



OCT. 22, 2019 Marieke Vervoort, 40, with her parents, Odette Pauwels and Jos Vervoort, in her bedroom in Diest, Belgium.

EMBRACING THE END

The right to die helped Marieke Vervoort live her life. It drove her to become a Paralympics champion. But she could never get away from the pain.

SPECIAL REPORT, SECTION F

Science Class Defies Racism With Genetics

By AMY HARMON

COLORADO SPRINGS — Biology textbooks used in American high schools do not go near the sensitive question of whether genetics can explain why African-Americans are overrepresented as football players and why a disproportionate number of American scientists are white or Asian.

But in a study starting this month, a group of biology teachers from across the country will address it head-on. They are testing the idea that the science classroom may be the best place to provide a buffer against the unfounded genetic rationales for human difference that often become the basis for racial intolerance.

At a recent training in Colorado, the dozen teachers who had volunteered to participate in the experiment acknowledged the challenges of inserting the combustible topic of race and ancestry into straightforward lessons on the 19th-century pea-breeding experiments of Gregor Mendel and the basic function of the strands of DNA coiled in every cell.

The new approach represents a major deviation from the usual school genetics fare, which devotes little time to the extent of genetic differences across human populations, or how traits in every species are shaped by a complex mix of genes and environment.

It also challenges a prevailing belief among science educators that questions about race are best left to their counterparts in social studies.

The history of today's racial categories arose long before the field of genetics and have been used to justify all manner of discriminatory policies. Race, a social construct, is not a biological reality.

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Shirebrook, England, a former mining town where seven in 10 voted to leave the European Union.

A Brexit Road Trip, With Disunity at Every Stop

By PATRICK KINGSLEY

SHIREBROOK, England — There used to be a mine at the edge of this small town near the center of England. Now there is only a warehouse.

The mine provided coal that powered the country. The warehouse stores tracksuits.

The mine meant a job for life. The warehouse offers mostly temporary work for the lowest legal wage.

You work here, one worker told me in the drizzly parking lot last month, and you get treated like a monkey.

Shirebrook was the third stop of a 900-mile journey I made through Britain last month. I was trying to make sense of a splintered country in the run-up to the Dec. 12 general election. The out-

THE ROOTS OF ITALY'S RAGE

The far right's rise is tied to ire over migrants, but China lit the fuse long ago. Sunday Business.

side world typically sees Britain through the affluence and cosmopolitanism of London, but other than one quick stop there, I went elsewhere, looking for people beyond the capital's glare.

Everywhere I went, it felt as if the country were coming unbound. For all sorts of reasons, all sorts of people — Leavers and Remainers; blue- and white-collar; Jews and Muslims; English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh — felt alienated and unmoored.

At times, I was reminded that electoral politics are far removed from many people's priorities,

which range from simply making a living to fighting global warming. "There's no Brexit on a dead planet," said Lauren McDonald, a Glasgow student who recently quit college to mobilize against climate change.

Again and again, though, people came back to the politics of nationalism, austerity and economic alienation. And in Shirebrook and beyond, the frustrations were rooted in Brexit.

Since the surrounding constituency was formed in 1950, its mostly working-class residents have always elected a Labour lawmaker.

Then came the 2016 Brexit referendum, in which seven in 10 local voters supported Britain's departure from the European Union. Many are now furious that the

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While They Play Online, Children May Be the Prey

Predators Using Gifts and Game Currency Trap Minors in 'Sextortion' Schemes

By NELLIE BOWLES and MICHAEL H. KELLER

When Kate's 13-year-old son took up Minecraft and Fortnite, she did not worry.

The video games were hardly Grand Theft Auto — banned in their home because it was too violent — and he played in a room

EXPLOITED Virtual 'Hunting Grounds'

where she could keep an eye on him.

But about six weeks later, Kate saw something appalling pop up on the screen: a video of bestiality involving a young boy. Horrified, she scrolled through her son's account on Discord, a platform where gamers can chat while playing. The conversations were filled with graphic language and imagery of sexual acts posted by others, she said.

Her son broke into tears when she questioned him last month.

"I think it's a huge weight off them for somebody to step in and say, 'Actually this is child abuse, and you're being abused and you're a victim here,'" said Kate, who asked not to be identified by her full name to protect her family's privacy.

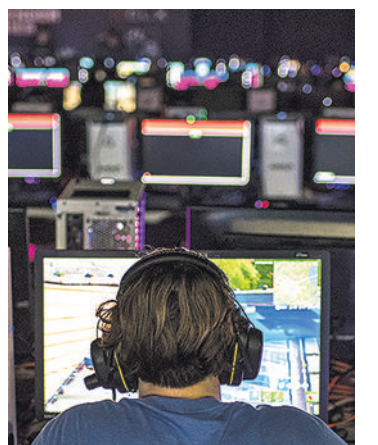
Sexual predators and other bad actors have found an easy access point into the lives of young people: They are meeting them online through multiplayer video games and chat apps, making virtual connections right in their victims' homes.

