the BBC iPlayer.

'I once ran a marathon without any training'



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NB. This is a visual depiction of the C1 Moonglow – it will appear entirely white in daytime light and glow green after dark.

TECH WORLD NOTES FROM A DIGITAL BUNKER

BY TIM BRADSHAW IN LONDON



ILLUSTRATION BY PÂTÉ

My tech predictions for the year ahead

Only a couple of weeks into a coronavirus-enforced quarantine, it is hard to imagine what the world will look like in a year's time. But a pessimist is never disappointed, so here are some very early predictions of the situation this technology writer might be reporting on a year from now.

It's early 2020: our tech-assisted lockdown starts well. There has never been a better time in history to be self-isolating, we say - all those videos of people singing from balconies, the FaceTime "quarantinis" offering a virtual cocktail hour, the catch-ups on Zoom and Houseparty with old friends near and far.

In the early weeks, I "meet" more of my London neighbours than in several years living here -

even if the bonding all happens via WhatsApp. Countries close their borders and travel is impossible, yet somehow the world feels more connected than ever.

App developers rise to the challenge. The crisis only boosts the internet's spirit of chaotic creativity - from new ways for remote workers to keep in touch, to online calculators for measuring toilet-roll usage, to Slack-based book groups.

But before long the internet starts to get overwhelmed. Too many kids playing *Fortnite*, too much Houseparty. At some point in 2020, Facebook, YouTube and Netflix agree to throttle their streams to preserve the bandwidth needed for remote working and home schooling. It soon becomes clear that it isn't enough.

And so the government has to rule on what online services should be deemed "essential". Zoom, Google Hangouts and FaceTime make the cut; media that don't have to be consumed live, like

movies and music, don't. "Stream shaming" becomes a popular pastime: flatmates and neighbours calling out those they suspect of jamming up the local broadband connection or using VPNs to evade bandwidth rationing.

There are other side effects too. Millennials discover TV schedules. Teenagers acquire their parents' habits of squabbling to get on the landline. iPod prices shoot up on eBay, though many have been stuck with someone else's pre-downloaded music collection for months on end. The hipsters who were sneered at for fetishising vinyl records and ancient PlayStations have, it turns out, the last laugh.

Text messaging, of course, still flows freely. WhatsApp becomes so essential that some countries try to nationalise it. Chat groups are created to assist self-isolating neighbours. People run errands for others they have never met.

But self-moderating WhatsApp networks and Telegram channels

can be haphazard places. Being a WhatsApp group administrator is harder than it sounds. Nobody remembers which group is for what - except the one dedicated to sharing pet photos.

Would civilisation have survived without an internet full of kittens? When you might face the prospect of the army being sent out to accompany online delivery trucks, a 24/7 Zoom stream of a particularly adorable golden retriever is one of the few things that can help preserve a semblance of normality.

By mid-2021, it is a year since Hollywood production began to be halted. In the absence of any scripted shows, all TV is reality TV and reruns of reruns. As well as the aforementioned dogs, the most popular broadcasters on Zoom and Twitch include baking

'Millennials discover TV schedules, teens fight over the landline, iPod prices shoot up on eBay'

shows, children's entertainers, yoga classes, marriage counsellors and lessons in self-hairdressing. With most major sports leagues shut down, virtual horse racing somehow still draws a crowd, even though everyone knows it is fixed.

Throttled streams. Crashing ecommerce sites. Essentials-only shipments. The strain that even the largest online services experience early in the coronavirus outbreak also reminds us just how valuable a role the offline world still plays - the radio broadcasts, the local grocers and the independent services that were too easy to overlook when going online was merely a convenience, not a matter of life and death.

We will not survive this crisis without Big Tech but we will never make a full recovery without nourishing our high streets, our neighbourhood restaurants and our corner shops. When the world finally goes back outside, we will have placed enough Amazon orders to last us a lifetime. **FT**

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Tim Bradshaw is the FT's global technology correspondent

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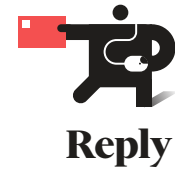
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ROBERT SHRIMSLEY THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION



Honestly, who'd be a burglar now?

It's the burglars I feel sorry for. Many of them face being wiped out by this crisis. With everyone penned inside, there simply aren't the opportunities there were before the virus struck.

Many face having to retrain as online fraudsters. Not all have the technical skills necessary to be a really good scammer, but at least they can work from home. I've heard a number of ministers being interviewed and none has suggested that burglars are exempt from the need for social distancing.

I suppose some might consider branching out into mugging - but that can be pretty risky if the nation is in a mood to put troops on the streets. Those who are still tempted to try their luck at housebreaking must remember to wash their hands after touching stolen property.

Times were already getting harder for burglars. All those online doorbell camera kits like Ring, that allow you to see and speak to potential intruders on your phone while you are on the beach, haven't helped. (Although, in truth, I'm a little sceptical about this. Your savvy burglar may wonder why they can hear seagulls when you are claiming to be unable to answer the door as you are in the toilet. From wetrooms to jacuzzis to Japanese loos, the modern bathroom has enjoyed some exciting innovations, but very few come with seagulls.)

Anyway, things are tough for housebreakers. As self-employed operators, they are not yet covered by any of the government's rescue schemes and there must be some doubt as to whether even a new package will be sufficiently extensive to help career criminals.

The plight of burglars occurred to me as I reflected that we all need to think about those less fortunate than ourselves in this crisis. Those of us able to carry on working from home and whose house is not too



ILLUSTRATION BY LUCAS VARELA

cramped are the lucky ones. We all need to remember those without our advantages, but I admit there are possibly more deserving cases. Then again, if everyone goes for the more obvious recipients of sympathy, someone has to think of the outliers.

Perhaps there are some virtual burglary games they can use to keep their hands in for the big score once restrictions are eased. The internet has, after all, been the one saving grace of the crisis. Which brings me neatly to the reflection that we are at least blessed by a connectivity that would have been unimaginable 30 years ago.

The idea of this period without the internet does not bear thinking about. My sister (who is self-isolating), my mother and I arranged a three-way evening call over dinner last week, although to be fair it was not a total success. We spent most of the conversation explaining how Google Hangouts work and urging my mother not to keep pressing the screen.

It can be disheartening. A good friend in lockdown in the US showed me a kitchen freezer the size of my spare room. But we are all going to talk much more to our friends and just perhaps come to appreciate seeing them in real time once we are sprung

from our homes. In the meantime, however, we are all grateful for Skype, Hangouts, FaceTime, Zoom and all the other ways of connecting. As we get into the teeth of lockdown, these conversations may be one of the few things that stop us turning into Jack Nicholson sitting at a keyboard and typing "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

Actually, I've assured my wife that I won't be hacking into the bathroom door with an axe. For one thing, she'd make me fix it - and for another, the seagulls would get out.

There are other small joys. Watching the little green truck move imperceptibly across the Ocado waiting page is almost like a dose of mindfulness and considerably less exhausting than yoga. The frisson you feel every 15 seconds at seeing yourself move from, say, 5,068 to 4,975 is deeply special. That's a significant incremental improvement over quite a short period of time.

There's something rather zen about watching your progress. It would be even better if there were any delivery slots at the end of it. **FT**

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@robertshrimsley

Simon Kuper's latest article ("Coronavirus could help push us into a greener way of life", March 21/22) was excellent. As he says, supermarket deliveries are a greener alternative but there is also a strong case for promoting small local shops accessible by foot - for exercise, social contact and local economic development - as part and parcel of that mix of social capital he rightly advocates.

Andrew Nickson, Birmingham

Preliminary research based on Italian data suggests there is a correlation between air pollution and the epidemic's spread. If this is proven, it means climate change has a shockingly direct economic impact in the present and is not just something whose disastrous consequences we will have to deal with in the future. This gives a powerful argument to justify green policies and behaviour, smart working included.

Italian Reader via FT.com

@ThewllisGraham March 20
Tough times but humour always helps. Thank you @robertshrimsley via @FT

Re "Jancis Robinson on Anderson Valley" (March 21/22). The region is one of California's best-kept secrets. If you can get past the Napa Valley hype and head further north, you won't be disappointed. Amateurs in wine stores will often grab a Napa cabernet. Those of us who have tried both, pick an Anderson Valley every time.

HuskerLance via FT.com

Further to "The best asparagus recipes from Bocca di Lupo" (March 21/22). If you possibly can, grow your own asparagus. They once provided me with nine early summer lunches, sitting in the garden, eating home-grown, lightly cooked asparagus dipped in Hollandaise or just mayo, with boiled new potatoes.

Mbeira via FT.com

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MASTERPIECE



Left: Horse armour probably made for Count Antonio IV Colalto (1548–1620) ca. 1580–90 and later. Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1923. Right: Portrait of a Percheron and his groom at the Simonds brewery, Reading, 1813, by Philip Reinagle. Courtesy of The Parker Gallery. Centre: Oscillation, 2010, by Merete Rasmussen. Courtesy of Merete Rasmussen/Pangolin London. Photo by Steve Russell.



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THE BATTLE TO CONTROL THE INTERNET

Governments everywhere agree that the internet is broken. But who is going to fix it? As Chinese telecoms giant Huawei pushes plans for an ambitious new network, others are concerned about citizen freedoms. *Madhumita Murgia and Anna Gross* report on the fight for our online future. Illustrations by *Alexander Glandien*

O

n a cool day late last September, half a dozen Chinese engineers walked into a conference room in the heart of Geneva's UN district with a radical idea. They had one hour to persuade delegates from more than 40 countries of their vision: an alternative form of the internet, to replace the technological architecture that has underpinned the web for half a century. Whereas today's internet is owned by everyone and no one, they were in the process of building something

very different - a new infrastructure that could put power back in the hands of nation states, instead of individuals.

The team who had masterminded the New IP (internet protocol) proposal was from the Chinese telecoms giant Huawei, which had sent the largest delegation of any company to the September meeting. At the gathering, held at the International Telecommunications Union, a UN agency that establishes common global standards for technologies, they presented a simple PowerPoint. It didn't bother with much detail on how this new network would work, or what specific problem it was solving. Instead, it was peppered with images of futuristic technologies, from life-size holograms to self-driving cars.

The idea was to illustrate that the current internet is a relic that has reached the limits of its technical prowess. It was time, Huawei proposed, for a new global network with a top-down design, and the Chinese should be the ones to build it.

Governments everywhere seem to agree that today's model of internet governance - essentially, lawless self-regulation by private, mostly American companies - is broken.

New IP is the latest in a series of efforts to change the way the internet is run, spearheaded by governments that were largely left out when it was founded half a century ago. "The conflicts surrounding internet governance are the new spaces where political and economic power are unfolding in the 21st century," wrote the academic Laura DeNardis in her 2014 book *The Global*

War for Internet Governance. The Chinese government in particular has viewed designing internet infrastructure and standards as core to its digital foreign policy, and its censorship tools as proof-of-concept for a more efficient internet, to be exported elsewhere.

"Of course [China] want a technological infrastructure that gives them the absolute control which they have achieved politically, a design that matches the totalitarian impulse," says Shoshana Zuboff, author of *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* and a social scientist at Harvard University. "So that is frightening to me and it should be frightening to every single person."

Huawei claims that New IP is being developed purely to meet the technical requirements of a rapidly evolving digital world, and that it has not yet baked a particular governance model into its design. The telecoms giant is leading an ITU group that is focused on future network technology needed by the year 2030, and New IP is being tailored to meet those demands, a spokesperson says.

What is known about the proposal has come primarily through two jargon-filled documents that have been shared with the FT. These were presented behind closed doors to ITU delegates last September and this February. One is a technical standards proposal, and the other a PowerPoint titled "New IP: Shaping the Future Network".

Despite the might of today's internet, it has no regulator; instead, power is largely held by a handful of US corporations - Apple, Google, Amazon and Facebook. This lack of central oversight is the very thing that has allowed technologists to transform how we communicate and live but it has also enabled deep fractures in our social order, including the manipulation of public dialogue, the disruption of democracy and the rise of online surveillance.

Today, in the wake of scandals from Cambridge Analytica to the role of Facebook in inciting real-world violence in Myanmar, many experts see the internet as a civic space that requires better public hygiene. Governments - whether democratic or authoritarian - are tired of being shut out and are agitating for more influence online. The power balance is starting to shift but the scope of what states want varies widely. The US, UK and Europe, for example, are interested in adapting the current system to introduce more regulatory power, and to give intelligence agencies greater access to users' personal data.

