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FT Weekend Magazine

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Why an Italian monastery is part of Steve Bannon's plans for a populist Europe. By Hannah Roberts

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'There has never been more interest in women's cricket'

Ellyse Perry, p22



KATRIN KOENNING



'The EU aims to go carbon neutral by 2050 – yet Poland is building new coal-fired power plants'

A country built on coal, p26



'This is a foolproof recipe for those who don't do dessert'

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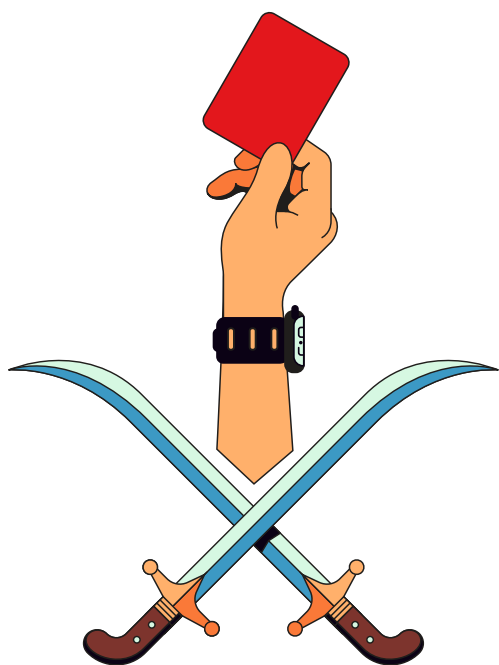
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SIMON KUPER

OPENING SHOT

Fifa's dangerous game: the Saudi World Cup plan



Saudi Arabia just executed 37 people. It is leading a military intervention in Yemen that has triggered the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. It is also leading an ineffectual economic blockade of its hated little neighbour, Qatar. The regime continues to arrest women's rights activists; some have been tortured. All this seems to be the kingdom's way of living down its sawing to pieces of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi last October.

Yet Saudi Arabia now hopes to co-host the world's biggest party. Nearly a decade after Qatar was crowned host of the 2022 World Cup, the kingdom has belatedly decided to pursue international prestige through football. Helped by the global football authority Fifa, the Saudis want to muscle into the hosting of 2022 and stage some matches. At the very least, they intend to force Qatar to share its party with other Gulf states.

The game-changer - the thing that makes the Saudis' ambition credible - is that their friend, Fifa's president Gianni Infantino, wants to expand the next World Cup from 32 teams to 48. Fifa's feasibility study said this would require at least two more stadiums in one other country. Fifa and Qatar are now working on a proposal for an expanded World Cup. This would be put to Fifa's next congress, in Paris on June 5, two years to the day after the Saudi-led blockade of Qatar began. (Fifa is also looking into moving its headquarters from Zurich to Paris, but that's another story.)

The additional matches would generate an estimated \$400m in revenue. The 200-plus presidents of national football federations will always opt for more money and more berths in the World Cup, so if they get to vote, the proposal should pass. Qatar would hate that, but it doesn't want to upset Fifa or be seen to block the stampede to the trough.

The question then is which country or countries in the Gulf would co-host. Fifa wants the issue sorted by the summer. The only palatable choices for Qatar are Oman and Kuwait, both of which sat out the blockade. Indeed, Fifa asked them first. But Oman said it wasn't ready, and Kuwait doesn't seem desperate either. Moreover, as a dry country that bans anyone with an Israeli passport, it's an inconvenient host.

Fifa's feasibility study (seen by the Associated Press) says: "Due to the geopolitical situation in the region and the recent blockade that Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have imposed on Qatar, the involvement of such countries in organising a co-hosted tournament with Qatar would require the lifting of such blockade."

These words open the route to a deal: the Saudis agree to drop the blockade (which hasn't hurt Qatar much anyway) and, in return, they (and possibly other neighbours) share the World Cup. Infantino could then preen as peacemaker of the Gulf and fantasise about a Nobel Peace Prize.

He would tout the World Cup as his cunning plan to liberalise Saudi Arabia through football.

But his real aim is to please his biggest funders. Saudi and Emirati money was central to last year's offer of \$25bn - fronted by Japanese tech conglomerate SoftBank - to create two new international football tournaments, a revamped club World Cup and a global Nations League. The plan has since stalled, but Infantino correctly called the \$25bn "the - by far - highest investment football has ever seen". For comparison, Fifa's revenues from the last World Cup (its only reliable cash cow)

'Saudi and Emirati money was central to last year's offer of \$25bn to create two new international tournaments'

were \$5.4bn. No wonder Infantino has become chummy with Saudi Arabia's young crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman ("MBS"). They sat fraternally with Vladimir Putin at the opening match of the Russian World Cup, MBS grinning ruefully as Saudi Arabia lost 5-0 to the hosts.

Now Qatar is unhappily negotiating with Fifa about how exactly to expand the World Cup. After 10 years planning the tournament, taking heat over its poor labour standards and alleged corruption in the initial bid, to have to include the Saudis or Emiratis even as junior partners would feel like defeat.

Saudi Arabia's plan may yet fail. Qatar might succeed in insisting on its existing contracts with Fifa for a 32-team tournament, says James Dorsey of Singapore's Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Middle East Institute. But if the Saudis do share the World Cup, the daily global scrutiny might shock a regime that isn't exactly a master of international public relations. Fifa is now proactively contacting human-rights groups to discuss the tournament's expansion.

Still, a few additional stains on Saudi Arabia's character wouldn't make much difference. The Khashoggi affair taught MBS that he can do what he likes. There may be some initial awkwardness, but business-class cabins to Riyadh will soon be full of westerners angling for deals again. "It's a privilege to be back in Saudi Arabia," said John Flint, HSBC's chief executive, at a Riyadh conference last month. He had pulled out of a similar conference after Khashoggi's murder.

Anointing Saudi Arabia as co-host would make the ultimate statement about today's world. The message: be as brutal as you like. The powers that be no longer even pretend to care. **FT**

.....
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'If we retreat into tribalism, we're stuffed'



INVENTORY RONA MUNRO, WRITER

Rona Munro, 59, has written extensively for stage, radio, film and TV, and recently adapted Elizabeth Strout's *My Name is Lucy Barton* for the stage. She received critical acclaim for the award-winning *The James Plays*. Her TV and film work includes *Oranges and Sunshine*, *Aimée and Jaguar*, and *Bumping the Odds* for the BBC.

What was your childhood or earliest ambition?

To be a writer. At five or six, I remember writing about a puffin and a ghost. I was determined it was going to be a novel.

Private school or state school? University or straight into work?

Both. Albyn School for Young Ladies - I'm sure it's not called that now. There was a hierarchy of the poshest schools in Aberdeen; I think we were number two. Then Mackie Academy in Stonehaven - a great state school, big and diverse

- followed by medieval European history at Edinburgh University. The medieval is exciting because there are so many gaps in our knowledge that you can fill in with imagination. People were living more extreme lives, there's a romance and a drama in that.

Who was or still is your mentor?

My mum's cousin Uncle Angus, the writer Angus MacVicar. He made a living out of writing from the end of the second world war until he died - he wrote fantastic novels and sci-fi, for radio, for journalism. Because he was in the family, I knew that it was possible to survive as a writer. He also gave me the example of putting the hours in.

How physically fit are you?

I can run a very slow marathon.

Ambition or talent: which matters more to success?

Graft and talent are the two things you need. Ambition can lead you to some false summits.

How politically committed are you?

In the tribal sense of following a party no matter what, not at all. In a community sense - both my immediate community and the broader national and international community - I try. If you had your formative years in the 1980s, there was a sense of embattlement for people with left or liberal leanings, but also that, if you kept going, things would change. Now people seem incredibly disempowered.

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

One of those Japanese baths. The plumber measured up and said, "Even if there was room, with your pipes, there's no way."

What's your biggest extravagance?

Scarves. Because of where I live and having a dog, I'm mostly in sweatshirts, but I have this idea that if I accessorise, I can look like Audrey Hepburn.

In what place are you happiest?

Selkirk, where I live. Or with my son. Combining both is the best.

What ambitions do you still have?

When I started out, my only ambition was to make a living out of this. If I can keep doing that, I still feel like I'm beating the odds.

What drives you on?

For every creative person, there must be a bit of ego, that drive for acclamation. Beyond that, the enjoyment of spinning stories.

What is the greatest achievement of your life so far?

Bringing another human being into the world and not wrecking them is probably the greatest thing anyone can do. Professionally, *The James Plays*, the scale of them. And I wrote them for myself - they're mad and daft and indulgent.

What do you find most irritating in other people?

People that dither while walking down the street, particularly in London. Abroad, I become the dithering person, of course.

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

She'd be cool with the work going all right.

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

My mother's engagement ring. Someone came to her house pretending to be servicing vacuum cleaners and it vanished.

What is the greatest challenge of our time?

To accommodate diversity - in its biggest sense - with empathy. If we retreat into tribalism, we're stuffed.

Do you believe in an afterlife?

If everything in my life is in balance, the answer to that question doesn't trouble me.

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

Eight. **FT**

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*Interview by Hester Lacey.
"Captain Corelli's Mandolin", adapted for the stage by Rona Munro, is on tour now; captaincorellismandolin.com*

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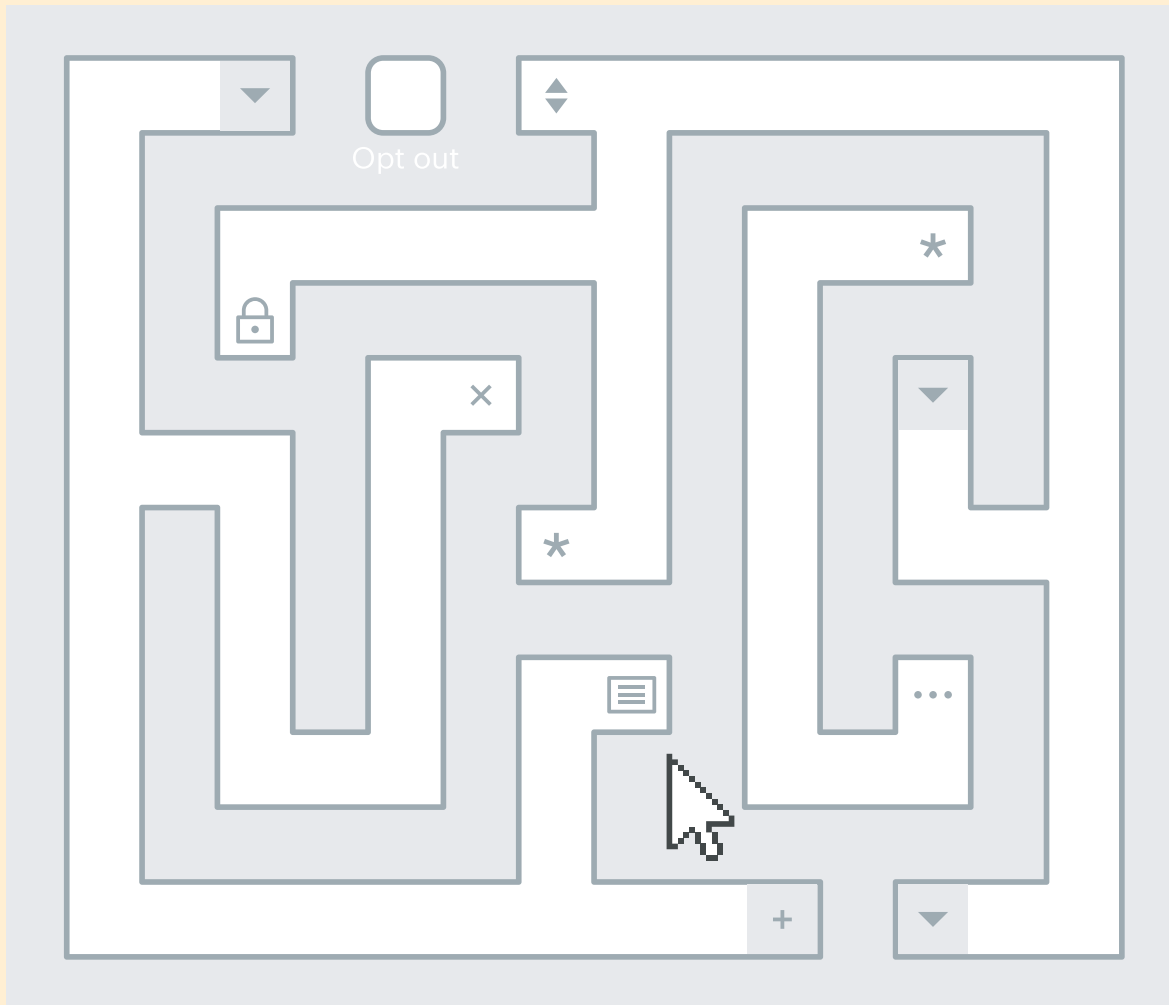


ILLUSTRATION BY PÂTE

When manipulation is the business model

We've all had that sinking feeling when you realise you've signed up for something online that you never meant to. Maybe a barrage of marketing spam you accepted by failing to tick a tiny box you never saw. Or perhaps you got to the last step of the checkout process on a shopping site, only to discover extra charges.