The criminals strike up a con-

versation and gradually build trust. Often they pose as children, confiding in their victims with false stories of hardship or self-loathing. Their goal, typically, is to dupe children into sharing sexually explicit photos and videos of themselves — which they use as blackmail for more imagery, much of it increasingly graphic and violent.

Reports of abuse are emerging with unprecedented frequency around the country, with some perpetrators grooming hundreds and even thousands of victims, according to a review of prosecutions, court records, law enforcement reports and academic studies. Games are a common target, but predators are also finding many victims on platforms like In-

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KHOLOOD EID FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DreamHack, a video game forum in Atlanta, drew 35,000.

Before Attack, A Saudi Shared Violent Footage

This article is by Frances Robles, Eric Schmitt, Patricia Mazzei and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs.

PENSACOLA, Fla. — As federal authorities worked on Saturday to piece together clues to last week's attack at a Florida military training base, new details emerged about the gunman, a Saudi trainee who had apparently shown videos of mass shootings at a dinner party the night before.

Several days earlier, the gunman and three other Saudi military trainees visited New York City, including several museums and Rockefeller Center, according to a person who was briefed on the investigation but not authorized to speak publicly.

Investigators were seeking to determine whether the New York trip was a tourist excursion or whether there were other motives. They also hoped to learn whether the group met with other people during the trip.

The 21-year-old gunman, identified as Second Lt. Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani, did not appear to have any ties to international terrorist groups, said a senior American official, who was not authorized to speak publicly about investigators' findings.

The Friday morning attack in a classroom building at the Pensacola Naval Air Station left three service members dead and eight others injured. The gunman, armed with a 9-millimeter handgun and several extra magazines, was killed by a sheriff's deputy.

Officials said the sailors who had been killed were Ensign

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REACTION The president avoided hard questions on why the U.S. is training Saudi officers. PAGE 24

As Rivals Jostle, Democrats Face A Primary Slog

By JONATHAN MARTIN

MASON CITY, Iowa — With just under two months until the Iowa caucuses, the already volatile Democratic presidential race has grown even more unsettled, setting the stage for a marathon nominating contest between the party's moderate and liberal factions.

Pete Buttigieg's surge, Bernie Sanders's revival, Elizabeth Warren's struggles and the exit of Kamala Harris have upended the primary and, along with Joseph R. Biden's Jr. enduring strength with nonwhite voters, increased the possibility of a split decision after the early nominating states.

That's when Michael R. Bloomberg aims to burst into the contest — after saturating the airwaves of the Super Tuesday states with tens of millions of dollars of television ads.

With no true front-runner and three other candidates besides Mr. Bloomberg armed with war chests of over \$20 million, Democrats are confronting the prospect of a drawn-out primary reminiscent of the epic Clinton-Obama contest in 2008.

"There's a real possibility Pete wins here, Warren takes New Hampshire, Biden South Carolina and who knows about Nevada," said Sue Dvorsky, a former Iowa Democratic chair. "Then you go into Super Tuesday with Bloomberg throwing \$30 million out of his couch cushions and this is going to go for a while."

That's a worrisome prospect for a party already anxious about whether it has a candidate strong enough to defeat President Trump next November. The contenders have recently begun to attack one another more forcefully — Ms.

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INTERNATIONAL 4-13

A Forbidden Flavor

The famous pasta-making women of Bari, Italy, are worried about a crackdown on contraband orecchiette. PAGE 6

Weekend of Discontent

A pension strike in France has given new energy to long-running protests against the government. PAGE 8

NATIONAL 16-27

Iowa's Democrat Whisperer

A state auditor is not generally considered to be a political kingmaker, but Rob Sand has become something of an oracle for Democratic candidates trying to crack the Iowa code. PAGE 16

Prescribing Positivity

For patients whose dementia is compounded by depression, psychotherapy that reinforces positive thoughts could be a safer alternative to drugs. PAGE 25

Doldrums in the Senate

Languishing legislation is frustrating senators of both parties as the clock ticks down on their session. PAGE 18

SUNDAY BUSINESS

The Exit of Google's Founders

Larry Page and Sergey Brin had been slowly stepping away from the messy business of running the company they started 21 years ago. Last week, they made it official. PAGE 1

Let the Tipping Begin (or Not)

An illustrated take on what 16 professionals — from doormen and nannies to barbers — received from customers during the holidays. Let your conscience be your guide. PAGE 3

SUNDAY REVIEW

Maureen Dowd

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TRAVEL

An Italian Feast, in Paris

From pizza labs to Michelin-starred bistros, Italian establishments are filling the French capital. PAGE 1

ARTS & LEISURE

The Best of 2019

Times critics list the cream of the crop.

SPORTSUNDAY

The College Playoff Looks Set

Louisiana State, Ohio State and Clemson all solidified their spots in the football playoff by winning their conference title games, and Oklahoma made its case by defeating Baylor. PAGES 3-4

Awful Injury, Wonderful Gift

Fay Vincent, the former baseball commissioner, relates the lessons he learned in recovering from a broken back as a teenager. PAGE 5