The Chinese New IP proposal is far more radical, and could embed a system of centralised rule enforcement into the technical fabric of the internet. Saudi Arabia, Iran and Russia have previously shown support for Chinese proposals for alternative network technologies, according to sources who were present at ITU meetings. The proposals revealed that the blueprints for this new network

have already been drawn up, and construction is under way. Any country will be free to adopt it.

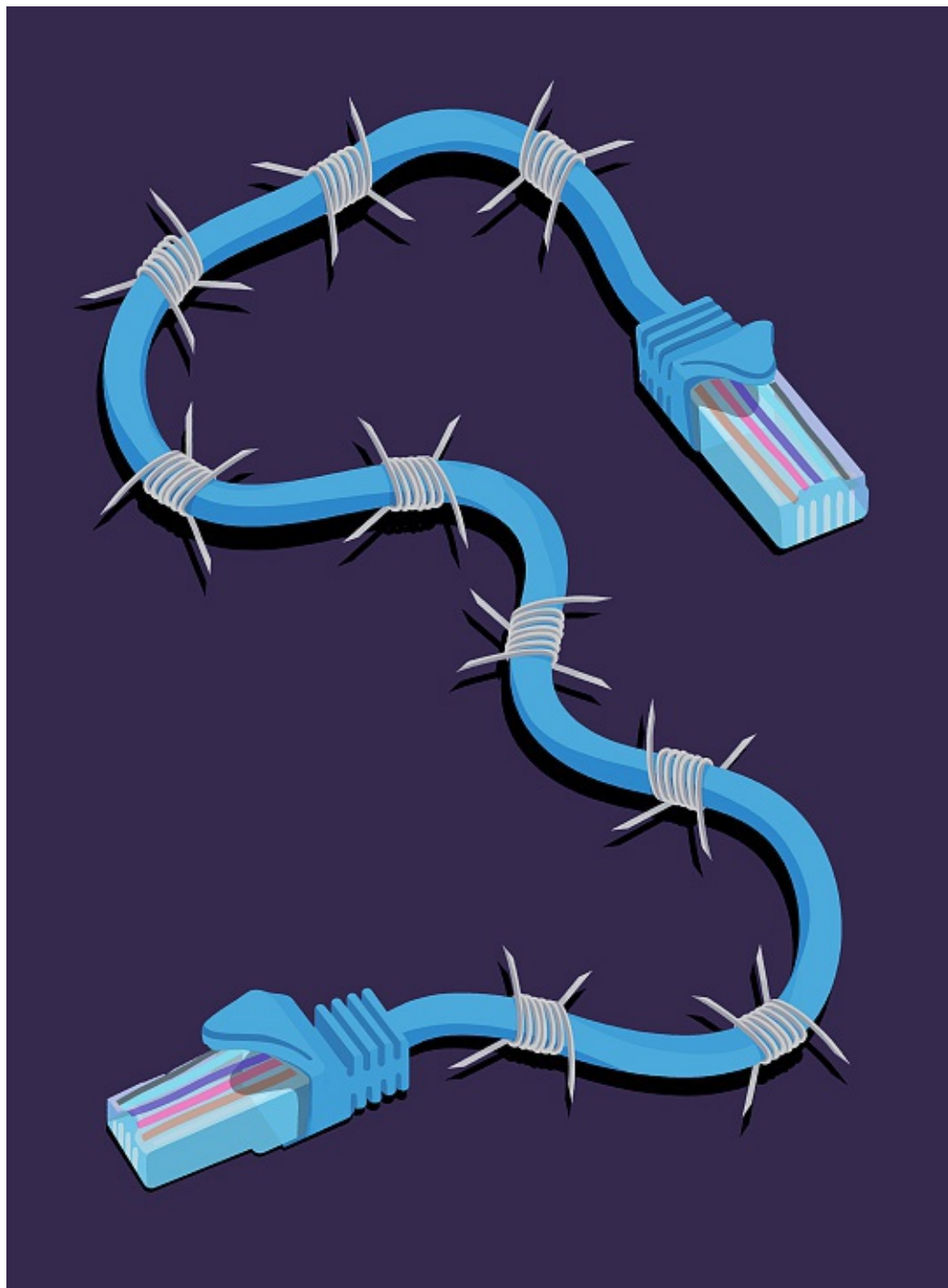
"Right now, we have two versions of the internet - a market-led capitalist version based on surveillance, which is exploitative, and an authoritarian version also based on surveillance," Zuboff says. "The question is: will Europe and North America pull together to construct the legal and technological frameworks for a democratic alternative?"

The New IP presentation paints a picture of a digital world in 2030 where virtual reality, holographic communication and remote surgery are ubiquitous - and for which our current network is unfit. Traditional IP protocol is described as "unstable" and "vastly insufficient", with "lots of security, reliability and configuration problems". The documents suggest a new network should instead have a "top-to-bottom design" and promote data-sharing schemes across governments, "thereby serving AI, Big Data and all kinds of other applications". Many experts fear that under New IP, internet service providers, usually state-owned, would have control and oversight of every device connected to the network and be able to monitor and gate individual access.

The system is already being built by engineers from "industry and academia" across "multiple countries", Huawei's team lead Sheng Jiang told the group in September, although he would not reveal who these were due to commercial sensitivities. Among the audience were veterans of the ITU, including mainly government representatives from the UK, the US, the Netherlands, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and China.

For some participants, the very idea is anathema. If New IP was legitimised by the ITU, state operators would be able to choose to implement a western internet or a Chinese one, they say. The latter could mean that everyone in those countries would need permission from their internet provider to do anything via the internet - whether downloading an app or accessing a site - and administrators could have the power to deny access on a whim. Rather than a unified world wide web, citizens could be forced to connect to a patchwork of national internets, each with its own rules - a concept known in China as cyber sovereignty.

Recent events in Iran and Saudi Arabia provide a glimpse of what this would look like. These governments blacked out global internet connectivity for prolonged periods during civil unrest, allowing only restricted access to essential services such as banking or healthcare. In Russia, a new "sovereign internet" law passed in November enshrined the government's right to monitor web traffic closely and showed the country's capability to cleave off from the global web - a capability that Chinese companies including Huawei helped the Russians build.



'OF COURSE CHINA WANTS A TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT GIVES THEM ABSOLUTE CONTROL... THAT IS FRIGHTENING TO ME AND IT SHOULD BE FRIGHTENING TO EVERY SINGLE PERSON'

Shoshana Zuboff, author of 'The Age of Surveillance Capitalism'

Experts now debate whether China's vision of its internet governance may be shifting from a defensive one, in which the government wished to be left alone to impose authoritarian internet controls at home, to a more assertive approach, in which the country is openly advocating for others to follow its lead.

The creators of New IP say that parts of the technology will be ready to be tested by next year. Efforts to persuade delegations of its value will culminate at a major ITU conference due to be held in India in November. To persuade the ITU to approve it within the year, so it can be officially "standardised", representatives must reach an internal consensus, based loosely on majority agreement. If the delegates are unable to agree, the proposal will go to a closed-door vote in which only member countries can participate, cutting out the views of industry and civil society.

This rapid timeline is causing western delegations particular anxiety and demands have been made to slow the process down, according to documents seen by the FT. One participant from the Dutch delegation wrote in an official response, leaked to the FT by multiple sources, that the "open and adaptable nature" of the internet - both its technical structure and how it is governed - was fundamental to its success and that he was "especially concerned" that this model veered away from that philosophy.

Another stinging rebuke from a UK delegate, also leaked to the FT, declared: "It is far from clear that technically sound justifications have been made for taking such a radical step. Unless these are forthcoming, reasonable foundations for future work or even continued research activities on these topics are either weak at best, or nonexistent."

One of the loudest critics of New IP has been Patrik Fältström, a long-haired maverick engineer, known in his native Sweden as one of the fathers of the internet. In the early 1980s, Fältström was a mathematics student in Stockholm when he was hired to build and test the infrastructure for a new technology that the US government was calling the internet. His job was to write a series of protocols that allowed computers to send text between each other. "In Europe, we were maybe 100 people in Sweden, 100 in the UK, 50 here, 20 there, all of us knew each other. We used to joke that if there was a problem, you knew who to call," he says.

Today, Fältström is a digital adviser to the Swedish government and its representative at most major internet standards bodies including the ITU. Thirty years after he helped assemble the building blocks of the internet, he embodies the cyber-libertarian western ideals that were woven into its foundation. "Internet architecture makes it very, very hard, almost impossible for whoever is ►



'I AM PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT THERE WILL BE CRIMINALS WHO DO BAD THINGS AND POLICE WILL HAVE AN INABILITY TO FIGHT ALL OF IT. I ACCEPT THAT SACRIFICE'

Patrik Fältström, internet pioneer

◀ providing internet access to know or regulate what the internet access is used for," he says. "That is a problem for law enforcement and others, who would like to have an internet service provider controlling it, so it is not used for illegal activities like pirating movies, or child abuse.

"But I am prepared to accept that there will be criminals who do bad things and police will have an inability to fight [all of] it. I accept that sacrifice."

For Fältström, the beauty of the internet is its "permissionless" nature, as demonstrated during the Arab spring. "We have to remember," he says, "it is a balance between being able to communicate and control, but people having a voice is always more important."

A stark contrast to this view can be found in a river-village called Wuzhen near Shanghai, which is emptied out every autumn to make room for the tech executives, academics and policymakers attending the ambitiously named World Internet Conference. The event was created by the Cyber-space Administration of China in 2014, a year after President Xi Jinping rose to power. A row of world flags greet visitors - a nod to Xi's vision of creating "a community of shared future in cyberspace".

Tech executives from Apple's Tim Cook to Qualcomm's Steve Mollenkopf have spoken there, lending credence to Xi's attempts to assemble the international tech elite. But in recent years, foreign attendance has dropped off as the US-China tech war intensifies and executives worry about being too closely aligned with Beijing.

There is precedent for such fears. In the event's first year, organisers slipped a draft joint statement under guests' hotel doors at midnight, setting out Xi's view of each nation's right to "cyber sovereignty". Guests were told to get back with any changes before 8am. After protests, the organisers dropped the matter entirely. But the fact that the leadership had tried such a stunt reflected Xi's digital ambitions.

In the early 1990s, the Chinese government started developing what is now known as the Great Firewall, a system of internet controls that stops citizens from connecting to banned foreign websites - from Google to The New York Times - as well as blocking politically sensitive domestic content and preventing mass organising online.

Beijing's technical controls are supported by large teams of government censors as well as those hired by private tech companies such as Baidu and Tencent. Although anyone anywhere in the world can technically host their own website using just a computer and an internet connection, in China one needs to apply for a licence to do so. Telecoms providers and internet platforms are also required to aid the police with the surveillance of "crimes", which can include actions such as calling Xi a "steamed bun" in a private chat group, an act punished by two years in prison.

'BUILDING A NEW VERSION OF THE INTERNET WOULD SAVE CHINA A HUGE AMOUNT OF EFFORT, MONEY AND MANPOWER FROM THE CENSORSHIP SIDE'

James Griffiths, author of 'The Great Firewall Of China'

Despite this, the Chinese internet is not 100 per cent effective at blocking content considered sensitive or dangerous by the government. "The leaky global internet remains frustrating for Chinese censors, and they've dealt with it at great expense and effort, but if you could make those problems go away almost completely by using a more automated and technical process, perhaps like New IP, that would be fantastic for them," says James Griffiths, author of *The Great Firewall of China: How to Build and Control an Alternative Version of the Internet*. "Building a new version of the internet would potentially block more people from gaining politically dangerous knowledge, saving a huge amount of effort, money and manpower from the censorship side. They can pick and choose what controls they want, bake it into the tech and roll it out."

Establishing a sophisticated alternative to the western internet would also fit with China's ambitions to extend its digital footprint globally. "In the early days of the internet, China was very much a follower and didn't recognise, like many other countries, how disruptive the internet would be," says Julia Voo, research director for the China Cyber Policy Initiative at Harvard University's Belfer Center. "As they realised how important it was, [they] funnelled more resources into developing technologies... and we can see their increased influence in many standards organisations like the ITU in the past two or three years."