These little design tricks have a name: dark patterns. They're the subtle ploys many digital companies use to manipulate you into doing something, such as disclosing personal or financial details.

Often, designers exploit loopholes in human psychology. They might use colours such as red and green interchangeably,

to wrongfoot assumptions about consistency, or make "cancel" options less conspicuous by rendering them in grey, or smaller.

Harry Brignull, a user-experience consultant, has created a website listing 11 dark pattern types to watch out for. A "roach motel" is when the design makes it simple to sign up but hard to cancel (for example, a subscription); "disguised ads" masquerade as content that isn't trying to sell you something; and "privacy Zuckering" - named after Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg - is the trick of getting you to over-share data.

Brignull's site has a Hall of Shame filled with examples of trickery - such as when, in 2016, Microsoft recommended users of older versions of Windows to upgrade to Windows 10. Clicking the "x" button, which usually closes the dialogue box, actually downloaded

the software - a classic "bait-and-switch" in Brignull's taxonomy.

Last month, investigative journalism site ProPublica unearthed another example. It revealed how Intuit, an accounting software company, in effect tricks Americans into paying to file their taxes each year, even though they qualify for a fully free service.

These deceptive practices serve to boost revenue: thousands of hard-to-cancel subscriptions generate a lot of income. But the ultimate aim is to lock in more users.

"[Tech companies] recognise the irrational side of human psychology and exploit that, persuasively designing it to their own end, which is attention," says James Williams, a researcher at Oxford University who previously worked for Google and now studies questions of free will in the digital world. "At the end of the day, that's their business model."

To consumers, companies such as YouTube, Google and Twitter provide a service - be it entertainment or information. But, as Williams points out, advertising is what they actually sell. So there is an incentive to resort to manipulation - including dark patterns - to boost audience engagement and, through that, the amount advertisers will pay to reach all those eyeballs. "Whole forms of media are designed according to the incentive structures and logic of advertising," Williams says.

No segment of the audience is exempt from this logic. Last year, Jack Poulson, a computational scientist, was asked to work on a project to improve YouTube recommendations based on conversational queries. The team knew that adults generally use search keywords that computers understand, but that children use natural language. So the team was given a dataset of searches done

Clicking the 'x' button, which usually closes the dialogue box, downloaded the software

by children to train a recommendation model on.

"The whole point of modelling children better is to manipulate them better through advertising," Poulson tells me. "Am I OK with children being manipulated for some unaccountable business's purposes? There are all kinds of fraudulent ads that Google makes a lot of money from selling... you're going to obviously lead to more cases of children being [targeted] with fraudulent ads." (Poulson left Google last August in protest over its China search engine.)

So the next time you discover unexpected charges on your card for a "free trial" you thought you'd cancelled, or click on a news story that's really an advert, try not to blame yourself. Our human brains are fallible, and tech companies are well aware of their quirks. But being wise to their ruses - and motives - is the first line of defence. **FT**

Madhumita Murgia is the FT's European technology correspondent



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ROBERT SHRIMSLEY THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION

I'd like a decaf latte, frothed not foamed

I must confess that I've never really got James Bond, even before I understood that the movies were passé, predictable and paleolithic. I can see the films had a certain 1960s appeal, a throwback to a time when men were men and women were spray-painted gold and left to suffocate.

Even in the 1970s, they were already long, shallow and devoid of storyline. They were a few iconic bars of a soundtrack; "Bond, James Bond"; "shaken, not stirred" and any number of other self-reverential clichés. As a child, I somehow could never muster the sense of anticipation a new Bond film was supposed to engender, even in an era when fine food, fast cars and fast women were not widely available - well, not to me anyway.

It was not as if my life was one long cavalcade of Bond-like sophistication. Fine dining was the Angus Steak House in Wembley Hill, where the wine waiters wore burgundy blazers and served a very palatable *Tafelwein*. A fast car was my mate's Capri and, as for fast women, well, perhaps I should have worn more Denim aftershave.

So the sight of Daniel Craig posing with a bevy of Bond beauties to promote the latest movie would not ordinarily have set me aquiver with anticipation. But then I read the news that this was going to be a Bond film for the #MeToo era and now, frankly, I'm interested. The presence of *Fleabag* and *Killing Eve* writer Phoebe Waller-Bridge only adds to the sense of excitement.

Even so, you have to wonder what a Bond stripped of misogyny and casual violence brings to the party. "The name's Bond, James Bond, and this is my assistant Susan, who will be accompanying me on all private conversations with the ladies so you can be sure I won't try to force myself on you in the way that we both know you



ILLUSTRATION BY LUCAS VARELA

want. Barman, I'd like a decaf latte, frothed not foamed - oh, and hang on, I've got a loyalty card."

I'm sure Waller-Bridge can do something with him if she's allowed to do more than pep up the dialogue of the female characters. *Killing Eve's* Villanelle was a masterpiece in homicidal humour. It must be possible to construct an all-action hero, attractive to women, who doesn't talk and stalk like the office perv at the Christmas party. Still, it's a challenge. The *Fleabag* writer may start off thinking that perhaps the bad guy can be a sleazy film big shot who forces himself on beautiful women and discards them afterwards, and then she'll remember, oh no, hang on - that's the good guy.

On the other hand, a #MeToo Bond, a tongue-tied gent more in the mould of, say, Hugh Grant in *Four Weddings*, might be closer to something men like me can work with. It's a more attainable, more metrosexual form of masculinity. "Now listen here Blofeld, in the immortal words of David Cassidy... no, wait a minute, that's not right."

But there is a bigger problem. The entire notion of James Bond is clichéd and archaic. It's not just the obvious issues such as attitudes to women, which, when you think about it, are not much better than

the idea of icing prostitutes in *Grand Theft Auto*. Its vision of manly perfection no longer rings true. The Ian Fleming sense of sophistication is utterly outmoded. Bond's success was based in part on bumper budgets that delivered old-world glamour and over-engineered action. In their day they were the biggest show in town and so Bond was the pinnacle of sophistication. Now we know that Macau casinos are the height of kitsch not cool, no more the zenith of chic than the Burj Dubai is a World Heritage site. As for Eton, have you looked at parliament recently?

Some of the more recent films tried harder - *Skyfall* was not bad if you can pass over the treatment of one particular female character. But Bond has gone from being a recognisable and, I guess, aspirational stereotype to being little more than a cartoon character in an era of Marvel comic-book movies with which it cannot compete. For all the gadgetry, Bond is seriously analogue.

But perhaps *Fleabag's* Waller-Bridge, who notably wrapped up her show after just two series, can bring the Bond franchise the one thing it really needs: a conclusion. **FT**

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Reply

The interview with Warren Buffett (April 27/28) was a very good article about a man who sits head and shoulders above most others in the financial world. Hopefully, the same fate doesn't await Berkshire Hathaway that befell GEC after Arnold Weinstock's departure. Weinstock made GEC into one of the UK's largest and most profitable companies. Within five years of his departure, the shares went from £12.50 to 4p and the company's huge cash pile had disappeared. **Roger** via FT.com

"... I think that if I was working with \$1m we would have no trouble earning 50 per cent a year". If Mr Buffet could share that wisdom with me, I'd be very grateful.

Dollar Bill via FT.com

Re: China's shrinking cities (April 27/28). A great article, thanks. And a useful reminder that the country is not unique but faces the same economic and societal challenges as most of the rest of the world does.

Harry Parkes via FT.com

@paulkrugman April 28

Wow. Even China has a "declining heartland" problem, in Manchuria

Bravo Gillian Tett ("Why we need to crack open the data vault", April 27/28). It's important to keep this debate going. My supermarket knows more about my diet than I do. My bank knows more about my spending patterns than I do. When will these organisations share this information with me? Surely a nutritionally sound and financially literate customer is a better "asset"?

A liberal multicultural via FT.com

What an excellent writer you have in Tim Hayward. I much enjoyed his review of Ox Club in Leeds (April 27/28), complete with amusing references to *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *Pulp Fiction* in a single paragraph. Kudos, Mr Hayward.

Iain Mackill Shrewsbury

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In the latest episode of the FT culture podcast, author and activist DeRay Mckesson discusses rising police violence, social media and what movements such as Extinction Rebellion can learn from Black Lives Matter; ft.com/everything-else

Quiz answers The link was answers that begin with the names of birds 1. Swansea 2. Martinet 3. Titus Andronicus 4. Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift 5. Ravenscroft 6. Henry VIII 7. Finchley 8. Canary Wharf 9. Wrench 10. Lark Rise to Candleford **Picture quiz** Jack Lord + Tanya Byron = Lord Byron

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Above: Steve Bannon at the former 13th-century monastery near Trisulti, which he proposes to turn into The Academy of the Judeo-Christian West. Right: protesters, including regional councillor Daniela Bianchi (holding microphone), in March



AND ONE VILLAGE'S BATTLE TO STOP IT

Former Trump adviser Steve Bannon wants to turn a medieval Italian monastery into a finishing school for European populists. *Hannah Roberts* speaks to him – and the locals trying to stand in his way. Photographs by *Marco Bonomo*

A

t first glance Letizia Roccasecca seems an improbable figure to encounter on the front line of the push back against the global alt-right. The 64-year-old housewife and grandmother of four lives in a two-storey farmhouse in Anagni, 40 miles south of Rome, better known as the birthplace of four popes. The house used to be in the countryside but, over her lifetime, it has been swallowed up by urban sprawl. She shares it with her husband, five dogs and an insouciant trio of goats, from whom she zealously guards the hot chillies she grows on her small plot.

But appearances can be deceptive. For a decade, Roccasecca has battled powerful interests as she campaigned against the dumping of toxic industrial waste in the nearby Sacco river. The disposal of toxins in this valley is alleged to be the cause of rising rates of tumours, including among Roccasecca's neighbours, and, she believes, contributed to her sister's death from cancer. Now she has a new adversary: Steve Bannon.

One of the most influential figures in Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, Bannon spent four years before the election running the Breitbart News website, turning it into a single platform for the disparate rightwing elements of modern America, from pro-lifers and climate-change deniers to white supremacists. Since being ousted from his position as White House chief strategist in 2017, he has shifted his attention to Europe, helping launch the Brussels-based The Movement, a rightwing think-tank to support nationalist, anti-establishment groups.

With European Parliament elections to be held later this month, Bannon is attempting to reinvent himself as Europe's high priest of populism, uniting nationalist parties in shared opposition to immigration, progressive liberal values and the EU itself. Drawing on his expertise in polling, messaging, slogans and data targeting, he has toured European capitals touting himself as a mentor to a new breed of "strongman" such as Italy's deputy prime minister Matteo Salvini and Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orbán.

While a number of Europe's rightwing leaders have sought to keep Bannon at arm's length, in Italy, his Christian-centric, pro-family (and vehemently anti-abortion) message has chimed with ultra-conservative Catholics. With their help, he is finalising preparations for the opening of an alt-right academy in a monastery in the mountains above Anagni. Bannon plans to turn this unlikely location into the centre of a European network of finishing schools for ultra-conservatives. The Academy of the Judeo-Christian West will, Bannon claims, serve as an incubator for nationalist leaders of the future.

Roccasecca is part of a motley alliance of anarchists and *nonne*, local civil servants and housewives, politicians and eco-warriors who hope to frustrate Bannon's ambitions in Italy. The location of the academy in the monastery at Trisulti, a former Carthusian charterhouse buried

in oak forests on a mountainous ridge, is particularly contentious, they say, given the core Christian values of compassion and love, and Pope Francis's repeated calls for Roman Catholics to protect migrants and refugees. With a centuries-old medicinal herb garden and pharmacy, and a library of more than 30,000 books, many relating to early medicine, the monastery represents knowledge and culture, says Roccasecca. "For us, Trisulti is a special place, key to the cultural identity of the area," she explains, sitting at the kitchen table where she bottles and preserves her chillies and jams, her favourite Jack Russell barking at her feet. "You have to respect the history of the place, you cannot give it to those who have the opposite ideology."

The rebels' goal is local - blocking Bannon's personal European project from opening on the holy ground of the monastery - but they see themselves as foot soldiers in an ideological showdown that is playing out across the globe. "Trisulti is becoming the centre of the worldwide struggle against fascism and nationalism", Roccasecca says. "We have already been poisoned by industry here, but this is another kind of poison, more subtle, more insidious."

On a misty Saturday morning in March, with snow still on the mountain peaks, about 100 demonstrators gather to march on the monastery. It seems a woefully inadequate army to challenge the forces of global populism, as even the organisers acknowledge. "This is David versus Goliath," says Daniela Bianchi, a regional councillor who works for a bank in Frosinone, the nearest large town. "We are just ordinary men and women against lobbies and powerful interests."

The protesters set off from Colleparado, a medieval village lying four miles below the monastery, and follow the pilgrims' trail of St Benedict, a patron saint of Europe, an irony that is not lost on the walkers. Most people in Colleparado oppose the academy, according to its mayor. But, as a traditional community of agricultural smallholders and factory workers with an increasingly elderly population, it is hardly a hotbed of radical politics. Rosalia Rondinara, a grandmother whose townhouse overlooks the village piazza, objects to Bannon's plans for the monastery but is not part of the march as she is suffering from a leg injury. "How could I walk miles up the mountain?" she asks, adding that she has never been on a demonstration. Bruno Frasca, who organises the annual summer fettuccine pasta festival, is another non-marcher; he believes the battle is already lost. "They should have complained two years ago, when the tender [for the monastery] went out. What's the point now?"

Alessandro Fattoracci, a civil servant from Frosinone, admits that "there is low political engagement" locally. He has a personal connection to the monastery: his mother was one of thousands who took shelter here when Frosinone was bombed by the Allies during the liberation of Italy at the end of the second world war. "This is a place of unity whereas Bannon's project is one of division," he says.

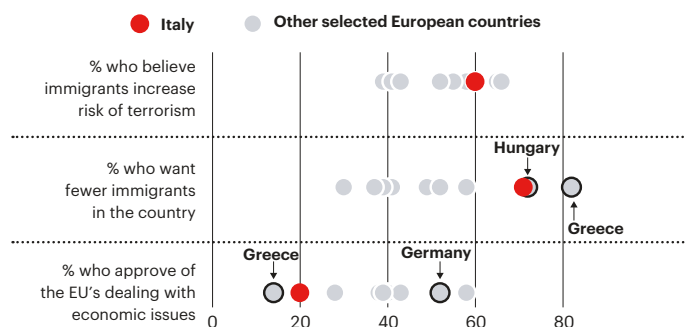
The demonstration takes place the day after the mass shooting by a rightwing extremist in the New Zealand mosque attacks, which left 50 people dead. Shortly before the attack, the shooter posted a photo online of ammunition on which he had scrawled the name of Luca Traini, an Italian who shot and wounded six African migrants in Macerata last year. An out-of-work bike courier called Riccardo tells me that the Christchurch massacre pushed him to march. He is afraid that the divisive rhetoric favoured by Bannon and his ilk will "see a return to the dark days of the 1970s, the so-called 'Years of Lead', with regular political violence." Alberto Valleriani, a comrade of Roccasecca's in her toxic-waste battle, looks every inch the eco-warrior with wraparound sunglasses and dreadlocks under a colourful headband. Striding up the road while rolling a cigarette with one hand, he is resolute. "When we heard about the political school, our antennae went up. Trisulti is an international scandal. This battle is symbolic, it's in the interests of all Europe."

Only one MP, Nicola Fratoianni from the tiny, leftist Free and Equal party [LEU], which polled just over 3 per cent in last year's elections, has turned out to support the protesters. Fratoianni is from Tuscany but says he has taken this struggle to heart because "what is happening here is indicative of what is happening all over: an alliance of the dark right neo-fascists and bigoted conservatives, waging a cultural and ideological war. These people want to take us back to medieval times."

According to Fratoianni, in seeking to radicalise Europe, Bannon and his friends want to row back on hard-won rights on abortion and gay marriage. "In the future this front will be a great danger not just for Italy ▶

Why Italy may be fertile ground for the alt-right

% of respondents in European countries



GRAPHIC: FEDERICA COCCO AND IAN BOTT; SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH CENTER, 2018



'Trisulti is becoming the centre of the worldwide struggle against fascism and nationalism'

Letizia Roccasecca, local activist



Above: the grounds of the Carthusian monastery where Steve Bannon plans to set up his alt-right academy. Left: protesters take the pilgrims' trail of St Benedict up to the monastery in March



'We have this place for 20 years, enough time to change the world'

Benjamin Harnwell, set to be the principal of the new academy



Above right: protesters unfurl a banner with the message BannOff.
Left: the garden maze of the monastery

◀ but for the freedom and rights of all.” Since a populist coalition made up of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the rightwing League took power in Italy last June, there has been a palpable impact, he says. “There have been more attacks on women; the Nazi and fascist parties have raised their heads again – this is not my country.”

As they ascend the mountain, herding dogs and children, the protesters are in festive spirits. Abba plays on a large speaker and rainbow flags fly high. One banner reads “BannOff”. “Trisulti, territory of Europe”, says another. But as they near the monastery gates the mood grows more subdued. The shattered remains of centuries-old oaks lie by the roadside, victims of the recent storms that have hit Italy. As a metaphor for the unpredictable forces currently wreaking havoc in the European political establishment, the scene is hard to beat.

A week later, behind the high gates at Trisulti, Bannon tours the site, dressed down in T-shirt, jeans and workman boots, his hair slicked back. He projects a breezy confidence, waving away charges of neo-fascism. “Fascism is worship of the state. We don’t want an all-powerful state – we are the exact opposite of that... The state has to get out of most aspects of people’s lives, so I think we are the true anti-fascists.” Bannon is eager to show off what he calls his “gladiator school” in the making. And for all the centuries monks lived there in peaceful contemplation, the monastery can feel more like a fortress than a holy site. It was built in the hunting grounds of the Counts of Segni by Lotario Segni, who became Pope Innocent III, the driving force behind the fourth crusade, and then gifted to the Carthusians. An imposing 8ft crucifix marks the entrance, while high boundary walls serve to create a citadel-like structure with a commanding view down the valley.

In 2017, the Italian ministry of culture agreed to lease the monastery to the religious lobbying group Dignitatis Humanae Institute (DHI), for 19 years, at a rent of €100,000 a year. The ultra-conservative Catholic organisation seeks to bind legislators to pro-life and anti-euthanasia policies. As well as Bannon, grantees include Cardinal Raymond Burke, Pope Francis’s antagonist-in-chief. Burke and Bannon first bonded in 2014 and share an opposition to Francis’s handling of the clerical abuse crisis, his support for migrants and his perceived socialist leanings.

As he walks through the terracotta portico, Bannon describes feeling “overwhelmed” when he came to Trisulti for the first time. “I had seen pictures, drawings, but when you get here and see how ancient it is and the scale of it, it blew me away.” Its location near Rome “is symbolic,” he says. “Rome along with Jerusalem and Athens has been the centre of the Judeo-Christian west... The reason I spend so much time here is the great experiment that’s being done with the Five Star and the League: centre-left populism and centre-right nationalism combined to form a national government. It’s the equivalent of Trump’s Deplorables with Bernie Sanders’ guys.”

In 1947, in a true-life murder mystery worthy of an Umberto Eco novel, the monastery’s prior was shot dead in his frescoed chambers. An investigation led to the monastery being disbanded and the monks scattered to the four corners of Italy. “The official reason is finance but maybe [it was] a homosexual thing,” says Bannon. “So it was quite controversial what the real reason is, but we don’t delve into that, although we are going to have an exorcism here.” The monks were replaced by a different order, the Cistercians, but vocations plummeted and just one solitary octogenarian monk, Don Ignazio, remains. Apart from a chef-gardener, the only other inhabitant is Benjamin Harnwell, a conservative British Catholic who founded DHI in 2008. Harnwell, an enthusiastic sidekick to Bannon, is the prospective principal of the academy, while Bannon will be in charge of “vision” and fundraising, he says. Formerly chief of staff to Conservative British MEP Nirj Deva, Harnwell now prefers Ukip and voted for the UK to leave the EU. He can’t wait to get started. “We have this place for 20 years, enough time to change the world.”

Looking out over the former hunting grounds, Bannon describes his vision. “Come back here in a few years and you’ll find 100 students; 20 to 25 faculty [staff]. You’ve already had a couple of classes graduate [by then] and people are back in media, back in political campaigns, serving as junior ministers in government and starting to build a network... I think this academy will start to build a cadre.”

The objective is to identify and accelerate young talent earlier, he explains, naming Beatrix von Storch of Germany’s AfD, Sebastian Kurz of the Austrian People’s Party and Marion Maréchal, firebrand granddaughter of Jean-Marie Le Pen, as the types of people he hopes the academy would produce. “Maybe you can pull out and see a [Matteo] Salvini or Marion Maréchal earlier... and help them get ahead. If we see those types of people 10 years downrange we’d be an enormous success.” Could the academy produce the next Trump? He responds diplomatically. “Well, Trump is Trump. But we definitely hope to generate the next Tom Cottons, Mike Pompeos, Nikki Haleys: that next generation that follows Trump.”

It is hard to tell how much of a market there is for the academy, or how successful it will be. Harnwell claims that hundreds have already applied, “from everywhere”, including the UK. Bannon is seeking official accreditation from one of several Catholic US universities in order to offer graduates of the course an official masters qualification. He sees this as a prerequisite, he says, to be taken seriously; to justify the proposed fees of \$45,000-\$50,000, and to persuade students “that it’s worth taking six to nine months out from their lives”.

The first of several two-to-four-week pilot courses is due to start in autumn this year, Bannon says. Applicants don’t need to be Catholic or religious, “but we clearly want people that support populism and economic nationalism. And I can’t imagine Marxists would want to come here.” Bannon admits he would like to roll back the clock of progress, if not to medieval times, then “to the late-19th-century Victorian era. It was a time of much more unity of family and more traditional values. People knew a moral code and tried to live to that code. It didn’t seem to be the social anarchy we see today.” The syllabus will include a grounding in his version of world events including classical and church history, art and finance. “The tenets of Judeo-Christian western culture”, as he calls it. A second “self-empowerment” module would include public speaking and leadership, teaching “how to get things done, how to fall back on yourself”. A third segment will focus on “how media can be used to drive a narrative, practical politics and running campaigns”. Will this be Bannon’s specialist area? “I’m not really a campaign guy – I’ve only done one campaign, not a bad one. I drew an inside straight.”

The aim is not to produce neo-fascist dictatorships, he insists. “I think you can also teach the pitfalls of nationalism, of people like Mussolini and Hitler and guys like that, you gotta teach the downside. Some things started off as populist and went in other directions, all that has gotta be taught and can be taught.” The academy will, he hopes, become part of a network, with student and faculty exchanges with existing programmes such as Marion Maréchal’s Institute of Social, Economic and Political Sciences, in Lyon, and the School for Political Education, in Milan, which is run by Armando Siri, MP for the League and undersecretary for transport.

Bannon’s fantasy faculty would include high-profile political figures such as Olavo de Carvalho, the supposed guru of Brazil’s far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro. The vehemently anti-communist writer and self-taught philosopher has championed some individual liberties such as the right to bear arms while vilifying everything from globalism to Islam, feminism, homosexuality and the left in general. He has expressed doubt about Darwin’s theory of evolution and has claimed that the Inquisition was a fiction invented by Protestants. “[De Carvalho] said he would be honoured to join the faculty,” says Bannon. (De Carvalho did not respond to the FT’s requests for comment.) He also dreams of inviting political and religious authorities such as Salvini, Orbán and Cardinal Burke to coach short “immersion” courses.