"But the US and others have made a strategic mistake in not seeing the value of growing infrastructure in developing markets," she adds. "There is still a lot of infrastructure that needs to be provided and in the past 10 years it has been Chinese companies that have been the ones to provide it, particularly in Africa."

Beijing has signed memoranda of understanding on building a "Digital Silk Road" - or system of advanced IT infrastructure - with 16 countries. Huawei says it has 91 contracts to provide 5G wireless telecoms equipment worldwide, including 47 from Europe - despite US warnings that Huawei's involvement was tantamount to giving the Chinese access to national security secrets, an allegation rejected by the company.

"In proving that you can control and intensely surveil your domestic internet and avoid it being used as a tool to rally people against the government, combined with the economic success of its companies, China has made this vision incredibly attractive to regimes - autocratic and otherwise - around the world," says Griffiths.

The ITU was created 155 years ago, making it one of the oldest international organisations in the world, predating even the UN. It is housed in a set of glass-panelled buildings in Geneva's Place des Nations. On the 10th floor of one is the airy office of Bilel Jamoussi, the Tunisian-born head of the ITU's

study groups - the units that develop and ratify technical standards.

The room is lined with an enormous bookcase from which Jamoussi pulls a dusty blue book - his PhD thesis, penned 25 years ago, about traffic going through the internet. At the time, there was a desire to build a new networking protocol to meet the internet's growing user base. In the end engineers opted to layer on top of the existing TCP/IP infrastructure. The technology, invented in the late 1970s by computational engineers working for the US defence department, was a way of transmitting messages between computers at the speed of light, using a special addressing system.

"Twenty-five years ago we had this conversation as a community - is it TCP/IP or is it something else - and then a lot of design and development happened to kind of rescue [it]," Jamoussi says. "We are now, I think, at another turning point, of saying, 'Is that enough, or do we need something new?'"

In its earliest days, the ITU oversaw the first international telegraph networks. Since then, it has grown from 40 nations to 193 and has become the de facto standards body for telecoms networks. Standards produced there legitimise new technologies and systems in the eyes of certain governments - particularly those in the developing world that don't participate in other internet bodies. Ultimately, they give a commercial edge to the companies that have built the tech they are based upon.

Over the past 21 years, Jamoussi has witnessed a geopolitical shift. "The pendulum has swung to the east, and now we see more participation from China, Japan, Korea," he says. "Twenty years ago it was Europe and North America that were dominating the products, solutions and standards development, now we have a swing to the east."

On one of the ITU's marble walls, backlit flags are hung, showing the biggest donor nations. The Chinese flag - currently at number five - was not there at all a few years ago, an employee explained, but it has been gradually working its way up.

New IP is the latest grenade thrown into the ITU's arena, but it is hardly the first internet-related standard to be proposed as an alternative to the original western-designed system. The governments of Russia, Saudi Arabia, China and Iran have been pushing the idea of alternative networks for years, according to participants who wished to remain anonymous.

"In the early 2000s, once you saw widespread take-up of the internet, suddenly you had this idea of democratisation, of essentially giving people more control and more information. For authoritarian governments, that was something they weren't happy with," says one member of the UK delegation. "And so work started, around the early 2000s, particularly in China, and then a bit later ►"



The Geneva-based headquarters of the International Telecommunications Union, the de facto standards body for telecoms networks

◀ in Iran and Russia, around how to create an alternative to the standards and the technologies that were being developed mostly by Americans still.”

But in recent years, Chinese companies have moved on to New IP. “There’s a new paradigm, it’s not voice and text and video and people chatting, it’s the real-time controlling of something remotely, or having telepresence, or holograms,” Jamoussi explains. “Those new applications are requiring new solutions. And now it’s more feasible, it’s no longer science fiction, it’s close to being a reality.”

Spearheading plans for New IP is Richard Li, chief scientist at Futurewei, Huawei’s R&D arm located in California. Li has been working with Huawei engineers based in China, as well as state telecoms companies China Mobile and China Unicom, with the explicit backing of the Chinese government, to develop the technology specifications and standards proposal.

Having Huawei at the helm will ring alarm bells for many in Europe and the US, where governments have become concerned that Chinese technology is being developed as a vehicle for state espionage. The advent of 5G - a much higher bandwidth network that will serve as the digital spine for a more automated world - has led to rising concern that products developed by Huawei will be built with “back doors” for spies in Beijing. Last year, the US blacklisted Huawei from selling into its market, and the UK government is embroiled in a parliamentary battle over the company’s involvement in its core telecoms infrastructure.

The FT reached out to Li to discuss New IP, but Huawei declined the opportunity for him to explain the idea in greater detail. The company said in a statement: “New IP aims to provide new IP technology solutions that can support... future applications such as Internet of Everything, holographic communications, and telemedicine. The research and innovation of New IP is open to scientists and engineers worldwide to participate in and contribute to.”

Critics argue that the technical claims made in the New IP documentation are either false or unclear, and represent a “solution looking for a problem”. They insist that the current IP system is fit for purpose, even in a rapidly digitising world. “The way that the internet has developed is through building blocks that are modular and loosely coupled, that’s the brilliance of it,” says Alissa Cooper, chair of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), an industry-dominated standards body in the US.

‘TWENTY YEARS AGO IT WAS EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA THAT WERE DOMINATING... NOW WE HAVE A SWING TO THE EAST’

Bilel Jamoussi, head of the ITU’s study groups



In November, Li presented to a small group during an IETF meeting in Singapore, which Cooper attended. “[The current infrastructure] is in pretty stark contrast to what you see in the New IP proposal, which is this kind of monolithic, top-down architecture that wants to tightly couple the applications to the network. This is exactly what the internet was designed not to be,” she says.

The implications for the average user could be enormous. “You’re pushing control into the hands of [telecoms] operators which are state-run,” says a UK ITU delegation member. “So [it means] you can now not only control access to certain types of content online, or track that content online, but you can actually control the access of a device to a network.”

China is already in the process of building a credit-scoring system for its population, based on online and offline behaviour and past “misdemeanours”, the delegation member noted. “So if somebody’s social credit score dipped below a certain amount because they were posting on social media too much, you could actually prevent that phone from connecting to the network.”

China’s telecoms operators have a wealth of data on their subscribers. By law, customers have to register for a phone number or internet connection using their real name and identification, which is then accessible by other companies such as banks. The country’s cyber-security law also mandates that all “network operators”, which includes telecoms companies, must keep “internet logs” - although it is not clear what these entail.

Jamoussi argues it is not the ITU’s place to judge whether proposals for a new internet architecture are “top-down” or could be misused by authoritarian governments. “Of course, anything you build, it’s a two-edged sword. You can use anything for good or for bad, and it’s the sovereign decision of every member state,” he says. “In the ITU we don’t go into that potential misuse of technology, we just focus on, ‘Here is some... communication technology problem, here is an aspiration, let’s as a community build a solution to reach that.’ But then how people use it is really up to them.”

Beijing’s ambitions to build more controls into the internet infrastructure are not seen as a problem by everybody - merely as the next chapter in its evolution.

“The internet was supposed to be a neutral infrastructure, but it has become a politicised arm of control. Increasingly internet infrastructure is being used for policy goals - to repress people economically, and physically - we saw it in Kashmir, Myanmar and in the Snowden revelations,” says Niels ten Oever, a former Dutch delegate at the ITU. “For me, the overarching question is: how do we build a public network on privately owned infrastructure? This is the problem we are



Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, speaks at the opening ceremony of the fourth World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, China, in December 2017



'THE INTERNET HAS BECOME A POLITICISED ARM OF CONTROL... WE SAW IT IN KASHMIR, MYANMAR AND IN THE SNOWDEN REVELATIONS

Niels ten Oever, a former Dutch delegate at the ITU

grappling with. What is the role of the state versus the role of companies?"

In his view, companies design technologies primarily for profit. "The internet is dominated by US companies, all data flows there. So, of course, they want to keep that power," he says. "We are scared of Chinese repression. We are making caricatures of the Chinese in a borderline imperialist-racist way. But the internet governance today is not working. There is room for an alternative."

Wherever our digital future is currently being built, there seems to be global agreement that the time has come for a better version of cyberspace. "I think [some] people would argue that our current model of the internet is deeply flawed, if not broken. At present, there is only one other truly comprehensive and fully realised model out there, China's," wrote Griffiths in *The Great Firewall of China*. "The risk is that if we fail to come up with a third model - one that empowers users and increases democracy and transparency online, and reduces the powers both of big tech and government security services - then more and more countries will tilt towards the Chinese model, rather than deal with the fallout of the failing Silicon Valley one."

Today, the "Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace" - the guiding principle of the internet - is starting to look more and more like a relic. The manifesto, written in 1996 by John Perry Barlow, co-founder of the American nonprofit Electronic Frontier Foundation and a Grateful Dead lyricist, was a call to arms.

"Governments of the Industrial World, you weary giants of flesh and steel, I come from Cyberspace, the new home of Mind," starts the document. "On behalf of the future, I ask you of the past to leave us alone. You are not welcome among us. You have no sovereignty where we gather."

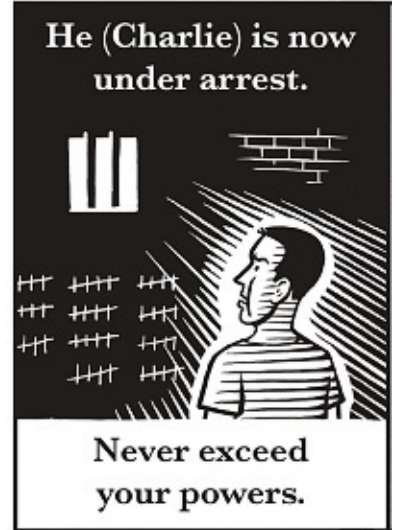
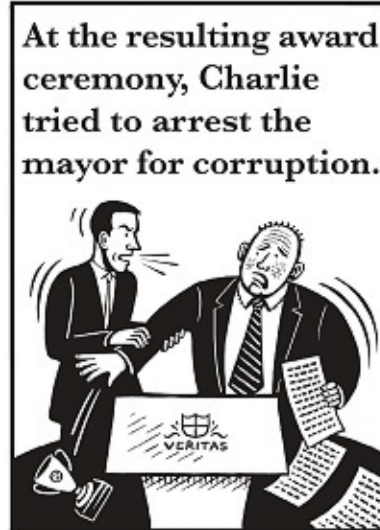
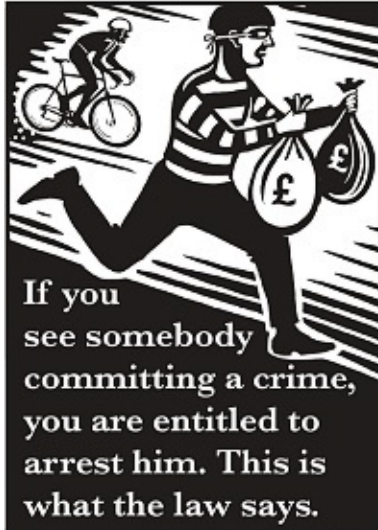
That view has now become a throwback to a time before trillion-dollar market capitalisations in the tech industry, critics say. But there is still hope - and possibly a third alternative to our two internets of today.