Bannon says he aims to finance the project with donations from wealthy Catholics in Italy, Europe and the US but that for now it is paid for “100 per cent by Stephen K Bannon”. The German billionaire and doyenne of Rome’s conservative Catholic scene, Princess Gloria von Thurn und Taxis, has offered her castle in Germany as a second campus, he says. Backing from Russians is ruled out, even though, as he says, their interests might be aligned, because “with the kleptocracy and the magnates, the oligarchs, it’s just not my deal”. He says he does not expect contributions from his erstwhile backers, the Mercer family, who broke ties with him at the same time Trump did. “They are fantastic but they are more libertarian and agnostic so it’s not that they would naturally see a fit here.” ▶

Below: Steve Bannon at the monastery. He rejects any charges of neo-fascism: 'Fascism is worship of the state. We don't want an all-powerful state – we are the exact opposite of that,' he says



'We clearly want people that support populism and economic nationalism. And I can't imagine Marxists would want to come here'

Steve Bannon



Trisulti retains much from the monks' era: the austere cells, the refectory lined with wooden pews, the religious icons. "The spartan environment is part of the experience," says Bannon. While some refurbishment is needed, in many ways the academy seems ready for the class of 2019, with empty desks and chairs ready. Yet not everyone takes Bannon's ambitions seriously. Jan-Werner Müller, a professor of politics at Princeton University, believes it is unlikely that Bannon has anything meaningful to offer Europe's wannabe populists. "I'm sceptical that there are dark arts that only Bannon knows. The Orbáns and Salvini's have been perfectly capable of obtaining and consolidating power without American geniuses of populism." He also questions whether the future academy would teach anything of significance. "It is not as if there is a cannon of populism. Populism is not an ideology or a philosophy. [You] can say 'We teach nationalism', but how does that translate into policy? We need to ask, are these people selling snake oil, as opposed to governance knowledge or campaign strategy, or anything else useful?"

Duncan McDonnell, a professor of politics at Griffith University in Brisbane, agrees. "The story of Bannon as some sort of Pied Piper for Europe's far-right parties has been overplayed. He didn't invent the ideology of populism or the defence of the Judeo-Christian west: it has been around for decades in Europe. In Italian you would say, 'He has invented *acqua calda*, hot water.'" McDonnell is also sceptical about the academy's future. "I wouldn't expect it to go that far, it looks very gimmicky. In five years' time, it might still not have come to anything."

Indeed, the obstacles in Bannon's path appear to be multiplying. First, the mayor of Colleparado sprang a surprise tax bill of €80,000 a year on DHI. When the FT refers to this, Bannon looks momentarily rattled, then adopts a Trump-like nonchalance. "They're adding some taxes and things like that; we will negotiate all of that out. Just write a cheque. It's like any deal, and of course the other guy's gonna try and throw things on to it. It's normal course of business, right? Not anything that's surprising or out of the ordinary."

Then this week, an Italian investigative TV programme called *Report* alleged that DHI's tender for the monastery had included irregularities. The programme alleged that Harnwell had declared DHI had legal standing to take part in the tender but, in fact, only acquired it six months after the tender was closed. In addition, *Report* alleged that DHI misrepresented its experience of managing cultural assets (a requirement for the tender), by saying it had managed a local museum - in fact, the museum wasn't open to the public and had no exhibitions. Harnwell has said that what mattered was that the museum existed although it only opened when booked in advance, and that DHI had managed the property itself, as required in the tender.

Harnwell told the FT "we are absolutely entitled to operate the Academy" and said he believed the opposition was "organised by a network of politically leftwing movements [as] part of a cynical strategy to maximise their own publicity". "Such accusations... should be seen within the context of an extremely bitterly divided contemporary political scene in Italy," he added.

Fratoianni, the MP, took a different view of the political scene, viewing recent large rallies around climate change workers' rights as tentative signs that Italians are on the cusp of a political awakening. "People are finally feeling the need to mobilise, to go to the piazzas and be the protagonists of their own fate. They are beginning to show the capacity to react. It is a sign of great hope".

However long the legal wrangling over the tender goes on, Roccasecca and her fellow protesters are determined to continue their opposition. For those gathered on the march last month, the cause feels personal. Saverio Coppola and his wife Mirella used to visit the monastery for Sunday picnics before they were married. "We don't want to see it become the heart of the attack on Europe," says Saverio. "There is the danger that our home becomes a reference point for populists and for the neo-fascist wave in Europe." Valleriani believes that Bannon picked the wrong place for such a project. "We are used to fighting powerful interests here. It's our day-to-day work." The Sacco river campaign has been a good training ground, he says. "We will bring that experience to this fight. This is a difficult battle, but the more difficult, the more we like it." **FT**

Hannah Roberts is a journalist based in Rome

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The only athlete to have represented Australia in the world cups of both football and cricket, Ellyse Perry is now firmly focused on the latter. Here she talks about 'huge' changes in Australia's attitude to women's cricket, the men's ball-tampering scandal and this summer's Ashes showdown in England.
Interview by *Jamie Smyth*. Portrait by *Katrin Koenning*

The all-rounder

Ellyse Perry photographed for the FT at the Sydney Cricket Ground

FT.COM/MAGAZINE MAY 4/5 2019



More than a dozen young women are lining up to bowl in the training nets at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG). Female officials are milling round the clubhouse and a women's cricket match is showing on nearby TV screens. Ellyse Perry, one of Australia's greatest cricketers, arrives twirling a bat in one hand and a kit bag in the other, and

I observe that all this is a far cry from cricket's traditional image as a stuffy old man's sport.

"It has carried that tag for a long time," says Perry, with a nervous laugh. "There has never been more interest in women's cricket. Our team story is pretty cool; the sport is developing very quickly and there is now so much access for girls to play."

Perry, nicknamed Pez by her teammates, is one of the reasons that women's cricket is growing rapidly in Australia and beyond. The 28-year-old all-rounder, which means she bats as well as bowls, is a phenomenal athlete. She burst on to the international stage in 2007 when, aged just 16, she became the youngest player to represent Australia. A few weeks later, she played her first match for the Australian football team - no one else has ever represented the nation at both football and cricket world cups.

Perry juggled these dual sporting commitments for several years - scoring a spectacular, long-range goal in a 2011 football world cup quarter-final - until, in 2015, as the professional era dawned, she chose to focus on cricket.

Football's loss was cricket's gain. Perry joined a new generation of exciting young players, including Meg Lanning and Alyssa Healy, who have helped Australia win four of the past six world cups in short-form T20 cricket and become the world's highest-ranked team.

Winning has become a habit. In 2017, Australia retained the Ashes in a hard-fought series against England and Perry played a key role, smashing an unbeaten 213 in the deciding test match in Sydney. In November, she became the first Australian to take 100 wickets in T20 matches.

Over the past 12 months, her thrilling form - she scored a record 777 runs at an average of 83 in Australia's Big Bash

'I absolutely loved football but it doesn't have the same cut-through with the Australian public as cricket does'

Ellyse Perry



Above: Perry with a player of the match award at the ICC women's world cup 2017
Below: celebrating her spectacular goal at the Fifa women's world cup in 2011

competition this summer - is an ominous sign for the England women's team, who face Australia in the next Ashes series, beginning in July.

"The last couple of Ashes series we have had some success against them. But having to go over there and play in the Ashes against a team that is never short on confidence will be a tough challenge for us," says Perry.

She speaks slowly and carefully and refrains from taking up an invitation to comment on her rivals or move much beyond what feels at times like a prepared script. More than a decade in the public eye has made Perry wary of journalists and she is protective of her image as a role model for the sport.

We are sitting in the members' stand at the SCG, which is hallowed territory for cricket fans. The ground, with its famous clock tower, has played host to moments of national triumph and tragedy. In 2014, for example, Australia's men sealed a devastating 5-0 victory against England here, prompting an outpouring of national pride. A few months later, Phillip Hughes, an up-and-coming batsman, was knocked unconscious by a ball in a freak accident and later died in hospital. A bronze plaque commemorating Hughes has been erected near the door to the home team's dressing room, just a few metres from where we are sitting.

"Cricket is our only truly national game," says Perry, when asked why she decided to pursue cricket over football. "I absolutely loved the sport [football] but it doesn't have the same cut-through with the Australian public as cricket does."

The success of Australia's women has provided some antidote to the gloom that has pervaded the men's team since three of them were caught cheating last year in South Africa. When a player was shown on TV tampering with the ball, using a piece of sandpaper, it deeply shocked a nation where people tend to hold their cricket captain in higher esteem than the prime minister. An independent review warned that Perry's male counterparts had developed a "win at all costs mentality", often at the expense of sportsmanship.

"It caused huge amounts of embarrassment. I guess the thing it really showed to everyone is how much we really care about cricket," says Perry.

She points out how different the culture of women's cricket is compared with men's: sledging, for example - the practice of verbally intimidating opposition players - is virtually unheard of in the women's game, she says.

Pay is also different. Just a few years ago, many of Australia's women cricketers were paid a pittance compared with men.

"Sometimes players had to pay for the privilege of representing their country or their state," says Perry. "When I first started playing, cricket was a part-time pursuit where everyone worked full-time or part-time or studied. Playing cricket was like a representative honour that you did before or after work or on weekends."

That changed in 2017, when Cricket Australia agreed a landmark pay deal, providing 150 female cricketers with their first proper salaries, increasing total player payments from A\$7.5m to A\$55.2m over five years. This year the top female players have been offered annual contracts reportedly worth A\$160,000 (£86,500) - about half the value of male players' base contracts, even though they play more games. Match payments, marketing and allowances can double the amount they earn.

Perry is backed by Australia's largest bank, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, as well as Adidas, the German sportswear maker, and several other sponsors. In 2013, British sports magazine SportsPro named her the most marketable sports person in Australia and the 36th most marketable sports person worldwide.

Perry laughs off the ranking as an "arbitrary number that someone picked out of the air" (she dropped off the list the following year). Yet the financial stability provided by professionalism has made a huge difference, she says, allowing players time to improve their skills and fitness.



'There is a feeling she came straight out of the factory production line of model professional athletes'

Isabelle Westbury, former cricketer and BBC commentator

Cricket's success is part of a wider movement in women's sport in Australia, with new pay deals in netball, football and Australian-rules football ushering in a professional or semi-professional era for the best players. Perry works as an ambassador to boost female participation, even penning a series of children's books showing girls participating in sports that traditionally have been dominated by men.

"There has been a huge change in societal attitudes too. If you look at how open people are in being a part of female sport, being fans, watching it on TV, sponsors wanting to invest in it, the media wanting to write about it," says Perry. "I don't think that attitude existed five or six years ago."

Women's cricket is shown on free-to-air television by Seven Network, as well as pay-per-view channels. The first T20 match of this year was viewed by 2.5 million people, the highest ever recorded for a women's match. Six out of every 10 new recruits to cricket are female and women now make up almost a third of the 1.6 million people who participate in the sport, according to a recent census by Cricket Australia.

Perry, who is married to Australian rugby international Matt Toomua, grew up in an affluent suburb in northern Sydney, playing backyard cricket with her brother.

"Mum and dad wanted to provide every opportunity they possibly could for us," she says. "They taught us the value of working hard, but they never pushed us into anything. I felt like the decisions I made around what I was doing were always off my own bat."

Her mother Kathy is a doctor and a former swimmer. Her dad Mark played cricket for the University of Sydney and still works as one of Perry's batting coaches, a role that has helped fashion one of the best techniques in the game.

"She is a very classical player in both the batting and bowling departments and, a bit like her character, there is a feeling she came straight out of the factory production line of model professional athletes," says Isabelle Westbury, a former cricketer and BBC commentator.

Perry's polished professional image hides a playful sense of humour, according to several former teammates, who recount

tales of mischievousness such as playing pranks and joking around on tours.

"Ellyse was the youngest in the squad and was your annoying little sister," says Lisa Sthalekar, a former Australia captain who coached Perry when she was a junior. "She was always pulling faces and throwing things while you were doing interviews - and giving you wedgies."

Another former player says the period when Perry divided her time between football and cricket was challenging for other members of the national team, even though she performed consistently well on the pitch. Her celebrity and early financial success created a perception that there was a "them" and "us" divide between the high-profile stars within the team and those who flew under the radar.

Perry brushes off any suggestion of divisions within the team at the time but notes that professionalism has enabled a lot of the current players to sign sponsors and pick up commercial and media work. Teammates say Perry has matured since her teenage years and that she has become an important mentor for younger players.

"I've loved being captain of the Sydney Sixers and it's taught me huge amounts. You can't have a one-size-fits-all approach to the team. We have got a group of 15 girls and every single one of them is different and turns up every day in a different head space and mood," says Perry.

Her first season as captain of the Sixers started with them losing six of their first seven games in the inaugural 2015-16 Big Bash. Until then, losing had not been a regular feature of Perry's career.

"Often when things go well and you get the result you want, you can paper over the cracks. But when you fall short of what you want to achieve it is easier to be critical and come up with solutions," says Perry, who steered the Sixers to Big Bash champions in the two subsequent seasons.

Teammates say Perry is her own harshest critic and typically the first player to arrive at training and the last to leave.

"It sounds weird but I actually enjoy training as much as I enjoy competing or playing matches," she says. "For me the joy in doing something like this every day is a challenge and an opportunity to get better. And then when things go well it is an opportunity that, yes, I'm doing something right." **FT**

Jamie Smyth is the FT's Australia and Pacific Islands correspondent

Above: Perry bowls in the One Day International Series against New Zealand at Junction Oval, Melbourne, March 3
Below: celebrating scoring 150 runs during day three of the women's test match against England, North Sydney Oval, November 11 2017



IN TOO DEEP?

No other EU country burns more hard coal than Poland. But as communities count the environmental cost, they are putting pressure on politicians to think again. By *James Shotter* and *Evon Huber*. Photographs by *Michał Siarek*

When a mining group started prospecting near Ireneusz Górniok's house in Imielin, a small town in Poland's southern industrial heartland, he paid little attention. "At first I thought, 'It's not my land, it's not my problem,'" he recalls. He was wrong. A few months later PGG, the Polish state-controlled mining group, unveiled plans to expand its Piast-Ziemowit mine under part of Imielin. When Górniok looked at the impact assessment, he could hardly believe his eyes: in the worst-case scenario, the land on which he had built his house could sink by up to six metres.

As news of PGG's plans spread, town officials organised a meeting to explain to worried locals what the implications of expansion could be. "Somebody asked a speaker from the university to present the consequences... in simple language that people could understand," says Górniok. "And the lady said, 'Six metres is only a first estimate. Some places could sink more, some could sink less. Worst of all, under the town we have a huge lake of natural water. If something goes wrong with the coal mining, the water could drain away, and then the consequences for Imielin could be far worse.'

"This was the moment people opened their eyes wide and began to ask, 'What can we do about this?'"

Shocked by what they had heard, a group of locals joined forces and, with the town's authorities, launched a campaign to block the expansion. For the activists, the campaign is a visceral fight to protect their properties. But it is also a microcosm of the broader arguments waged across this central European nation as it slowly begins to debate something that would once have been unthinkable: whether - and how - to wean itself off coal.

The black fuel powered Poland's industrialisation and, for decades, those who dug it out of the ground were lionised as the vanguard of economic progress. No other EU country burns more hard

Plans to expand the Piast-Ziemowit coal mine (right) in southern Poland have met opposition





‘When I showed my father the report, he grabbed his head in disbelief. He worked in the mine, he knows the dangers’

Tomasz Lamik, campaigner

From far left: campaigner Tomasz Lamik; Imielin residents worry about becoming a “second Bytom”, a city badly affected by mining damage, where other miners have operated; union leader Jerzy Demski Below: Imielin, where lorries carrying rubble rumble daily down its main street

homeowner, recounting how one quake sent her neighbour’s son-in-law, a newlywed who had only recently moved to the area, scurrying out of the house in terror. “It’s so much stress,” she says.

Together with local officials, Imielin’s activists mobilised. They commissioned a hydro-geological study into the consequences of the new mining, put up posters warning against the risks, held protests in Katowice, petitioned nearby municipalities for support and even went to Brussels to tell their story. Back home, they rallied locals, persuading 1,287 to sign a petition against the project. Initial efforts were unsuccessful: the regional environmental protection office in Katowice gave PGG a green light last October. Undeterred, Jan Chwiędacz, a former engineer at the mine who has served as Imielin’s mayor for the past 24 years, launched an appeal.

“No matter how the mine secures [properties] and repairs the damage, there is no way to completely eliminate the damage to houses or the road infrastructure, let alone the environment,” says Chwiędacz. “If you weigh the negative impact of the project... against the benefits, such as the jobs the mine provides... and the tax it pays to the municipality... unfortunately, the damages are higher than the benefits. That’s why we’re saying no.”

PGG, which emerged from a restructuring of Poland’s mines in 2016, says Imielin’s concerns are misplaced. It insists that 80 per cent of buildings in the mining impact zone are adequately protected against mining tremors and says it will analyse what safeguards are necessary for those that aren’t.

The company says: “Land subsidence is forecast to be mild, will emerge over 25 years and will reach at most 6.5 metres. This will not cause significant changes to the terrain, scenic values or water conditions... The mine, as it does at the moment, will sign contracts with specialist firms, which... will immediately deal with any failures that occur. The mine will set aside appropriate financial resources in its annual plans for repairing mining damages, including to the water-pipe network and roads located within the boundaries of the impact zone of the planned extraction in the Imielin North deposit.”

For Jerzy Demski, who spent 20 years working in the Piast mine and is now head of the ZZPD miners’ union, the campaign by Imielin’s residents is wildly overblown. “The citizens are being convinced that if the Piast mine expands its coal extraction, a huge tragedy will occur, but it won’t,” he says. “The citizens are being led to such hysteria... I don’t want to offend anyone, but the mayor wants to create a banana republic here. This is about Poland. The mayor can’t demand - even from the perspective of an 8,000-citizen municipality - that the Polish state abandons its business activity.”

Chwiędacz sees things differently. In his view, the battle is a sign of how Poland is changing, with people increasingly prepared to challenge an industry that was once unassailable. “In the 1980s... citizens living by mines thought, ‘This is just how it has to be. We live in an area where there is coal, and it has to be extracted. Some countries have tsunamis. Others have floods. In America they have hurricanes. And we have mines,’” he says.

“Today the attitude is completely different. [People realise] that mines and extraction bring harm and damage... that they destroy the environment and our houses, which people built, sometimes with a life-long mortgage, thinking that they would one day pass them on to their children.” ▶



◀ coal than Poland and only Germany burns more lignite, the most polluting grade of coal. Even today, almost 80 per cent of Polish electricity is generated from the fossil fuel. Yet as reserves dwindle and citizens worry more about their dirty air and their damaged countryside, questions are being raised over a fuel that has long been an environmental curse and, in recent years, more often than not an economic burden.

“If you look at opinion polls, support among Poles for renewable energy is by far the highest of any energy source, and fear of the impact of climate change is growing,” says Ilona Jędrasik, from the environmental group ClientEarth. “The economy is also doing well. It’s a good moment for politicians to decide to move away from coal and to set a date for doing so.”

So far, however, Poland’s ruling Law and Justice party has shown no interest in making such radical decisions. Deeply distrustful of the Kremlin and its use of gas supplies as a political weapon in Ukraine, Law and Justice’s strategists see coal as a guarantor of Polish energy independence. Like most of its predecessors, the ruling camp also has little appetite for riling the industry’s powerful unions. The result is that as the EU aims to go carbon neutral by 2050, Warsaw is building new coal-fired power plants and has no plans to burn less of the fuel before 2030. Even by 2040, it expects to draw almost a third of its electricity from the most polluting hydrocarbon.

The contradictions were thrown into the global spotlight when Poland hosted the COP24 climate talks in its coal capital, Katowice, last year. As delegates from around the world gathered to limit global warming, Warsaw selected mining and energy groups among the event’s main partners. On the eve of the conference, the energy ministry unveiled a strategy that implied onshore wind-farms would be all but phased out by 2040. And a couple of days into the summit, Andrzej Duda, Poland’s president, promised a miners’ festival that he would “not let anyone murder Polish mining”.

Situated some 20km south-east of Katowice, Imielin’s 8,800 or so inhabitants are surrounded by the industry Duda is so keen to preserve. Lorries carrying rubble rumble daily down its main street. Beyond the town, mine headframes dot the rolling countryside, their spindly steel girders silhouetted against the slate-grey Silesian sky. There are also visible reminders of coal’s environmental cost. Subsidence has damaged a local river, leading it to overflow in places. And to the south-west of the town, water displaced by mining has turned part of a wood into a swamp, leaving dead trees standing forlornly in stagnant pools.

What particularly horrified the citizens of Imielin when they heard of PGG’s plans, however, was that the company was seeking to mine coal at depths of as little as 180m, and to use the so-called *na zawal* method of mining. Under this approach, mining cavities are not filled but left to collapse - a prospect that unnerves locals. Imielin’s town hall says that if the expansion goes ahead, 48 per cent of the town, and about 3,000 buildings, will be within the impact zone.

“When I showed my father the report prepared by the mine, he grabbed his head in disbelief. He worked in the mine, he knows what the dangers are,” says Tomasz Lamik, who founded Nasz Imielin, one of the groups battling against expansion. “That’s when I really got involved.”

Alicja Zdziechiewicz, a teacher and another leading campaigner, was similarly motivated. “This is completely new to me,” she says. “But I want to protect my house. I am afraid for my house.”

Silesia is dotted with the damage the activists fear. In one house in the Imielin area that has been blighted by subsidence, the tilt is omnipresent. Crossing a room feels like walking uphill. Doors either jam or swing loose. Bowls and cups cannot be filled to the brim because the slope means they will overflow. Then there are the tremors. “You sleep, but you feel like you’re on a boat,” says the

For much of the 20th century, Poland's mines were seen as inextricably linked with the nation's prosperity. Until the mid-1980s, Poland was one of the world's top five coal producers. Silesia's coalfields drew workers and wealth to the region, creating the sprawling conurbation of about three million people around Katowice, which remains one of Poland's most densely populated areas. Mythologised by the communist regime as standard bearers of the working class, miners lived in tight-knit communities in which generation after generation worked underground. Demski remembers mines promising "a house, a car and a wife", while miners' traditions shaped the region's culture. They had special uniforms, medals, clubs and orchestras - even their own festival, the Barbórka, named after St Barbara, patron saint of mining.

"Mining is more than a job, it's a way of life for many people in Silesia," says Marek Józefiak, a Greenpeace activist who grew up in Jaworzno, a town some 20km east of Katowice. "My great-grandfather worked in a mine... my grandmother also worked her whole life at one. When my father was a teenager, he played for a football club sponsored by a coal mine and when he was done with his football career, he went straight to being a miner. The church in the parish that I grew up in was St Barbara's. My mum is called Barbara. It's no coincidence... Coal mining made the town. There would be many towns in Silesia [like this]."

By 1990, Poland's 70 mines employed nearly 400,000 and dug up almost 5 per cent of the world's hard coal. Yet while Poland's level of coal mining before the second world war was economically viable, the industry was caught in a spiral of overproduction during its years behind the Iron Curtain. When communism collapsed, Poland went through wrenching changes as it adapted to the realities of capitalism. The fuel that was meant to be the cornerstone of its economy quickly became a millstone around its neck. Within a decade, the sector was more than 20bn zlotys (€5.7bn) in debt.

Successive governments attempted to reform the industry. But they were weak, and Poland's mining unions were strong, and it was not until 1998 that the government of Jerzy Buzek undertook the most comprehensive overhaul. "It was a very radical reform, much more radical than that of Margaret Thatcher [in the UK]," says Leszek Balcerowicz, who was deputy prime minister under Buzek. "We extracted 100,000 miners from the mines and closed a lot of unprofitable ones... We have reduced emissions per unit of GDP by 40 per cent... The most important ecological measure Poland took was to get rid of [communism]."

Despite further reforms over the following decade, the chronic inefficiency of Poland's mines remained unresolved. When prices fell, the sector once again ran into trouble, racking up losses of 4.5bn zlotys in 2015. Disaster was averted by a rebound in prices, and the pressure was further eased as the European Commission allowed Poland to subsidise the closure of loss-making collieries. The number of people employed in the sector has fallen to 80,000 and Poland's big state-controlled mining groups posted profits last year.

But the costs of sticking with coal are mounting, which helps those questioning its place at the heart of Poland's economy. Not only are the country's mines inefficient by global standards, but the amount that can be mined economically is dwin-



'Mining is more than a job, it's a way of life for many people in Silesia'

Marek Józefiak,
Greenpeace activist



Above: entrance to the Piast-Ziemowit mine
From near right: Jan Chwiędacz, mayor of Imielin since 1995; standing water near Imielin, displaced by mining activity; local activists Przemek and Alicja Zdziechiewicz



ding. Meanwhile, the EU's carbon permit system has made electricity based on coal more expensive, heaping pressure on Poland's state-owned energy groups. A 2017 study by WiseEuropa calculated that, between 1990 and 2016, Poland's coal industry and coal-based energy sector received 230bn zlotys in direct and indirect subsidies. The think-tank estimated that, without a change in policy, they would consume another 150bn zlotys by 2030.