"What differentiates us from China now is that in the west, the public can still mobilise and have a say. A lot of this now is down to lawmakers to protect democracy in an age of surveillance, whether it's market driven or authoritarian driven," says Zuboff. "The sleeping giant of democracy is finally stirring, lawmakers are waking up, but they need to feel the public at their backs. We need a western web that will offer the kind of vision of a digital future that is compatible with democracy. This is the work of the next decade." **FT**

Madhumita Murgia is the FT's European tech correspondent. Anna Gross is an FT markets reporter. Additional reporting by Yuan Yang and Nian Liu

**CITIZEN'S ARREST
EXPLAINED**

Tiny Tales by Alexander McCall Smith *Illustrated by
Iain McIntosh*



Windows on the world

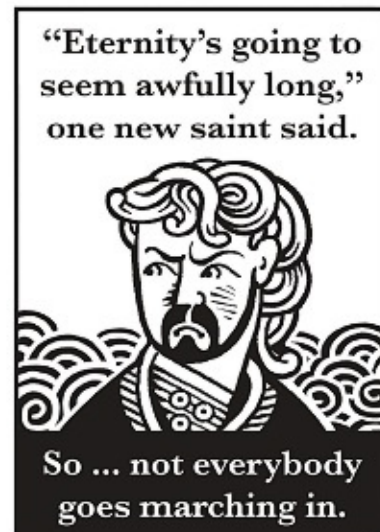
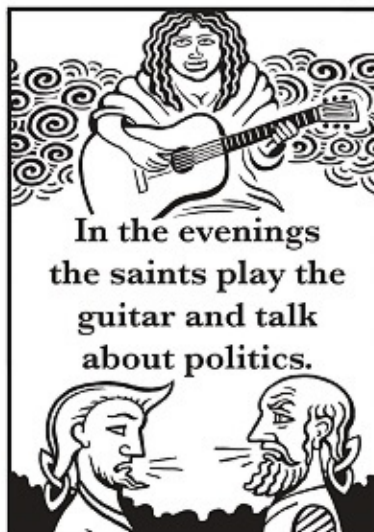
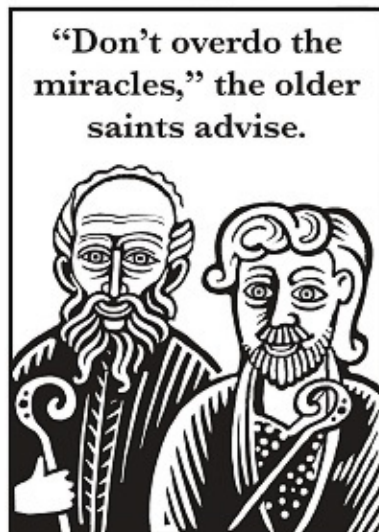
As author *Alexander McCall Smith* launches a series of 'Tiny Tales' for the FT with illustrator *Iain McIntosh*, he explores how writers have always been attracted by the idea of portraying a whole universe within a few terse paragraphs.

Portrait by *Kirsty Anderson*



THE SAINTS

Tiny Tales by Alexander McCall Smith *Illustrated by* Gavin McIntosh



The latest novel from Hilary Mantel is a comforting 912 pages long. *War and Peace*, in its Penguin Classics edition, runs to a modest 1,440 pages. Trollope and Dickens were both capable of going on at considerable length, as was Tolkien. Novelists can show great staying power.

At the other end of the literary spectrum are short stories, some of which can be very brief. Flash fiction, the term now used for what has previously been described as short, short stories, has been around rather longer than one might imagine - and has had some distinguished practitioners.

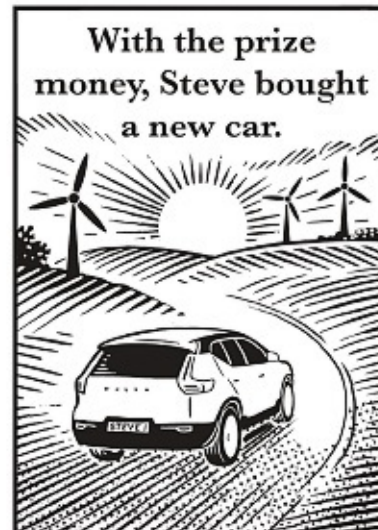
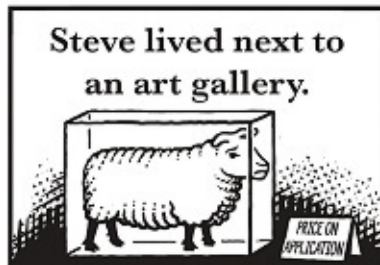
Today, its natural home may be the internet, but long before that writers were intrigued by the possibilities of the very brief short story. *Aesop's Fables* are an early example, but by the 20th century the goal of telling an intriguing story within very few lines had become widely shared. Writers such as Jorge Luis Borges, Somerset Maugham and Italo Calvino, all capable of spinning a lengthy narrative, were nonetheless attracted by the lure of portraying a whole world within the space of a few terse paragraphs.

Ernest Hemingway is said to have liked the idea and is credited - wrongly - with the authorship of one of the most famous ultra-short stories, the poignant six-word tale: “For sale, baby shoes, never worn.” He is said to have written this on a napkin over dinner in the Algonquin Hotel in New York, thus winning a \$10 bet. In fact, he probably did not write it at all; other writers referred to the story as early as 1917. Whatever its provenance, this little masterpiece shows how it is possible to conjure up a moving and, indeed, tragic tale with the use of only a handful of words. All the rest, it might be argued, is padding.

I became interested in the possibilities of the very brief short story in the course of writing a serial novel for the past 15 years, *44 Scotland Street*. This series of books, now approaching its 14th volume, has been published daily, chapter by chapter, in *The Scotsman* newspaper. The chapters are short - never much more than 1,200 words - and I found that I rather enjoyed telling a whole story in each one. Twelve hundred words is

CONCEPTUAL ART

Tiny Tales by Alexander McCall Smith *Illustrated by* Iain McIntosh



more than enough to develop a character, set the scene and have something happen before ending with a suitable cliffhanger.

When Twitter decided some years ago to inaugurate an online literary festival, I received an invitation to help launch it. At that point, Twitter was even more stringent with its word limit (140 characters per post), a brevity requirement that would have been frankly incompatible with most coherent attempts at fiction.

The solution was obvious: each post would be a very short chapter, and the whole story, made up of 20 or 30 chapters, could still be fewer than 1,000 words. Ulf Varg, my new Swedish character, since portrayed in the full-length novel *The Department of Sensitive Crimes*, and in the forthcoming *The Talented Mr Varg*, started in this form, as did Martin, his lip-reading, hearing-impaired dog.

The Sociopaths' Ball was another example. This was a short story in 36 chapters, but still only 800 words in length. It started: "Chapter 1. In fashionable Palm Beach there is a winter

season: plenty of charity events, fundraising concerts, formal balls. Chapter 2. These events are always organised by a committee of *grandes dames*, prominent socialites, wealthy patrons etc. Chapter 3. One year they decided to have a ball solely for sociopaths, of whom there were quite a few..."

Of course, a ball requires an organising committee, and an organising committee must have a meeting. So... "Chapter 20. The sociopaths elected a chairman. He was called George Fist. 'You got a problem with my name?' he challenged. Chapter 21. George Fist called the first meeting at his apartment overlooking the ocean. He was proud of his view. Chapter 22. 'Some guy tried to build in front of us,' he remarked. 'We sorted that out. Result: we still have the view...'"

Very short stories are not the exclusive preserve of writers. Illustrators are also adept at the form, and it was for this reason that I approached the well-known Scottish illustrator Iain McIntosh to see whether he would be interested in embarking on a series of ►

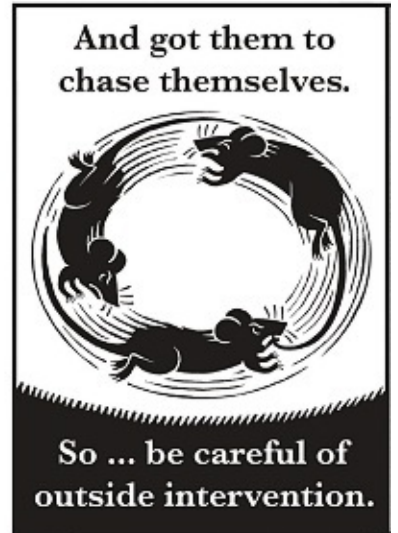
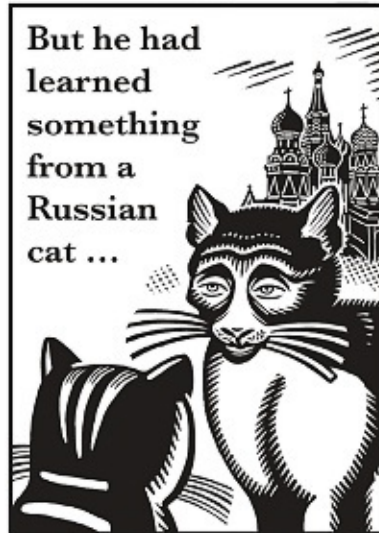
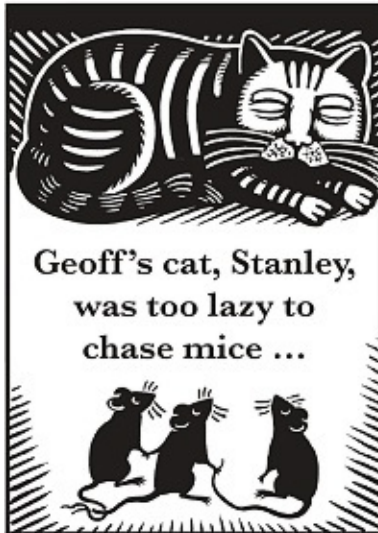
Opening pages: Alexander McCall Smith at home in Edinburgh last month. Below: Illustrator Iain McIntosh, McCall Smith's collaborator on the *Tiny Tales* project



ALEX MCINTOSH

**GEOFF'S CAT'S
STRATEGY**

Tiny Tales by Alexander McCall Smith *Illustrated by* Iain Mcintosh



It is possible to conjure up a moving and, indeed, tragic tale with only a handful of words

◀ extremely brief stories. The idea was that Iain would draw four panels in which a whole story would be illustrated with the minimum of text.

Graphic novels, a growing genre within fiction, already do this, of course, but they are not subject to constraints of space. They can devote several panels to the illustration of a character's expression, for example, or to the teasing out of a small nuance of plot. These novels satisfy what seems to be a fairly fundamental human interest in being told a story through pictures. It is this which lies behind our earliest cave paintings, where the events of the hunt may be daubed on the wall, just as it may be responsible for the publication of a full-length graphic novel version of Marcel Proust's *Du côté de chez Swann*, painstakingly and evocatively illustrated by Stéphane Heuet.

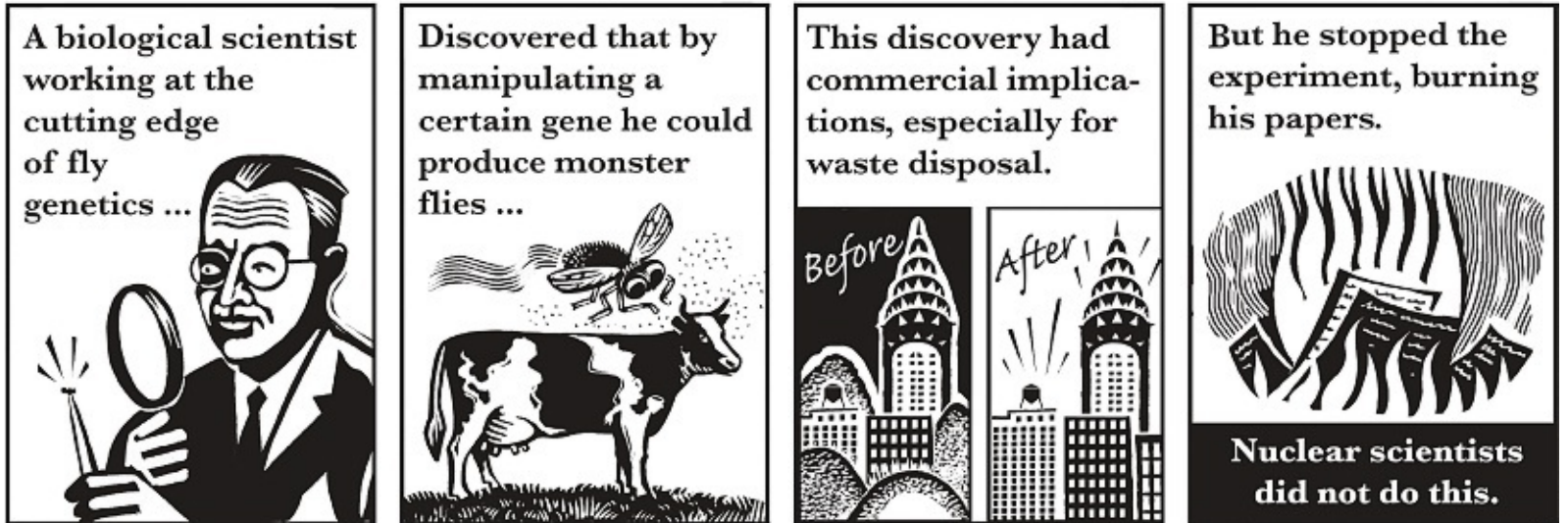
Iain required little persuading, and we set about working on *Tiny Tales*, which will now be appearing in the FT Weekend over the coming months. There are five tasters here of what is to follow, each of them demonstrating

the illustrator's acute eye for the humorous potential of small detail. The Turner Prize judges in *Conceptual Art* are perfect. The figures are very small, but look at the folded arms of one of the judges; look at their clothing and their hairstyles. I am not sure what Turner Prize judges look like in real life, but I suspect that this is fairly close to reality. One thing is certain: they won't wear suits. And could a Volvo sliced down the middle really win the Turner Prize? Of course it could. In fact, I'm surprised that a Volvo, sliced or otherwise, hasn't already won it.