Poles' growing environmental concerns have also begun to embolden coal's critics. According to a 2016 World Health Organization investigation into air quality, 33 of Europe's 50 most polluted cities are in Poland. The smog that descends on the country like a pall in winter causes about 45,000 premature deaths a year and has become an important factor in driving broader ecological awareness, says Paweł Ruzzkowski, a professor of sociology at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw. "Five years ago, people were not particularly interested in this issue. But year by year, more and more people see that it is dangerous for them, because... they can smell the air," he says. "In Poland, the green movement was never popular. But now it is not a matter of ideology, it is a matter of everyday experience... Politicians will have to take it into account."

In Imielin, such concerns have already taken root. Przemek Zdziechiewicz, husband of Alicja and founder of Green Imielin, one of the groups fighting against the mine's expansion, pulls out his phone and displays a screen shot from an app showing that, one night in February, air pollution in Imielin was 908 per cent of the acceptable limit. "We should be wearing masks here," he says. "We're embarrassed by Poland's strategy. The government is doing nothing to shift away from coal more quickly."

Law and Justice will decide this year whether to adopt the coal-heavy strategy unveiled on the eve of COP24. Recent messages have been mixed, with documents published in January more ambiguous about the future of onshore wind energy than the plan that envisaged killing it off. Yet given Poland's aversion to Russian gas, and the time it would take

to build the country's first nuclear plant - the only other source of energy that could replace coal as the base of Poland's energy supply - experts do not expect radical changes in the next decade. "Will anything significant happen [with coal] before 2030? I would say it is highly unlikely," says Tomasz Jurkanis, a partner at McKinsey, the consulting firm. "The strategy beyond 2030 really depends on... whether Poland will construct nuclear plants."

Miners are also sceptical that Poland will abandon coal any time soon, given both the social costs and the technical complexity of closing mines. "You don't build mines in a day and you don't close them in a day either," says Demski, who does not expect Poland's mines to be shut before 2040. "I can guarantee you one thing - everyone who is working in the mining industry today will work until their retirement. Every single person."

Yet slowly but surely, the idea of an exit from coal is working its way on to the political agenda. A study last November found that 69 per cent of Poles wanted to ditch the fossil fuel by 2030. In February, Robert Biedroń, the founder of a new leftwing party, proposed closing all Poland's mines by 2035. In March, Grzegorz Schetyna, head of the biggest opposition party, Civic Platform, said that by 2030 no Polish household should be heated by coal. "Politicians used to be way behind the population. But recently we've seen some politicians, even quite conservative ones, raising the issue," says Client-Earth's Jędrasik. "One year ago, I would have found this impossible."

While the politicians talk, Imielin's activists anxiously await a decision on their appeal. The verdict is due in June but PGG has already underscored its determination to press on. "We will keep appealing as long as we can," says Chwiędacz. "It's hard to say if we'll win, but we have to keep fighting. Because if we don't, the coming generations probably wouldn't forgive us." **FT**

James Shotter is the FT's central Europe correspondent.
Evan Huber is the FT's Warsaw office assistant

Fifty years on from the riots in New York that sparked the start of the gay liberation movement, a new book celebrates the photographers whose work flourished amid emerging freedoms

After Stonewall

On June 28 1969, a little more than an hour after midnight, police raided the Stonewall Inn in Manhattan's Greenwich Village. As officers began to arrest patrons, the crowds swelled and energised. They had had enough. A riot began, sparking decades of change.

The novelist Edmund White described that night's events in a letter to friends the next week: "A mammoth paddy wagon... pulled up to the Wall and about 10 cops raided the joint. The kids were all shooed into the street; soon other gay kids and straight spectators swelled the ranks to, I'd say, about a thousand people... A drag queen is shoved into the wagon; she hits the cop over the head with her purse. The cop clubs her... But the crowd doesn't disperse... something's brewing."

Fifty years on, Stonewall's symbolic importance, and the role the riots played in the emergence of gay liberation, is clear. Before, two women or two men might hold hands in public; gender nonconforming individuals could walk around the city. Some did. But in the context of a homophobic society, this would elicit extra (usually unwanted) attention. Today, in some parts of the world, it is possible for identifiably queer people to move about without their sexual or gender identity making them subject to scrutiny. Within the realm of photography, too, this makes a difference.

In earlier times - if, say, Diane Arbus had photographed the same pair - an image like Joyce Culver's "Marianne & Eva Gilleran, NYC" (1994) would have attracted critical attention for its depiction of two lesbian sisters embracing. Today, we pay just as much attention to their intense bond and the artist's use of a traditional studio portrait format as we do to their sexuality.

In Robert Kalman's portraits of gay couples of many ages, colours and genders, several with young children, the subjects are allowed to just be. John Paul Evans, whose framed portraits of same-sex couples hang on walls or are tenderly placed on side tables, generates a similar sense of family and domestic warmth.

James Bidgood, whose work is the earliest represented in this catalogue, sits on the cusp of pre- and post-Stonewall photography. The shots of his model and friend Bobby Kendall, from the mid to late 1960s, are stuffed with signifiers of the classical and the painterly. Yet the frankness with which they project their blatant homoeroticism is very much of the post-liberation world. Bidgood describes them as an attempt to inject aesthetic idealism into the black-and-white minimalism of the physique photography of that time. With greater distance, we can appreciate the beautiful melodrama and clever use of outmoded queer codes in his work.

Later, Aids was a battering ram that seemed to blunt the increased tolerance and booming sexual culture that came out of Stonewall. Photographers responded with anger and activism - as well as mourning. In Sunil Gupta's diptychs, shots of the artist receiving treatment for HIV are juxtaposed with quiet images of the daylit exteriors of gay bars and clubs - an unsentimental yet resilient approach to living with the virus.

The multitude of photographic practices reflects the heterogeneity of the gay liberation movement; the riots were, after all, started by a coalition of trans women, people of colour, lesbians, drag queens and street youths. It also serves as a reminder of how much has been achieved - and how much remains to be done. ▶

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This is an edited extract from an essay by Nicholas C Morgan in "Photography After Stonewall", edited by Bill Travis and Larry Davis. An exhibition runs at Soho Photo Gallery, New York, from June 5-29



**'BLUE BOY',
FROM PINK NARCISSUS,
BY JAMES BIDGOOD, 1960s**

Born in Wisconsin in 1933, Bidgood moved to New York when he was just 18. 'Most of my work was done before gay rights really started moving,' he says. 'I hardly noticed prejudice, or I simply accepted it and worked around it'

'VAPOR', BY DAVID HILLIARD, 2015

In a body of work chronicling 'the masculine condition', Hilliard's large panoramic images function as 'a visual language, shifting panel by panel. This is what interests me: the convergence of a static moment with something slightly cinematic,' he explains



'GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES', BY ROBERT KALMAN, 2018

Depicting couples of different ages and races, often with children, Kalman's documentary portraits reflect the narrative of LGBTQ civil rights, which, he says, 'simply told, draws a straight line from the Stonewall riots to a person's liberty to love whomever they wish today'



'MARIANNE & EVA GILLERAN, NYC', BY JOYCE CULVER, 1994

This portrait of twins Marianne and Eva was taken at a women's dance celebrating the 25th anniversary of Stonewall. Marianne, on the left, has a protective arm around her sister. 'Recently, I spoke to Marianne, who told me Eva passed away in January 2018,' says Culver

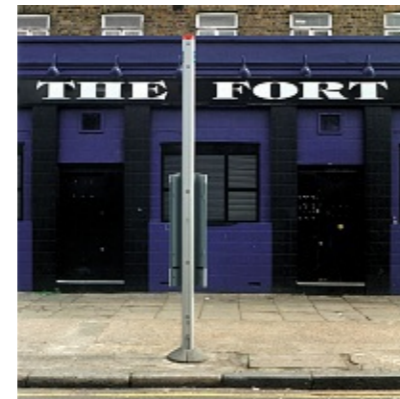


**'JEAN & ELAINE, SANTA FE',
BY SAGE SOHIER, 1988**
In 1986, Sohier began focusing on gay couples in tender, domestic settings. 'Looking at these pictures now,' she says, 'I realise it took a good deal more courage to stand up and be photographed as a same-sex couple in the 1980s than it does today'



**'CENTERFOLDS',
BY PACIFICO SILANO, 2018**
Silano's images recontextualise gay erotica from the pre-Aids era. 'My work addresses the emotional and physical voids felt as a result of the Aids crisis, the complicated nature of photography, and our constantly changing relationship to the past,' he explains

**'BLOOD' AND 'FORT',
FROM FROM HERE TO ETERNITY,
BY SUNIL GUPTA, 1999**
Gupta's diptychs juxtapose shots of his HIV treatment with exteriors of gay clubs. 'I felt liberated from the hesitation of showing my sick body, and from adding HIV to my already overburdened identity mix of gay and Indian'



blood fort

**'BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH
FOR - HOME SWEET HOME',
BY JOHN PAUL EVANS, 2015**
Evans, who grew up in Wales, explores the concept of the family album. Here, a staged picture shows him with his now-husband Peter. 'I was always critical of what the "family album" represented in terms of normality,' he says





Honey & Co Recipes



An easy nut to crack

A fear of baking is common even among confident cooks. Asked to whip up something savoury to eat, most of us will be able to fix something without too much sweat with whatever is around. However, bring up the topic of dessert and we tend to require assistance: we reach for Nigella or Delia, the weighing scales and a measuring cup.

We have met quite a lot of cooks - good ones - who simply don't do desserts. And if the world of pastry were not intimidating enough already, it's now a competitive sport on prime-time television.

It is true that baking demands certain attention from the cook, but unless you work in a professional kitchen - or indeed take part in an amateur competition - it needn't be a daunting ordeal. Your creation might be slightly over or under, a bit soft or stiff, but unless you are cooking for Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood, most people are quite happy with a sweet treat even if it isn't perfection.

So, here's a foolproof recipe for those who don't do dessert. There is no baking whatsoever, no proving of yeast or blooming of gelatin. It doesn't call for thermometers, fine instruments or heavy machinery. No strenuous whipping is involved, there's no folding or sifting, no risk of cracking, burning or soggy bottoms. In fact, this is so simple to prepare, it's great to do with children.

And the results are anything but simple: rich chocolate and nuts two ways - crunchy and creamy and wholly irresistible. Slice it at the table or cut it into cubes and serve as *petits fours*. No one will know you're not a natural baker. **FT**

By Sarit Packer and Itamar Srulovich
honeyandco@ft.com

Peanut and chocolate bar

To make one bar to cut into eight to 10 fingers

For the first layer

- 140g salted roasted peanuts. For best flavour, make your own. Pop them into the oven with a little oil and sea salt at 180C (fan assist) for eight to 10 minutes, shaking a couple of times as they roast. Pre-roasted are fine too
- 50g butter
- 50g dark chocolate (we used 70 per cent cocoa chocolate)
- 1 tbs olive oil (or coconut oil)
- 1 tbs cocoa powder
- 20g honey

For the second layer

- 50g butter at room temperature
- 100g smooth peanut butter
- 2 tbs icing sugar
- Seeds from ½ vanilla pod

For the third layer

- 180ml double cream
- 40g honey
- Seeds from ½ vanilla pod (the other half)
- 50g peanut butter
- 100g dark chocolate (we used a 70 per cent cocoa chocolate)

1 - Line a loaf tin with a sheet of baking paper. Set 40g of the peanuts aside to garnish the final dish if you wish.

2 - Melt the butter with the chocolate, olive oil, cocoa powder and honey and heat until it's all combined into a lovely chocolatey liquid. Add the roasted peanuts, mix well to coat and pour the contents into the lined tin. Flatten and pop into the freezer to set quickly while you make the next layer.

3 - Cream the butter with the peanut butter, icing sugar and vanilla seeds until there are no lumps of butter. Top the frozen layer with the mix and smooth it out flat. Again, pop into the freezer while you make the final layer.

4 - Boil the cream with the honey, vanilla seeds and peanut butter, then pour over the chocolate. Mix well to form a lovely homogenous cream and top the layer of peanut butter with the mix. Place in the fridge to chill entirely. When it's ready, garnish with the remaining peanuts (if you wish) and cut with a hot knife into thin fingers. Serve cold from the fridge.

You can also freeze the cake for a couple of weeks - just remember to thaw it in the fridge before serving.



A NEW TWIST

ON THE CLASSIC NEGRONI



The famous classic cocktail, The Negroni, remains hugely popular, and deservedly so. The classic combination of just three ingredients - equal parts gin, Campari and Red Vermouth - is hard to beat.

Yet, when you have an astonishing spirit like Brockmans Gin, creating unexpected twists on the Negroni theme is somehow irresistible.

The combination of botanicals in Brockmans includes bitter-sweet Valencian orange peel, coriander, blueberries and blackberries.

By combining Brockmans Gin with just two other ingredients, the results are rather surprising and unusually delicious - perfect for this time of year.



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The Brockmans Negroni is one of a number of classic and contemporary recipes in an exclusive, limited edition book.

You can't buy it but if you tell us your thoughts about @BrockmansGin on Twitter using hashtag #BrockmansFT you could win a copy and a bottle of Brockmans.



SUNDOWN VERMOUTH

Fill an old-fashioned glass with ice cubes, pour in 35ml Brockmans Gin, 25ml of Rosso (red) Vermouth and 15ml Triple Sec and stir in the glass. Garnish with a dehydrated orange.

SUMMER NEGRONI

Muddle 4 raspberries in a shaker and then add ice cubes, 50ml of Brockmans Gin, 25ml Antica Formula, 25ml Aperol. Shake till chilled. Double strain into a rocks glass over an ice ball. Garnish with a dehydrated orange slice.

NEGRONI BLANCO

Fill a tumbler glass with ice cubes then add 35ml of Brockmans Gin and 35ml Luxardo Bitter Bianco and top with 40ml of sparkling grapefruit juice. Give it a gentle stir in the glass. Garnish with a thin wedge of pink grapefruit.



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Negroni
Blanco**

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www.brockmansgin.com

Jancis Robinson Wine

Battle of the blancs

The first Friday in May was International Sauvignon Blanc Day, which may have come and gone without you noticing. I'm aware of it only because a couple of weeks ago I took part in a fascinating blind tasting in anticipation of the great day.

A small group of wine professionals compared pairs of Sauvignons from its homeland, the Loire, and its (new) world centre of operations, New Zealand. Exercises of this sort are usually organised by the upstart region or country, eager to prove they are the equal of the established practitioner. But in this case, New Zealand Sauvignon is so popular worldwide that Kiwi winemakers can hardly be described as upstarts. This tasting - unusually and delightfully - was organised and hosted by both interested parties acting in unison.

Marlborough, in the north of South Island, is the powerhouse of NZ Sauvignon production, making 80 per cent of the country's wine. From a standing start - the first vintage of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc was 1979 - NZ Sauvignon has been so successful commercially that it accounts for almost 90 per cent of the country's wine exports.

Nowadays, Marlborough Sauvignon is as popular with Australians (Australians!) and Americans as with the British, who first fell in love with Cloudy Bay in the mid-1980s. Still, it cannot be accused of unpredictability. Its generally monotone nature - pungently perfumed, unashamedly tart, immediately recognisable and often a little bit sweet - has made it beloved by regular wine drinkers and rather despised by us hard-to-please and jaded wine professionals.

France's most famous Sauvignon Blanc appellations are all in the Loire: Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé with their outlying villages Reuilly, Quincy and Menetou-Salon, plus Touraine, whose whites are invariably based on Sauvignon



As imagined by Leon Edler

Sauvignons from both hemispheres

The wines are listed in my order of preference. Most of these wines are available from several other UK retailers.

- Clos Henri 2016 Marlborough £21.99
- Te Mata, Cape Crest 2018 Hawkes Bay £19.99
- Joël Delaunay 2018 Touraine £12.50
- Greywacke Wild Sauvignon 2016 Marlborough £25.50
- Domaine de la Renaudie 2018 Touraine £12.50
- Bourgeois, Côte de Monts Damnés 2017 Sancerre £310 a dozen
- Domaine Denis Jamain, Les Fossiles 2018 Reuilly £14.99
- Domaine du Pré Baron, Vieilles Vignes 2017 Touraine £10.59
- Villa Maria, Private Bin 2018 Marlborough £7.99
- Domaine Delobel, Cuvée Exponentielle 2017 Touraine
- Brancott Estate, Chosen Rows 2010 Marlborough
- Cause & Effect 2017 Marlborough £17.49



For tasting notes, see JancisRobinson.com. Other stockists from Wine-searcher.com



Blanc. The theory goes that Loire Sauvignons are subtler, more reticent, drier, longer-lasting and more likely to taste mineral than fruity, so they should have been easy to distinguish from the Kiwi newcomers.

In terms of average temperatures, Marlborough is very similar to the Loire, but there's a crucial difference. Depletion of the ozone layer over New Zealand means that ultraviolet radiation levels are 40 times higher than they ought to be, and this, together with the long hours of sunshine and an atmosphere far from industrial and urban pollution, seems to imbue the wines with their almost blinding brightness of fruit.

'The theory goes that Loire Sauvignons should be easy to distinguish from the Kiwi newcomers'

Average annual rainfall is also about the same in Marlborough as it is in the Loire, but the Marlborough soils hold such little water that most growers there irrigate their vines. Only a handful of European-influenced producers - such as the Swiss-founded Fromm and Clos Henri, which is owned by none other than the Bourgeois family of Sancerre - are trying to farm without added water.

The six pairs of Sauvignons for our blind tasting were chosen by wine scientist Jamie Goode of wineanorak.com, who has studied Sauvignon Blanc in considerable scientific detail, and Rebecca Gibb, one-time New Zealand resident, Master of Wine and author of *The Wines of New Zealand*.

One intriguing discovery is that grapes picked by machine, as virtually all of them are in underpopulated Marlborough, rather than by hand, have 10 times more of one mysterious ▶

◀ but key aromatic compound associated with Sauvignon Blanc.

Mind you, so many grapes are now machine-harvested in the Loire that some producers there have taken to boasting of hand-picking on their back labels. Furthermore, many younger producers in Touraine, where the cost of land is a fraction of that in well-established Sancerre, have travelled to New Zealand to absorb their winemaking methods - which often include picking grapes at different levels of ripeness (underripe for freshness and just overripe for lusciousness) - and then blending them. So, while I find Sancerre still tastes like Sancerre because it can afford to, some of the Touraine Sauvignons can be eerily Kiwi-like.

Notwithstanding, in the blind tasting it was generally pretty obvious which were the northern hemisphere wines and which the southern. Any trace of sweetness tended to indicate New Zealand, whose wines also tended to be paler than the Loire examples, which, counterintuitively, seemed to age faster than the Kiwis. Fellow wine writer Steven Spurrier confessed halfway through the tasting of wines served in masked bottles by a sommelier at the wine-minded club, 67 Pall Mall, that he had noted the difference in bottle tops carefully: those that had obviously been screwcapped, he assumed to be from New Zealand.

But that didn't work with the fourth and fifth pairs. The fourth pair, both cork-stoppered,

consisted of examples of Sauvignon Blanc made in Marlborough and Sancerre by the same family, the Bourgeois. And the Kiwi one, the Clos Henri 2016 Marlborough, was my favourite wine of the day. I thought it had the finesse of a top-quality Sancerre and noted that it was so dominated by floral and citrus flavour compounds that it almost tasted like Riesling (there is no greater compliment in my book). By contrast, the Bourgeois Monts Damnés 2017 Sancerre seemed a bit heavier on its feet.

Nor did the screwcap test work on the next pair since the Loire example was made by Joël Delaunay, a screwcap pioneer in Touraine. And the sixth pair included an exception too, Sauvignon from the North Island region of Hawkes Bay, made by one of the first ambitious wine producers in New Zealand, John Buck's Te Mata Estate. Te Mata's Cape Crest has been made since 1991 and nowadays it is produced following a recipe that owes more to Bordeaux than to the Loire, fermented in oak and incorporating some Semillon and Sauvignon Gris in the blend.

So, the tasting showed that, even with Sauvignon Blanc, there is no longer a gulf between the old and new worlds and - with the noble exception of the bargain Villa Maria Private Bin - New Zealand wines tend to be more ambitiously priced. **FT**

More columns at ft.com/jancis-robinson

MY ADDRESSES — MUMBAI

SAMYUKTA NAIR, HOTELIER



— **Kala Ghoda Café**, also an art gallery, is one of my favourite places in Mumbai for breakfast or coffee. It has a relaxed ambience, incredible service and serves a fantastic selection of Parsi delicacies, such as *akuri* (spiced scrambled eggs) and *tameta par edda* (eggs on tomato).

— **Le15 Café**, in Colaba, is a French-inspired eatery from pastry chef Pooja Dhingra and head chef Pablo Naranjo Agular. I would recommend the Parmesan waffles with poached eggs. Their desserts, such as caramel cheesecake cupcakes and Paan macarons (above left), are decadent.

— For street food, I head to **Swati Snacks** (above right) for its menu of Mumbai vegetarian comfort food, including traditional dishes such as *dal dhokli* (wheat-flour noodles in a lentil curry) and baked *masala khichdi* (rice and moong lentils). The wait can be long but it's well worth it.

— **The Table**, owned by Gauri Devidayal and Jay Yousuf, is a great dinner spot, notable for its pan-roasted crab cake and the chocolate tart. **The Bombay Canteen** is another favourite. Chef Thomas Zacharias is really innovative and uses indigenous produce to create dishes such as *arbi tuk* (deep-fried arbi tossed in dry masala), *moras bhaji* (deep-fried, spiced and battered moras leaves) and Indian *millet khichdi* (millet with moong lentils).

— At weekends, I like a leisurely brunch at **Bastian** in Bandra. Chef Kelvin Cheung's menu features an opulent selection of dishes including my favourite, chocolate chip pancakes.

.....
Samyukta Nair is a hotelier who lives in London and Mumbai. She is also co-founder of restaurants *Bombay Bustle* and *Jamavar* in London

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Restaurant Insider

Nicholas Lander



SERASÉ'S DRAMATIC DINING ROOM; BEEF DONBURI

Serasé, Seoul, South Korea

Less than 24 hours in an unfamiliar city can present a challenge to even the most experienced traveller - especially if he does not speak the language but still has to find a good dinner.

That was my recent predicament in Seoul, South Korea. I wanted to eat and sleep near the airport but preferably not in an airport hotel. Art Paradiso, a boutique hotel set within the massive Paradise City shopping and arts complex, seemed the ideal solution. It could be seen as our plane descended into Incheon airport en route to Hong Kong. It is very new, modern and black.

The restaurant at Art Paradiso, called Serasé, lives up to its extremely smart location. The dining room is large, with a dramatic series of white chandeliers hanging above a long, central white table.

The floor staff are notably well attired - the management in crisp suits and ties, the waiters in red jackets and black trousers, while the chefs are dressed in equally smart black uniforms. With its

low - though not ridiculously low - lighting, there is an air of intrigue about the place.

We arrived shortly after 8pm and the restaurant was already thinning out. The few other diners, mostly young Koreans, were leaving, and by the time we had chosen what to eat, we were the only ones left.

How much difference did this make to our meal? Certainly, if Serasé had been busier, we would not have had the undivided attention of the waiting staff, supplemented by the waiting skills of chef Wonho Lee, who appeared just after our soup course was served.

But I don't believe the restaurant changed that much, being so quiet. The intensity on the young chefs' faces, their professionalism and collective enthusiasm were constant.

Only set menus, headed "bistronomy", were available: one at Won100,000 (£67) and the other at Won150,000 (£100). We chose the former, with one of us opting for the lobster with *natto* (fermented Japanese soyabeans) as a main course, and the other choosing the Korean beef - both of us forgoing the "Austrian" (which almost certainly



'The pumpkin porridge had far greater charm than its name suggested, enriched with chestnuts and black truffles, and topped with the thinnest of pastry lids'

Serasé
Art Paradiso, Paradise City,
186 Yeongjonghaeannam-ro 321,
beon-gil, Jung-gu, Incheon, 22382
+82 327 292 000
slh.com/hotels/art-paradiso-hotel

should have been Australian) "rock" (rack?) of lamb.

We began in style, with a series of three *amuse-bouches*, one of which was fantastic - a small triangle of toast topped with Italian sevruga caviar. It wasn't an easy act to follow, but the kitchen rose to the challenge with the next two courses.

The first was a dish of snow-crab salad, enlivened by a couple of slices of strawberry of unctuous, almost English sweetness, alongside a pesto of wild greens. The second, described somewhat mysteriously as pumpkin porridge en croûte, had far greater charm than its name suggested. It was a pumpkin soup, the rich liquid further enriched with chestnuts and slices of black truffles, topped with the thinnest of pastry lids.

By this stage, we were also enjoying an extraordinary bottle of wine, a Barolo Bussia 2012 from Giacomo Fenocchio. With its freshness and intensity, it lifted the very different flavours of the food.

There had to be a slight dip, perhaps, and it came with our main courses, not so much for what they were but for their one-dimensional flavour profile - compared with the more harmonious first courses, the lobster and the beef dominated their respective dishes too heavily.