A series needs a few regular characters, and in *Tiny Tales* we have Larry Porker, a socially ambitious pig, and a stripy feline called Stanley, whose owner, Geoff, does his best to improve his cat's life. Like most cats, Stanley is indifferent to human plans and pursues his own agenda regardless. In the series, we see Geoff trying to interest Stanley in a feline gym - to no avail. The limit of most cats'

**SCIENTIFIC ETHICS:
A CRASH COURSE**

Tiny Tales by Alexander McCall Smith *Illustrated by Gavin McIntosh*



ambition is to sit somewhere warm, even if that happens to be a cross trainer.

Geoff's Cat's Strategy is about as political as these tales get. We are in *Aesop's Fables* territory here, but with a contemporary flavour. Look at the face of the Russian cat in the second panel. Familiar? And just how would one destabilise mice? Panel three provides the answer: fake cheese. That was the illustrator's addition - a lovely nod to the outcome portrayed in the final panel, which, in one view, might be exactly what has happened in the real world. The mice have been severely confused.

The illustrations in *The Saints* show the artist's feeling for the Celtic tradition in Scottish art. The figures and the whirling circles are straight out of the *Book of Kells* and the 20th-century Celtic art revival.

The idea of the saints having to live together in the next world was inspired by my reading of a story by an Italian author, who wrote about the saints being irritated by the arrival of a new and rather overactive saint. Here he is, but not as he was portrayed in that story: here he

expresses his irritation at the prevailing tone in heaven. And, of course, he would not take kindly to a suggestion that he go marching in.

These strips will be included in a *Tiny Tales* book due to be published this year. They will be accompanied by 30 text stories on various themes - love, revenge, cosmetic surgery and so on - all those aspects of life so worthy of examination.

The tone will be upbeat, because, quite frankly, who has the desire to wallow in the sombre side of life at present? We must continue to be able to smile, even when things are dire - perhaps especially when things are dire. Of course we can experience regret over what has been done or not done. *Scientific Ethics: a Crash Course*, the fifth strip illustrated here, reminds us that we are where we are and that we can't really undo the things that have gone wrong. Mind you, the man who genetically engineered this monster fly did just that... **FT**

.....
Alexander McCall Smith's "Tiny Tales" series will appear in FT Life & Arts from next week

We must continue to be able to smile, even when things are dire - perhaps especially when things are dire



Woody, Hackney Marshes

THE DOG WALKERS

With the country under strict lockdown, our canine companions have helped maintain a small sense of normality for some. *Hannah Starkey* shares photographs taken on her dog walks through London



Hanoush, Ferdy, Friday and Kali, London Fields

Over the past few days, as coronavirus has spread ever more rapidly, we've seen a move from clubs, bars, galleries and churches to green spaces and parks. People are looking to maintain a bit of sanity, and outdoors is where they think they'll find it (so much so that the overcrowding of parks may have contributed to new restrictions on how often we can leave the house). There is all the more reason, or excuse, to break self-isolation if you have a dog. A walk through nature with your pet is a very reassuring thing to do as we look down the barrel of a crisis few have experienced before.

As I walked my dog, I came across others out and about with their canine companions. Everyone wanted to chat, and most agreed to be photographed, while keeping social distancing in mind. It became a trade-off: I'll photograph you, and you tell me your story.

There's an urgency to the dog walk right now. I met a couple who decided to take the leap and live together for fear of being kept apart by closing borders. I met a self-employed musician, all gigs cancelled, who felt ►



Bobi and Wellington, Victoria Park

'A DOG WALK THROUGH NATURE WITH YOUR PET IS A VERY REASSURING THING TO DO AS WE LOOK DOWN THE BARREL OF A CRISIS FEW HAVE EXPERIENCED BEFORE'



Cloud, Haggerston Park

'I HEARD STORIES OF THIEVES STEALING
OCADO DELIVERIES IN HAMPSTEAD BUT
I HEARD EVEN MORE ABOUT STRANGERS
WALKING ELDERLY NEIGHBOURS' HOUNDS'



Dusty, Hampstead Heath

◀ sad not for himself but for fellow musicians with young families. I heard stories of thieves stealing Ocado deliveries in Hampstead but I heard even more about strangers walking elderly neighbours' hounds. We now realise how precious our lifestyles were before but we have also found a belief in each other... we've had to. The dogs care nothing about Covid-19, but they love the attention.

We're also realising that a pandemic is a great leveller. There's no opting out of it and everyone has a story that directly relates to everyone else. We're in this together. I've listened to people who are both strangely intoxicated by the extreme nature of the situation and terrified by what may come. Last weekend, the first one when normality changed for good, people's stories changed with it. This thing is moving so fast that, by now, I have no doubt they are changing again. And yet the dog will still need a walk. **FT**

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*Hannah Starkey is a photographer based in London;
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‘I’ve travelled millions of miles psychologically’

From Grenfell Tower survivors to refugee parents, psychotherapist Julia Samuel has spent 30 years helping people through times of appalling grief. So how should we best prepare for life during a pandemic? *Emma Jacobs* finds out. Photographs by *Lea Thijs*

It is peaceful sitting inside the duck-egg-blue walls of a room at the top of a mansion block in west London. Outside, beyond the pink blossom trees and bright spring day, a pandemic rages, financial markets are in meltdown and workers are losing their jobs.

This is where clients from all walks of life usually visit Julia Samuel, an author and psychotherapist who specialises in grief. Over the past few weeks, as coronavirus has come to dominate all our lives, they have become increasingly fretful: about their health and that of relatives and friends, as well as concerns about money.

“All the people I’m seeing are going through difficulties - they’re going through uncertainty, divorce, losing their jobs, bereavement,” she says. “They were already on an uncertain landscape and this has intensified it.”

I met Samuel before the government announced rules about social distancing and school closures. My desire to see her was spurred by her new book, *This Too Shall Pass*, about the difficulties of coping with change. Drawing on her 30 years of experience as a therapist in the NHS (and in private practice) dealing with bereaved parents, it grapples with family, love, work, health and identity. I had greatly admired her 2017 debut, *GriefWorks*, which explores bereavement in all its shapes, including the death of a parent, sibling, partner and child.

Unsurprisingly, coronavirus is inescapable over the course of our conversation. As Samuel writes, change can be terrifying and complicated, testing our deeply held beliefs. “When life sucks, we say, ‘This too shall pass,’ and hopefully it does - but here’s the hitch: when life is good, it too, inevitably, will pass. The difficult truth we must face is that only death stops life changing.”

As disquiet about the pandemic increases, I follow up over email and phone. Her mood is very different: “F**king hell, f**king hell,” she says over the line. “It’s shit. It’s got more intense.” In Samuel’s warm received pronunciation, even swearing (which she recommends as a coping mechanism) is soothing.

The upheavals caused by the virus on day-to-day life - on our social lives, work routines, schools and childcare - are causing great anxiety, she says, exacerbated by the fact that there is no “template” for dealing with a pandemic. There is a general sense, she says, that “there’s no one in charge that we know is going to sort it. There’s no saviour.” Social media is only compounding anxiety.

Rather than catastrophise about an unknown future, she recommends keeping plans on a short timeline: “Don’t project into weeks and months ahead, plan today.” New structures ►



Julia Samuel in the shared garden of her London home this month

◀ are important too: “We’re very habitual beings. The coffee that you buy, the route that you take, the clothes that you get, even the thoughts that you have down a particular street. You have them habitually as you get to the office. We have to create new structures and habits that give you a sense of agency and efficacy.”

Some coping mechanisms – alcohol, drugs, promiscuity or extreme busyness – are particularly unhelpful: “If you block pain, you block joy and the capacity to experience all feelings.” Instead, it’s healthier to acknowledge our difficult feelings, with support from friends and family, alongside exercise.

Samuel is one of five children born into the banking side of the Guinness family. Her mother and father subscribed to the “stiff upper-lip” approach to emotions. “They were good people and [they] were very old-fashioned parents.” By the age of 25, Samuel’s mother had lost her father, mother, sister and brother. “[Her] most significant family members had all died and they never talked about any of them. There were these photographs around the house, and I vaguely knew that was my grandfather, that was my uncle, but they were never, ever talked about.”

At 20, she married Michael Samuel, a descendant of the family behind Hill Samuel bank, later bought by Lloyds. After a brief career in publishing, she trained as a psychotherapist, working at St Mary’s Hospital in Paddington, London, where she had her own four children.

Describing herself as an “imperfect mother”, she says she was “ignorant” when she had her first child at 21. It was a different time, less obsessed with parenting advice. “There were virtually no books then.” She is fiercely devoted to her children – and also pragmatic. “I really love my kids, we get on very well. We’re incredibly close. I really annoy them.”

It was her mother’s buttoned-up emotions that convinced Samuel that there was a better way to grieve. “In many respects, I have lived a very traditional, married, old-fashioned life. But I’ve also travelled millions of miles psychologically, working in a hospital for 25 years, and had thousands of different experiences with thousands of different people.”

Her role at St Mary’s was to support families whose babies and children had died. She often saw refugees and worked with interpreters. “I went to their homes, and worked with them at their home, because they couldn’t leave the child. I went



Julia Samuel at home: ‘The difficult truth we must face is that only death stops life changing’

Julia Samuel’s five tips on coping with coronavirus

Keep plans short-term. Only plan today and the next few days. Don’t look into the unknown future: it will drive you mad.

Exercise. Even seven minutes inside will help. Dancing in the kitchen is good at lifting your mood and won’t feel like a slog. All movement helps reduce stress in your body.

Breathing. After physical exercise, try a five-minute breathing exercise. It can just be breathing in for a count of seven and out for 11. Or use an app such as Calm.

Treats. Give yourself intentional treats, preferably not tons of alcohol.

Connect with others. This can be online via a video link or by phone.

‘I know really bad things can happen to good people. And that bad things can happen out of the blue for no reason, because I saw it every week’

into lots of people’s houses from very different backgrounds.” She remains attached to the hospital today through its ethics committee, supporting staff. “I love being part of it,” she says.

A good friend of the late Princess Diana, she is a godparent to Prince George. Prince William and Harry’s openness about the difficulties they had after their mother’s death, she says, highlighted the importance of grief counselling for children, something that she herself has campaigned for.

I tell her that a friend is wrestling with how to help an anxious child who is worried about their family dying from coronavirus. Samuel, who is a founder patron of the charity Child Bereavement UK, says that kids need truthful information, just like adults.

“Check what they understand. Check their fears,” she says. “So, always, when you’re telling somebody bad news, check what their existing understanding is. Because then you can correct them. And then ask them what their worries are. We need to allow children to be sad and worried and upset. Don’t stop them. Don’t over-reassure them. Let them feel what they feel, and then let them be normal, happy kids.”

A child’s grief is different from an adult’s, she notes, more akin to jumping in and out of puddles. “You jump in the puddle and you’re very sad, and then five minutes later you’re out of the puddle, screaming with laughter, nicking your sister’s toy and having a lot of fun.”

The previously bereaved, she says, might find themselves better-equipped to deal with these anxious times, as they know they can come out the other side. “They survived it and came through and did OK; [that] will give them hope.”

As the death toll from coronavirus rises, grief will be an emotion more of us will have to deal with. In *Grief Works*, Samuel wrote: “We seem happy to talk about sex or failure, or to expose our deepest vulnerabilities, but on death we are silent. It is so frightening, even alien, for many of us that we cannot find the words to voice it... The pain we feel is invisible, an unseen wound.” One bereaved mother told her after her daughter died of a drug overdose: “I really haven’t felt well in the head, I’ve just been breathing, not really alive.”