Our dessert, a scoop of "*jeju hanrabong*" ice cream (made from a fruit grown on Korea's Jeju island, which is similar to an orange but has a thicker skin), was both creamy and refreshing, enriched by thin pieces of white chocolate. This, alongside some *petits fours* and a cup of traditional Korean tea, signalled a considerable talent within Serasé's pastry section.

We paid our bill of just under Won300,000 (£200) for two willingly. The Paradise City complex is a highly commercial affair - the restaurant itself overlooks the enormous shopping mall - but the nearby art gallery also has a serious collection, with floors dedicated to Antony Gormley and Jeff Koons among others. Still, it was the cooking of chef Lee and his team that most impressed - an impression enhanced by the fact that the whole thing was kimchee-free. **FT**

More columns at ft.com/lander

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



Trilogy: A unique sky-rise hub in Cyprus

Trilogy Limassol Seafront is a new chapter for established developer Cybarco, with a success story spanning over 70 years and including landmark projects like Aphrodite Hills Golf Resort, Limassol Marina, Akamas Bay Villas and The Oval.

A statement of high living in the heart of the city's affluent waterfront, this latest landmark development is already under construction. Sales of the luxury sea view apartments and offices in its West Tower, due for delivery in 2021, launched with great success. Sales and reservations of the luxury properties have exceeded €100 million, accounting for more than 35% of units in the two front towers, in under a year.

Trilogy is high living in every sense - a trio of shimmering beachfront towers, surrounded by a bustling

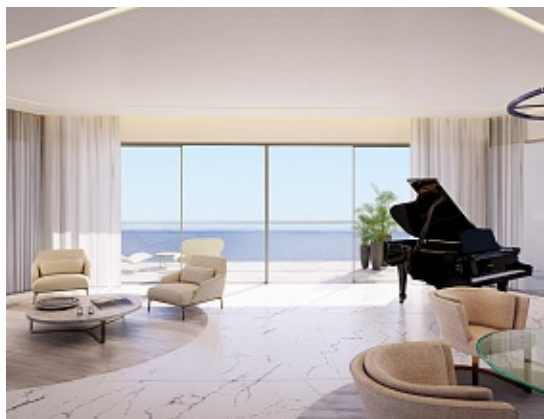
inner plaza, right in the heart of Limassol, the most vibrant and cosmopolitan city in Cyprus. A place to live, work and play with unobstructed views of the Mediterranean Sea, it is as much an experience as it is a destination. Brought to life by a world-class collaboration of architects, designers and developers, it offers a lifestyle experience, blending the aspirational dream of high-end beachfront living, with the sophistication of urban cool.

Astonishing design flair and unsurpassed levels of finish characterise the luxury apartments and offices in Trilogy's North, East and West Towers. Each residence is a statement of discerning taste and understated wealth. Spectacular layouts are complemented with high standards of finish and sea views enjoyed by everyone. Elegant resident-only health, fitness and spa retreats

occupy two floors of each tower, offering relaxation with unparalleled first class services and outstanding views of the infinite horizon.

The high-rise destination's offices also ooze prestige, sophistication and credibility with their exclusive landmark address, functional workspace, stylish interiors and impressive range of facilities. A lifestyle destination to live or do business, with the beach and city centre at your doorstep, Trilogy has been just as thoughtfully considered on the outside. A breathtaking private oasis pool, tennis court, children's play area and tranquil gardens offer everyone a place to escape. And at the centre of it all, the beautiful plaza is home to fine restaurants, bars and shops – an inviting hub and the beating heart of this unique integrated development.

Trilogy has high ambitions – not just to create one of the world's premier sky-rise living experiences, but to combine three lifestyle aspirations in one ecosystem of prosperity. It is a unique opportunity to play a part in the city's ever-changing story and begin an exciting new chapter of your own.



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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 What's the only current Welsh university that was founded in the 20th century?

2 Which English word for a strict disciplinarian comes from the surname of a French officer who served under Louis XIV?

3 In which Shakespeare play does the main character serve a mother her two sons baked in a pie?

4 Lemuel is the first name of the main character in which novel of 1726?

5 What was the real surname of the DJ John Peel (above)?

6 Who was the first Tudor monarch?



7 What was Margaret Thatcher's constituency throughout her Commons career?

8 Which London financial district is on the Isle of Dogs?

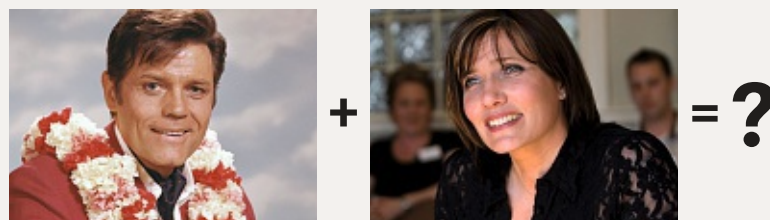
9 What's the usual American word for a spanner (right)?

10 Which BBC drama series that ran from 2008 to 2011 was based on a trilogy of books by Flora Thompson?



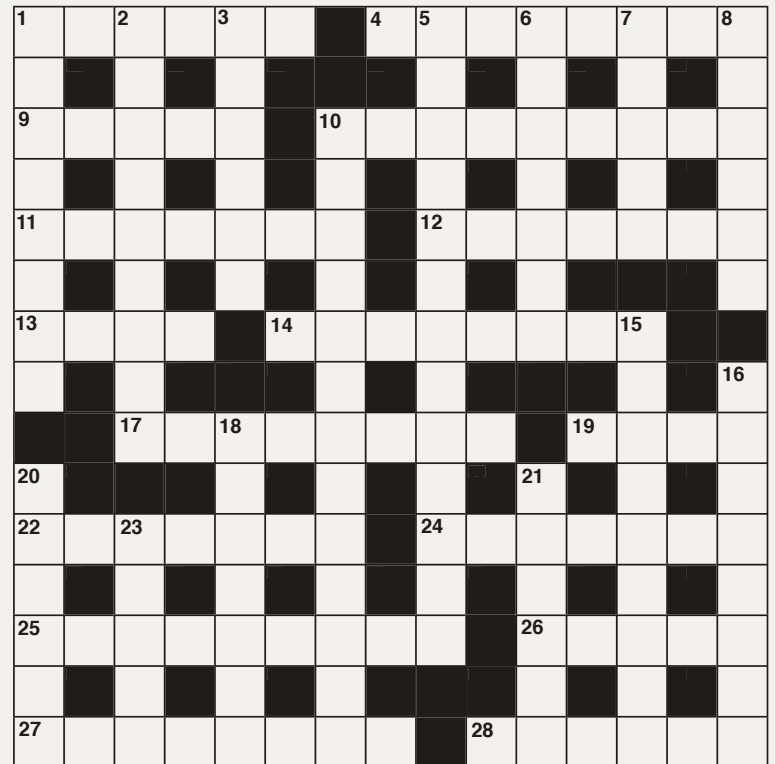
The Picture Round by James Walton

Who or what do these pictures add up to?



Answers page 12

The Crossword No 435. Set by Aldhelm



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

ACROSS

- 1** Tiny unit of length (6)
- 4** Intellectual (8)
- 9** ___ Gras, Shrove Tuesday (5)
- 10** Management, cultivation (9)
- 11** Cockerel (7)
- 12** Take out (7)
- 13** Well-ordered (4)
- 14** Most unyielding (8)
- 17** Traffic queue (8)
- 19** Molten rock (4)
- 22** Insect mound (7)
- 24** Highbrow (7)
- 25** Jollity, fun (9)
- 26** Classical dance music (5)
- 27** Mutinied (8)
- 28** Colouring pencil (6)

DOWN

- 1** Film me twice eating cereal, in part (8)
- 2** Bird, plant part or insect (9)
- 3** Drug for surgery I swallowed (6)
- 5** Moving science off it with time is economical (4-9)
- 6** One enlisted by air force with little support after start of degree (7)
- 7** Tragedy is made worse without hope, ultimately (5)
- 8** Regular pieces of goat we found under timid predator (6)
- 10** Bore and TV head clashed about tall tale that's far-fetched (4, 2, 7)
- 15** Drink one-by-one in a tantalising way (9)

- 16** Criticise the only half-built holy building (8)
- 18** Bit of interest in Latin I translated first (7)
- 20** One involved with 10 marines consumed by terrible fear (6)
- 21** One scorching vocalist! (6)
- 23** Beat both, perhaps, taking king captive (5)

Solution to Crossword No 434





GILLIAN TETT

PARTING SHOT

A fraud or the future? The bitter bitcoin debate

Last year, I took part in a noisy public debate about whether bitcoin is a beneficial innovation – or the opposite. It was an eye-opening experience: almost as soon as the event was posted online, I was trolled by furious cryptocurrency fans and critics alike.

Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies such as ethereum, I concluded, arouse a level of passion rarely found within finance. Their detractors are convinced that the entire concept is a fraud; their evangelists are equally certain that cryptocurrencies are the future.

Both sides may be right, depending on timing. Presently, cryptocurrencies seem to be marred by intellectual contradictions. Why does anyone think, for example, that crypto is a good payment mechanism or store of value when transactions are clunky and the value of a bitcoin has swung from \$20,000 to \$5,000 in the past 18 months?

But I also recognise that the underlying blockchain technology is potentially very useful. It is entirely possible that future historians might see bitcoin as the MySpace of cryptocurrency – a pioneering product that was flawed but eventually replaced by better versions of the technology.

However, if you want to get a less emotional view of these issues, consider a fascinating study of crypto trading that has just been conducted by an eight-strong team of computer scientists based at institutions including Cornell Tech, Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign and ETH in Zurich. Their research set out to determine whether trading in cryptocurrencies is fair when it takes place on decentralised exchanges (DEXes), where individual traders cut deals directly with each other in a relatively transparent way, without a central authority.

Before the study, it might have been expected – or hoped – that these venues were indeed pretty fair. After all, the whole point of cryptocurrencies is that they enable “miners” to create “money” and for it to be priced in a peer-to-peer manner with a permanent digital record. Central banks, governments and other institutions are not involved: call it digital people power.

It is true that shady things have occurred when cryptocurrencies have gone on to exchanges: just last month, for example, a computer analytics group called The Tie calculated that “87 per cent of exchanges reported trading volume was potentially suspicious, and that 75 per cent of exchanges had some form of suspicious activity occurring on them”. But cryptocurrency advocates argue that the gains from democratising money outweigh such apparent abuses.

However, when the researchers started tracking the DEXes (six of them, over 18 months) they had a nasty surprise: they found that the networks have become infested by computer bots, operating alongside the libertarian humans who are meant to populate them. More specifically,

some unscrupulous miners and traders have apparently created these bots to anticipate and gain from others’ everyday trades by gaining advantages in the platforms’ information flows, enabling them to siphon off millions – or even billions – of dollars a year in profits.

“Like high-frequency traders on Wall Street, these bots exploit inefficiencies in [DEXes], paying high transaction fees and optimizing network latency to front-run trades,” the research paper declares. “We observe bots competitively bidding up transaction fees in order to obtain

‘The scale of the bot activity is still small, but it shows the difficulty of trying to build a truly democratic marketplace’

priority ordering.” Translated for the lay reader, what this means is that some ruthlessly aggressive miners and traders are finding ways to grab data on the deals that other investors are trying to cut – and then jumping ahead of them to take advantage of the prices.

To be fair, crypto is not alone in this respect. As Michael Lewis’s book *Flash Boys* explained a few years ago, high-frequency traders have been using bots to front-run other investors in the equity world for several years. Moreover, the scale of this bot activity is probably still small when viewed against the wider financial system.

Nevertheless, there are two reasons why this tale is striking. First, it shows the difficulty of ever trying to build a truly democratic marketplace – with bitcoin or anything else – in a world of accelerating (and unequal) computing power.

Second, it also shows the challenges of cleaning up this corner of finance. Thus far, regulators have shown little sign of being heavy-handed in their crypto regulation, preferring to rely instead on the principle of *caveat emptor*. Besides, very few crypto enthusiasts are asking for regulation (partly because they tend to dislike government intervention in any form).

But can a fledgling product such as bitcoin truly flourish if there is no external oversight? Can investors find a way to clean up their markets themselves? Right now it is unclear. However, the next time you meet a crypto evangelist, point out the odd story of the blockchain bots – or direct them to the webpage that the researchers have provided, which tracks the bots in real time. If nothing else, it should spark more debate – and possibly another bitcoin row. **FT**

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