Widespread deaths, through war or a disaster, can prove particularly complicated. Samuel counselled grieving relatives after the fire at Grenfell Tower killed 72 people in 2017, and after the Paddington train crash in 1999, in which 31 died. “You would hope that you’d have a shared experience, and that there would be a sense of understanding with each other,” she reflects. “And there certainly can be that, but also you can feel that you’ve been robbed of the uniqueness of your experience, and somehow you’ve been thrown into this club where everyone is a coronavirus widow or bereaved child, and you lose your uniqueness.” Collective grief can be “incredibly overwhelming, confusing, and you’re treated like one [person]... [when] you’re really a lot of very different grieving, hurting people.”

Seeing all this grief throughout her career as a psychotherapist has, unsurprisingly, “completely changed” her. “I really know bad things can happen to good people. And that bad things can happen out of the blue for no reason, because I saw it every week.”

It takes an emotional toll. “I cry seeing them so upset. I cry with clients sometimes. I don’t boo hoo or any of that. Seeing them with their dead child is devastating. I’ve got lots of tools that I use. And I cry when I get home, and I write notes.” Kick-boxing is one of her own coping mechanisms.

Millennials, she says, are often so much better-equipped to discuss their interior life than past generations. However, she worries about the modern tendency to pathologise normal feelings such as sadness and worry, labelling them as depression and anxiety and baring their souls to everybody.

Instead, we should “open ourselves to [parents, partners, close friends] and burst into tears, pour it all out, over-exaggerate it, make a drama, call it trauma. They support you. You cry. You feel better. You have a cup of tea then, you go back to work.” **FT**

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Emma Jacobs is an FT features writer. “This Too Shall Pass: Stories of Change, Crisis and Hopeful Beginnings” is published by Penguin



'I was lonely, but the cooking was fun. I felt like the quarantine queen'

As a child, I had a somewhat romantic view of survival cooking. I was rapt by Laura Ingalls Wilder's *The Long Winter*, a fictionalised account of her family's struggle through a season of blizzards in their cabin in South Dakota. Reading about "Aladdin", Uncle Matthew's wartime larder stuffed with gastronomic delights, in *The Pursuit of Love* by Nancy Mitford, made my stomach tingle. In recent years, one of my favourite holidays was a trip to a remote Scottish island, where, in the absence of any source of fresh supplies, my friends and I caught and ate mackerel and mussels and made our own bread. So when, in late February, I fell ill with a nasty cough soon after returning from Venice and was obliged to go into isolation, I have to admit that the idea of being holed up at home, forced to be creative by a dwindling store cupboard, did have a certain appeal.

My confinement, anyway, came at an optimal time. Only two days before, amid a general sense of foreboding, I'd done a little stocking up. I'd bought plenty of lemons and garlic for vitamin C, a bit of pasta and rice, root vegetables, onions and apples, as well as a concise war chest of dried goods and tins. I'd also made a potful of chicken stock and frozen it in handy tubs. I was in that twilight zone between proper sickness and health: not so ill that I felt miserable, but not well enough

to do much either. Resting seemed like the best course of (in)action, so I spent my days bed-snuggling or sofa-surfing, drinking warm drinks and fantasising about food.

For the first few days, I just tried to eat healthily. I drank squeezed lemons in warm water, assembled salads and made vegetable soups. I chopped raw garlic cloves like a Shaanxi native. Breaking into my stock of tins and jars, I made pasta with ready-made pesto, ate tinned sardines with a squeeze of lemon and resurrected a stand-by dish of my childhood, corned beef hash. But I began to get bored.

As the days went on, my gastronomic imaginings became more baroque. Sitting on the sofa, I remembered I had a pheasant in the freezer. As it defrosted, I made a three-day plan so exciting it made my mouth water. The first evening, I marinated the bird in soy sauce and Shaoxing wine and then pot-roasted it in a lotus leaf, like a simplified version of Hangzhou beggar's chicken. I ate one breast and leg with the potatoes that I'd tucked into the pot, sumptuous pan juices and crabapple jelly. It was quite absurdly delicious. I forgot my ticklish lungs and my solitude. Later, I made a stock from the carcass and the lotus leaf, and magical aromas filled my kitchen.

The next day, I concocted a pheasant and dried porcini risotto with some of the stock and leftover meat, and sprinkled the lazy mass of silken rice with grated Parmesan. It was one ►

Bunker Food Fuchsia Dunlop

Pot roast pheasant in lotus leaf

This is a simplified version of the famous Hangzhou dish "beggar's chicken", where a whole chicken is wrapped in a lotus leaf and encased in clay before roasting. Traditionally, it is sent to table with a wooden mallet for cracking open the clay. According to legend, the cooking method was devised by a beggar who stole a chicken and, lacking any pot or pan, simply wrapped it in leaves and mud and cooked it in the embers of his fire. At home in England, I've sometimes substituted a salt-crust pastry for the clay: highly effective, but after an assault by the mallet, one does end up with shards of pastry flying about the room. For this recipe, I've used the classic seasonings, stuffing and

leaf but let a clay pot take the place of mud, sealing in the steam and letting the bird roast juicily. (A "chicken brick" would also work perfectly.)

The lotus leaf (available in good Chinese supermarkets) gives the meat and juices a fabulous aroma, but the dish is also delicious without it. If you do use a leaf, the combination of its scent with those of the meat and mushrooms in the stuffing will create a marvellous South Tyrol-meets-Hangzhou flavour. If you wish, do as I did and add some chunks of peeled potato, parboiled for five minutes in salty water, to the pot. Carrots would be a delicious addition too.

- 1 dried lotus leaf
- 1 pheasant (pigeon, guinea fowl or small chicken), ready to cook (725g)
- 2 rashers thick-cut streaky bacon, with rind
- 1-2 wooden cocktail sticks

For the marinade

- A 10g piece of ginger, skin on
- 1 spring onion, white part only
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1½ tbs Shaoxing wine
- 1 tbs light soy sauce
- ¼ tsp dark soy sauce

For the stuffing

- 1 leek, white part only
- 2 dried shiitake mushrooms
- 1 tbs cooking oil
- ¼ tsp salt

Photographs by Yuki Sugiura



Pot roast pheasant in lotus leaf *Continued*

1 — Cover the dried mushrooms in hot water from the kettle and leave to soak for at least half an hour. Soak the lotus leaf briefly in hot water from the kettle to soften it: the best way to do this is to hold it over a pan and pour over some hot water, poking the rest of the large leaf into the pan as it softens and becomes pliable. Leave in the water until needed.

If you wish to make the other recipes, eat half the pheasant, then shred and keep the remaining meat. Put the carcass and leg bones in a pan with the lotus leaf and cover generously with water; bring to the boil and simmer for an hour to make a stock.

2 — Slice into the skin between the pheasant's body and legs on each side. Pull out and dislocate the leg joints but leave them attached to

the body. Then press down hard on the breast bone to break it. Place the bird in a bowl, add the marinade ingredients and rub them all over the bird, inside and out. Leave in a cool place for at least an hour.

3 — Make the stuffing: cut the trimmed leek into 6-7cm sections and then lengthwise into fine slivers. Finely slice the soaked mushroom caps, discarding any stalks. Heat the oil in a wok over a high flame. Add the mushrooms, sizzle for a few moments, then tip in the leeks and stir-fry until tender, seasoning with the salt to taste. Set aside to cool.

4 — Set the oven to 220C (fan assist).

5 — When you are ready to roast the bird, remove and discard the

ginger and spring onion from the marinade. Lay the lotus leaf on a plate, shiny side up. Lay the bird in the centre of the leaf and fill it with the prepared stuffing. Pour over the rest of the marinade. Cut the bacon rashers in half and lay the pieces over the breast. Wrap the leaf around the bird to enclose it completely and fix with a cocktail stick or two (if you are not using a leaf, use the cocktail sticks to fix the bacon to the bird). Place it in an ovenproof casserole and cover with a lid. If you wish, you can surround it with small chunks of potato that have been parboiled in salty water for about five minutes.

6 — Place the pot in the preheated oven and roast for 55 minutes. Remove from the oven and rest for 10-15 minutes without removing the lid. Serve.



◀ of the finest risottos I'd ever made; alone, I gave it my full attention. I could only laugh at myself. I hadn't been out for days and was slopping around in my dressing gown, yet I was eating better than I had done for ages, simply because I was home all the time, stocked up and with little to do besides plan the next meal. I was lonely, but the cooking was fun. I felt like the king of my castle, the quarantine queen.

The pheasant fed me for longer than I'd expected. I rolled the remaining risotto into discs, dipped them in bread crumbs and made arancini, which I ate with homemade sauerkraut. Another day, I cooked some frozen edamame beans with a softened leek, Chinese pickles and a few shreds of meat, eating this delectable stew with brown rice. The last gasp of the bird, which selfishly I felt had not died in vain, was a pheasant noodle soup made with the remains of the meat and stock: glorious. By this time, I was well again, and had tested negative for the virus. But I was still thinking of all the other meals I could make with the ingredients in my fridge and larder, in ever more unlikely combinations.

Although I've devoted my career to a foreign cuisine, at heart I'm an extremely practical home cook, having learnt from my mother how to eat resourcefully and thriftily. Give me a whole fish and a slab of pork and I can make you a Chinese banquet - but I can also rustle up a tasty, nourishing meal out of virtually anything. During my quarantine, local friends had offered to help with supplies but I wanted to accept the challenge of living for an indeterminate period on what I had in store. Like most reasonably well-off Londoners, I'm used to the privilege of being able to eat almost whatever I want, whenever I want it. Suddenly, the resources were exact and finite. I decided to consider it a dry run for worse things that might happen in the future, to play the game: a sort of solitary *Ready Steady Cook*, survival-lite.

Barely two weeks later, with coronavirus cases shooting up the curve and a lockdown in place across the UK, the cooking game is truly

on and is already getting more serious. Restaurants have closed and companies delivering provisions cannot keep up with demand. Who knows what the longer-term effects of this wartime footing may be on our supplies of food and the way we eat? The crisis is a reminder of so many things, not least the critical importance of cooking skills, whoever you are.


There is a freedom in knowing that you can make a decent meal from whatever is available, in anything but the most desperate circumstances. While writing this piece, I popped out to my local supermarket: it was like a war zone, with rationing, stripped shelves and long queues. But, like other cooks, I had the comfort of knowing that even if the obvious foods - the pasta, tinned tomatoes and sardines - ran out, I could probably make do. I had bags of flour: I could make bread or noodles. I could even, if necessary, turn dried soyabeans into bean sprouts or tofu. As long as I could lay my hands on something edible, I could make a meal.

In what seemed until last week to be normal times, I found my own obsession with food faintly ridiculous; I'm the caricature of a high-falutin, globetrotting, metropolitan foodie. But the pandemic is showing me how quickly I can shift into another gear if required, and use my skills to help myself and others. Knowledge of good food and cooking is not frivolous, it's a mainstay. The same skills that enable someone to transform a game bird into days of meals can be applied to any ingredient. Show me a cabbage, and I'll show you 10 dishes: that's a more useful education than a degree. Something to remember, I hope, during the difficult months to come - and when all this is over.

A frozen pheasant for company

Self-isolation is psychologically taxing, but in the absence of serious illness, good food can be a great consolation. Why not make a nice lunch, lay the table for yourself, light a candle even - and keep feeling part of civilisation? It doesn't have to be fancy: a simple salad or scrambled eggs, attentively made and eaten, can lighten the gloom. Alternatively, if you have a good bottle of wine you've been keeping for a special occasion or something special in the freezer, perhaps now's the time to bring it out.

Being stuck at home has some advantages, food-wise: it allows time to make stocks and stews, to wait for bread to rise, to make your own sauerkraut, to read cookbooks and, above all, to dream up inventive ways to use whatever's in your larder. It can also reduce waste, because there's no chance of going out for dinner and forgetting about leftovers that need eating up.

During my first week of total isolation, I was lucky to find I had an unexpected companion in my pheasant. Although they are no longer in season, frozen birds can be hunted down; alternatively, the same recipes can equally be applied (with adjusted measurements and timings) to pigeon, guinea fowl or even a small chicken. If you're cooking for one, a pheasant will give you five meals; for two, it will supply a fine roast dinner and a risotto. 

Next week: Tim Hayward.

More columns at ft.com/food-drink



Pheasant and porcini risotto

This recipe makes enough risotto for two. If you're cooking for one, the remaining risotto can be pan-fried the next day, or shaped into discs or balls, dipped in beaten egg and plain flour, and then deep-fried to make arancini.

- About a litre of strained pheasant stock
- Small onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbs butter
- 1-2 tbs olive oil
- 200g risotto rice (carnaroli or arborio), rinsed
- 2 tbs Shaoxing wine or a dash of white wine
- 20g dried porcini mushrooms
- Up to 100g leftover pheasant meat, shredded
- Grated Parmesan cheese (to serve)

1 — Heat the stock and keep it warm.

2 — Over a gentle heat, soften the chopped onion in the butter and olive oil without letting it colour. Add the rice, turn the heat up to medium and stir for a couple of minutes. Then add the wine and stir as the liquid evaporates.

3 — Add the dried mushrooms and a ladleful of stock and stir in. Season with a little salt to taste. Gradually add the rest of the stock, a ladleful at a time, stirring constantly as the liquid is absorbed. When you've added about half of the stock, stir in the shredded pheasant. Keep adding stock until the rice is just cooked but faintly al dente and the risotto has a soft, lazy consistency. Add more salt to taste if necessary, then switch off the heat, cover the pot and set aside for a few minutes. Serve with grated Parmesan.

Pheasant and green soyabean stew

If you only served pheasant to one person, you should have enough meat and stock left for another couple of meals. To make the soyabean stew with frozen edamame beans, first soften a sliced leek in olive oil or butter, without colouring it. Add 250g of frozen beans (or peas) and half the remaining pheasant meat. If you have any Sichuan preserved mustard tuber (*zhacai*), shred some and add about 3 tbs to the pot. Add enough stock to nearly cover, with salt to taste. Simmer until the beans are hot and have absorbed the flavours of the stew. Adjust seasoning and serve with rice or mashed potatoes.

Pheasant noodle soup

Reheat the remaining pheasant stock with the remaining scraps of meat and season to taste with salt and pepper (you will need about 300ml for one serving); keep warm. Bring a large pan full of water to the boil. Blanch a handful of leafy greens in the water and then refresh under the cold tap: spinach, pak choi, pea shoots or little gem lettuce are all fine. Pour 1 tsp sesame oil into a serving bowl. Tip 100g dried noodles or 150g fresh noodles into the water and cook to your liking. Strain 300ml of stock into your serving bowl. Add the drained, cooked noodles. Top with the greens and the pheasant meat. Sprinkle with some finely sliced spring onion greens if you wish. You can serve some chilli sauce on the side.

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EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Jancis Robinson

Investing in wine

Part 1

If it doesn't spark joy - sell it

So strong is the collecting instinct that many of those who start to buy wine seriously end up with collections that would take a couple of lifetimes to consume. As one particularly avid collector put it to me when I asked how long he would have to live to consume every bottle: "I've never done the calculation because - unless I lose my taste buds and have a garage sale - I know I shall die with far more wine in my cellar than I can possibly drink. And I'm still buying almost as fast as I can drink, if not faster."

Ian Mill QC saw the writing on the wall at just the right moment. On October 26 2019, he sold about 65 per cent of his collection through Zachys, New York, netting \$8m and setting 353 world records for prices of individual wines, mainly fashionable burgundy. He had been intending to leave the wine in bond in England but, to encourage bids from the American wine trade, Zachys advised him to ship the wine to the US in advance of the sale. It arrived days before a 25 per cent tariff on wine imported from Europe was imposed.

With 7,000 bottles of handpicked, professionally stored fine wine to sell, Mill was heavily courted by the major auctioneers. Sotheby's had initially proposed holding the sale in Hong Kong, which - given the unrest and economic meltdown there - would not have been so clever as it turned out. As Mill notes now about the Zachys sale at three-star restaurant Le Bernardin: "The timing was great, as the market was just starting to dip." Prices for high-end wines have softened considerably since he sold.

Mill chose the US wine retailer and auctioneer because he felt Zachys' love for his collection and was impressed by their creativity about how best to sell it. The company organised dinners for potential bidders: chez Alain Passard in Normandy; at Fäviken



As imagined by Leon Edler

Less successful wine investments

All prices for a case of 12 regular 75cl bottles, from Liv-ex, the fine wine database and trading platform.

Buying Bordeaux en primeur, in the spring after the harvest, has been financially rewarding only for the vintages 2008, 2012 and 2014 in recent years.

The most obvious examples of this were the 2009 first growth Bordeaux. Examples: Ch Lafite 2009 released

in 2010 at £13,000 and peaked at £14,500 in January 2011. It is now £7,000. Ch Margaux 2009 released in 2010 at £8,500 and peaked at £8,950 in April 2011. It is now £6,080.

Many of the 2010 Bordeaux were overpriced too. Liv-ex compared prices on release in 2011 with those in February 2020 and found that 23 of the prime 50 wines had fallen in price since they were offered en primeur.

The most extreme example of rise and fall is

Ch Lafite 2008, embossed with a "lucky" eight for the then rapturous Chinese market.

It was released at a relatively modest £1,850 but if you bought at the peak of the market in February 2011 you would have had to pay £14,200. It is currently selling at £7,000.

Prices for Sauternes in general have also fallen, regrettably. Ch d'Yquem 2010 has steadily declined since its release in 2011 at £4,700. It is now £2,580.



just before the world-famous Swedish restaurant closed for good, and at The Modern in New York. The idea of these dinners was to show off some of the wines. As Mill reports happily: "Every bottle sang, and I'm sure that had an effect."

"The people at the dinners bought heavily and I've had nothing but nice words since the sale about how the wines are showing. The wines were sold under my name and I think that probably helped as well, so buyers could have confidence in the provenance of the wine." You can't complain about out-of-condition bottles to an anonymous vendor.

Mills's love affair with burgundy was ignited, as so often, by a

'Half his collection sparked no joy whatsoever, notably new-world fruit bombs and special cuvée Châteauneufs'

single bottle. A Grand Cru white burgundy, Domaine Leflaive's 1982 Bâtard-Montrachet. "It was infanticide to drink it in 1995, of course, but it completely blew my mind." Mill reports that he became "indoctrinated" when he lived close to the shop operated in the 1980s by Jasper Morris, who would go on to become a notable burgundy expert.

"When I started buying from Jasper, I met all these amazing burgundy producers. Those were magical times," he remembers happily, musing further on the psychology of wine-buying.

"You start off completely convinced you're going to drink everything you buy. So, for example, I bought everything duty-paid initially. But, from about 1999, I started to buy in bond because I realised I was going to sell some of my wine. I took a view 15 years ago that equities were an extremely dull investment and that I could do better in wine." ▶



'Prices can go down as well as up. Wine is by no means a sure-fire investment'

◀ By 1992, he was already a shareholder in Morris's business Morris & Verdin, as well as later owning a 10 per cent share in Jean-Yves Devevey's Beaune Premier Cru. Today, he is also a shareholder in Cabotte, a burgundy-focused restaurant located in London.

I was inspired to write about selling wine by Thomas De Waen, a wine-mad Belgian private equity executive. He emailed excitedly to tell me about his experience: "I had too much wine in my cellar and figured that, Marie Kondo-style, I would sell off anything that did not spark joy. It felt very liberating. Everyone with a big cellar should do this."

He realised that about half his wine collection, bought when he was less sure of his tastes, sparked no joy whatsoever, notably "new-world fruit bombs, special cuvée Châteauneufs and old wines that should have been drunk long ago". He also admits to having been caught up by the hype surrounding some producers and specific wines. "If at some point you develop a true independent taste, you wake up one day and realise that you actually have zero interest in all that Super Tuscan, bordeaux, Grand Cru white burgundy, Guigal La Las, etc that you bought because they were desirable."

He looked systematically and critically at every wine he owned. "For me, the results were eye-opening," he says, and suggested that, "once you go past £20 a bottle, there is very little relationship between the price of a bottle and

how much you're looking forward to drinking it." Accordingly, he cleared out those unwanted bottles and says he's "very happy" he did so.

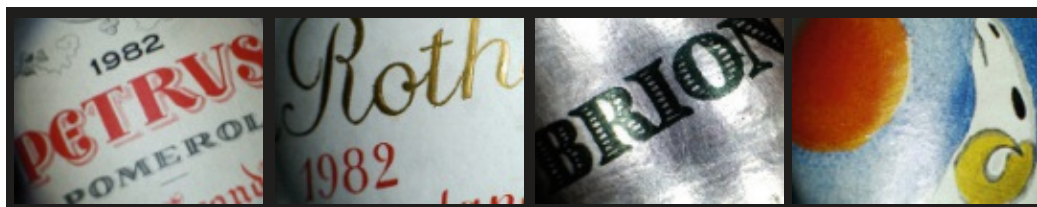
You don't need a big collection to make money. My brother-in-law amassed quite a few bottles of Dom Pérignon during his previous career. He was very pleased by the three-figure sum each raised when sold by his local auctioneer who, unlike major auction houses, was not particularly interested in exactly how they had been stored.

By contrast, the avid collector referred to at the top of this article has sold wine only twice: "A case of 1983 Le Pin, which I sold when it reached £3,000 [having paid less than £300 for it], and a half-case of 1982 Château Lafite when the Chinese were chasing up the value - or, rather, price - and it reached £24,000 a case."

He defends his collecting habit thus: "I say to myself that since I have mainly bought good wine, which appreciates on the whole, I can always sell it when the Tories have destroyed the NHS and I need money for a high-priced, privately turned wooden leg."

But prices can go down as well as up. Wine is by no means a sure-fire investment, as is evident at the bottom of the previous page. Auctions are the most obvious place to sell wine, but there are several other options available to collectors nowadays. I shall be examining them all next week. **FT**

More columns at ft.com/jancis-robinson



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FT Weekend



I'D BE LOST WITHOUT...

Ginger

Its bold flavours are central to any Indian dish, writes chef *Rohit Ghai*. Just be mindful when you use it – early for mildness, later for pungency. Illustration by *Anna Bu Kliewer*

I grew up near Delhi, in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, where ginger is integral to the local cuisine. My mother used it like it was going out of fashion, especially during the winter months. Her dry ginger powder – ground from dried ginger roots – would find its way into fragrant teas, home-made pickles and a fabulous tamarind chutney. Even as a kid, I loved the sharp, zesty taste of ginger. Today, its aroma transports me to my childhood.

Before ginger became essential to my larder, I used it as a natural home remedy. My mother taught me that just a few drops of fresh ginger juice with some sweet honey (ideally manuka) can reduce the risk of catching a winter bug, and I've passed this on to my own young family.

Ginger has been celebrated in Indian cooking for thousands of years – it is fundamental to those bold flavours. In fact, it isn't really worth approaching Indian cooking without it.

Ginger-and-garlic paste is the best place to start, an excellent foundation to any Indian dish. It's easy to make at home and can last a few weeks if sealed in an airtight container and refrigerated. Blend ginger and garlic

with a pinch of salt, turmeric and a drizzle of oil (don't be alarmed if it turns bluish-green in colour). I use equal measures of garlic and ginger. It's great for tenderising meat – and it even helps my digestion.

Enhancing sweet, savoury and spicy dishes, ginger can be used in every course and in drinks too. It is central, for example, in marinating tandoori dishes. A simple marinade of ginger garlic paste, a little oil, lemon juice and salt can go a long way – just massage it into the main ingredient before cooking.

On the whole, the earlier ginger is used in the cooking process, the milder its effect; it's more pungent if added nearer the end. It's also important to remember that dried ginger is often much hotter than fresh ginger, and the older it is, the stronger the taste. At Kutir, we use dried ginger in our *chaat*, a chickpea mixture with tamarind chutney, for our *aloo tikki* dish. It features prominently on our vegan menu too – in the aubergine dumplings, for example, and the wild morels. **FT**

Rohit Ghai is chef-patron of Kutir in Chelsea; kutir.co.uk

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All in the family

Rowley Leigh pays tribute to Michel Roux Sr, the three-star chef who became a mentor to a generation of cooks



MICHEL ROUX (SECOND FROM RIGHT) WITH (FROM LEFT) NEPHEW MICHEL JR, BROTHER ALBERT AND SON ALAIN AT THE WATERSIDE INN, 1998

Michel Roux, whose death was announced by the family 10 days ago, was the son of a feckless father. He, like his brother Albert – and famed chef Marie-Antoine Carême 150 years previously – went to work at a patisserie at the age of 14. Michel rose to the very top as a pastry cook, winning the prestigious title of *Meilleur Ouvrier de France*. He then migrated to the kitchen, entering private service with the Rothschilds – again, just as Carême had done. Albert, who had also taken the pastry route, then lured Michel to England.

Carême came to England to work for the Prince Regent but was put off by the weather. The brothers found the climate more hospitable. Like PG Wodehouse's Anatole, they discovered that the English upper classes appreciated French haute cuisine. Thanks to Albert's connections, they opened *Le Gavroche* in London, despite having virtually no experience of cooking in a restaurant and none of running one.

Initially, the brothers exchanged roles on a weekly basis, working in the dining room one week and the kitchen the next. Some of the cooks found it difficult to adjust to the brothers' preferences – having to remember, for example, that Michel liked his omelette a lovely golden brown whereas his brother abhorred colour and demanded the finished product should be “as smooth as a baby's bottom”. There were other differences too but it took nearly 20 years before they had an amicable divorce while maintaining a united front in public.

Once Michel had his independence, he flourished. The *Waterside Inn* in Bray, under his direction, was a centre of excellence. As one of my many duties as Albert's factotum, I used to deliver the produce from Rungis Market in Paris twice a week, and the brigade pored over the latest bounty with a spontaneous enthusiasm led by its genial father. The *Waterside* was a happy place. He may have been a stickler for the highest standards but Michel was no martinet.

The Waterside Inn was a happy place. Michel may have been a stickler for the highest standards but he was no martinet

The style of cooking was often inventive (though I am not sure if the veal with pineapple or the rabbit with *marrons glacés* have stood the test of time) but, while it aimed for freshness and lightness, it was always, however novel, firmly founded in classical methods. He once showed me his “new creation”, a roast duck with citrus fruits, and offered me a taste of the sauce, flavoured with orange and grapefruit juice. “It's just *sauce bigarade*,” I thought to myself, slightly missing the point that it may have been *sauce bigarade* but it was his *sauce bigarade*.

Michel respected tradition and espoused evolution, not just in his

cooking but in his mentoring of young talent. He was rightly proud of his Roux Scholarship, which has nurtured several brilliant young chefs. The main prize was three months in a three-star restaurant in France of the winner's choice, a prize nobody else could possibly have awarded but was guaranteed by the brothers' stature among the confraternity of Michelin chefs.

Over and above this nurturing of talent, Michel kept in touch. He was supportive of cooks everywhere but especially those members of the “family”, like myself, who had spread their wings. He would visit every new venture, be effusive in his praise and discreet in his misgivings.

His other legacy was a series of highly successful books, always produced with great skill and exactitude. The innumerable recipes are always clear, carefully thought out and equally carefully measured. They were also very profitable. He sold more than two and a half million of them: unlike Carême, Michel did not make the mistake of being poor. With properties in Provence and Switzerland, and an impressive wine cellar, he enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle.

Learning his trade in a feudal atmosphere and in the service of the rich, he was never arrogant and generally followed the dictum that the customer was always right. Almost always.

A couple at lunch were given the best table in the house, on a raised platform overlooking the restaurant. Almost at once they started to complain. They complained of a draught, they complained that their starters took too long, the soup was not hot enough, culminating with the complaint that their meat was not cooked enough, by which time the waiters were at their wits' end. Michel ordered that their plates were removed. Then the cutlery and the glassware were taken away. Then two waiters lifted the round table and took that away, leaving the ungracious guests sitting on their chairs with their napkins on their laps. Carême may have stomped out of a couple of jobs but he would never have done that. We will miss Michel Roux. **FT**

Games



A Round on the Links by James Walton

All the answers here are linked in some way. Once you've spotted the link, any you didn't know the first time around should become easier.

1. Which British mobile phone company was rebranded as T-Mobile in 2003?

2. Which Shakespeare play is set in Vienna?

3. What was the recruiting slogan for the US Army between 1980 and 2001?

4. In the King James Bible, what's the first sentence spoken by the preacher in the Book of Ecclesiastes?

5. Between 1971 and 1977 – and again between 1990 and 1994 – which catchphrase was used to introduce the BBC TV game show based on the Dutch programme *One of the Eight*?

6. Which much-mocked three-word phrase did Theresa May (right) first



use on July 11 2016 while running for the Conservative leadership?

7. Which 1979 film starred Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep (above) as a divorcing couple?

8. Major Tom featured in two number one singles by David Bowie: *Space Oddity* – and what?

9. Who wrote *Three Men in a Boat*?

10. In country dancing, what does the instruction "dosey doe" mean?



The Picture Round by James Walton

Who or what do these pictures add up to?



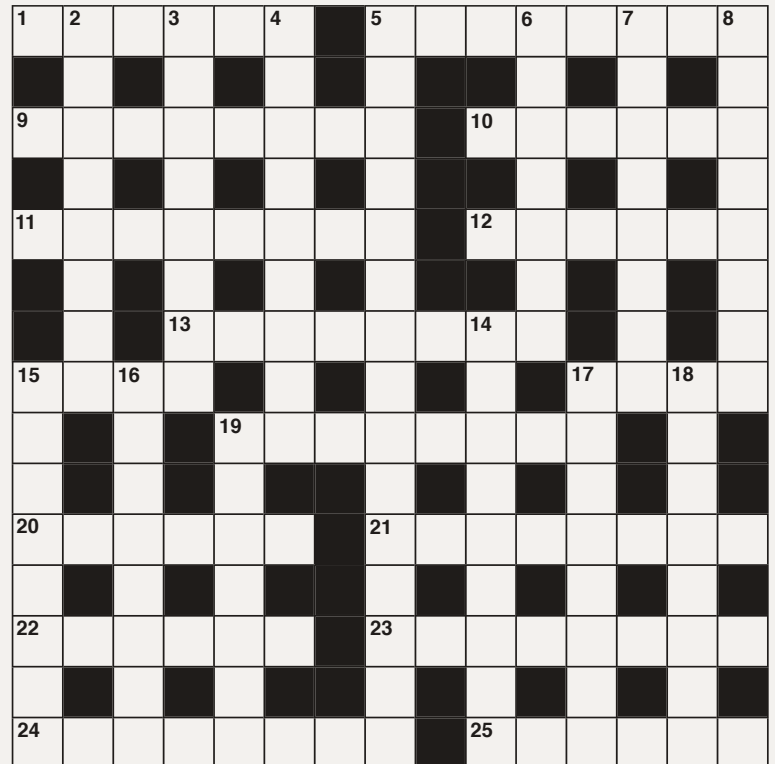
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Answers page 10

The Crossword No 481. Set by Aldhelm



The Across clues are straightforward, while the Down clues are cryptic.

ACROSS

- 1** Astronomical distance (6)
5 Embassy worker (8)
9 Filbert (8)
10 Method, way (6)
11 Piet ____, 20th-century Dutch artist (8)
12 Himalayan guide (6)
13 One owed money (8)
15 Quick kiss (4)
17 Quiche (4)
19 19th-century French novelist (8)
20 Select (6)
21 Enhanced (8)
22 Creature (6)
23 Caribbean island (8)
24 Overpower (8)
25 Young bird of prey (6)

DOWN

- 2** Non-digital architecture primarily redesigning a lounge (8)
3 Bird kept in drain (8)
4 Happy when going around popular part of the world (9)
5 Place to keep people occupied, initially, with decent internet organised (9, 6)
6 Beat first of eggs encircled by foam (7)
7 Post boxes working with alternative transport system (8)
8 Herb's horribly arrogant (8)
14 Cultivate white rose differently (9)
15 Fish cheek served up with green vegetable (8)

- 16** Chemical much altered around digital memory current (8)
17 Gathering a velvet-like pattern (8)
18 Come before magistrate, finally, after one got to attend nervously (8)
19 Help us getting over disgrace (7)

Solution to Crossword No 480





GILLIAN TETT

PARTING SHOT

The coronavirus should not stop the US census



Last week, an envelope dropped through my front door marked “Census 2020” and “Your Response Is Required By Law”. In normal circumstances, I might have chucked it on to my pile of bills and ignored it until the last minute. But now I am trapped at home. So I opened the envelope, went online to complete the survey – and then felt a twinge of moral satisfaction, not just because I had ticked a job off my “to do” list, but for two bigger reasons as well.

One is the fact that we all need to find ways to uphold civil society and democracy right now – and in the US (like most other countries), the census is a cornerstone of this. So much so, in fact, that the Founding Fathers embedded the census into the constitution and it has been conducted every 10 years since, irrespective of domestic strife or economic depression. The only time that Congress has rejected its results was in 1920, when politicians refused to believe the tally of urban immigrants (in 1930, Congress also insisted that the unemployment count was redone).

Of course, some might argue that there is a case to delay the 2020 census, given the extraordinary current circumstances. Perhaps so. Normally, the schedule for the census mandates that households should return their forms, voluntarily, by April 1. Fieldworkers then do house-to-house calls to chase up non-respondents until late July. The latter is clearly impossible to organise right now.

But the fact that the census can be completed online at home should make it possible to finish the voluntary submissions; and even if fieldworker visits need to be delayed, it would be a grave mistake to use the coronavirus to scrap the 2020 census or delay it indefinitely. After all, it is not just an administrative task; it is a crucial process in enabling government to allocate resources fairly (and manage voting procedures accurately).

These principles desperately need to be upheld, particularly given the risk that the current crisis will undermine all manner of other government norms (not to mention the ways in which the Trump administration has compromised the status of government processes over the past three years). However, there is another, bigger reason why the census matters: the pandemic illustrates the importance of counting populations. It also shows that the Trump administration has been deeply misguided in arguing in recent years that only legal US citizens matter in this respect.

Historically, the decennial census has not tackled the citizenship issue head on because it has usually only counted residents, not citizens. Although counting the former is definitely required under the constitution, the latter is not. However, the Trump administration has been pressing to insert a question about citizenship status into the 2020 census, unleashing intense legal controversy.

While this campaign was recently blocked in court, it has unleashed so much controversy that

it has already had a dangerously debilitating effect: census officials and experts are quietly warning that, even without the coronavirus, many immigrants – legal and illegal – may simply refuse to take part out of fear that they (or their families) will be reported to immigration officials.

Some Trump supporters might argue this does not matter; indeed, civil liberties groups suspect that the furore has been deliberately amplified in order to reduce the participation of immigrant-heavy communities, and thus diminish their political voice and future resources. If this is true, it is short-sighted. The coronavirus shows that non-citizens shape the fabric of society as well as

‘We all need to find ways to uphold civil society and democracy right now – and the census is a cornerstone of this’

citizens, and not just because all humans spread germs. They also often do vital, low-paid jobs in retail, social care, delivery services and food production. We ignore the vulnerable at our own peril: not counting them is a mistake – legal or not.

In an ideal world, this suggests that the White House should get involved in the communications programme to back the census. They should reassure people that the data will not be used against them – and mean it. Of course, in the real world, given Trump’s stance, this is unlikely to happen.

The best hope lies with the ranks of highly committed (largely apolitical) statisticians in the Census Bureau. They have scrambled in the past year to develop better computing tools to preserve anonymity in surveys. More recently, an informal coalition of past and present census department officials has been working with other government statisticians to develop a back-up plan in case the census fails, by amassing alternative sources of data – both from the public and private sector – for a “shadow census” this summer.

They hope this will provide a way to test the veracity of the “real” census and enable the bureau to adopt more cutting-edge data search tools in future years. “No one wants to see a census fail,” explains one top former census official, who is part of an informal group of departmental alumni who are so alarmed about the situation that they are discreetly trying to help.

Whether it works remains to be seen. But the bureau will have more chance of success if it gets government backing – and popular support. So, if you live in the US and get that census envelope, I would urge you to reply (or just go online). If your kids are at home with you, do it together, as a civics lesson. After all, we all need to uphold civic values in these troubled times; it matters who counts.

.....
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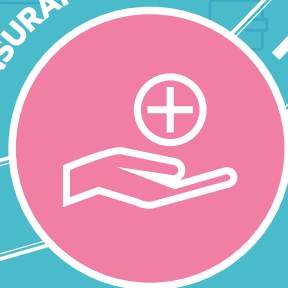
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