More Heat Plus More People Equals Deadlier U.S. Summers

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By David Hasemyer, InsideClimate News
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People try to cool off from the heat in Karachi, Pakistan, June 25, 2015. A new study finds the number of people who die from heat in the U.S. could quadruple by 2070, due to climate change and population changes. Credit: REUTERS
The recent heat waves that have scorched Europe, India and Pakistan have served as vivid reminders of the deadliness of heat. Thousands have died so far, and summer has only just begun.

The health toll of heat, unfortunately, is only going to get worse in the United States as well, because not only is climate change bringing more heat, but urbanization is also putting more people in the hottest places, according to a recent study in the peer-reviewed journal Nature Climate Change.

The number of Americans exposed to extreme heat could quadruple by 2070, according to study authored by researchers at the National Center for Atmospheric Research and the City University of New York.

Using a computer model and assuming no significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, the researchers calculated exposure to extreme heat based on "person-days." The formula multiplied the number of days when the temperature was expected to hit at least 95 degrees by the number of people projected to live in the areas beset by extreme heat.

The results show that average yearly exposure to extremely high temperatures would rise from 2.3 billion person-days—the average during the years 1971 to 2000—to between 10 billion and 15 billion person-days during the years 2041 to 2070.

Extreme heat already kills more people in the United States than any other weather-related event, and scientists expect the number of deadly heat waves to increase as the climate warms, according to the study. Urbanization intensifies heat—a phenomenon known as the heat island effect—and in the U.S., people are moving to the hotter parts of the country, not the colder ones.

"Both population change and climate change matter," NCAR scientist Brian O'Neill, one of the study's co-authors, said in a prepared statement. "If you want to know how heat waves will affect health in the future, you have to consider both."

Sharon Harlan, a professor in Arizona States University's School of Human Evolution and Social Change, said urban areas present the greatest challenges to mitigating the consequences of increasing heat. They're also home to the most vulnerable class of people—the elderly, sick and poor.

People in the poorer neighborhoods of big cities find themselves at even greater risk for heat-related health problems, Harlan. These are the people who can’t afford the utility bills that come with air conditioning or whose houses are poorly insulated or ventilated.

Ken Spaeth, a physician and division chief of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, N.Y., said steadily rising temperatures increase the risks to people’s health.
"It's likely that climate change temperature patterns will continue to get worse and the corresponding public health effects will become more demonstrable," Spaeth said.

Bryan Jones, a postdoctoral researcher at the City University of New York Institute for Demographic Research and the study's lead author, said heat waves are also arriving in months not typically associated with extreme heat. Southern California was in the grips of a heat wave in March that sent temperatures soaring 15 to 20 degrees above normal.

Special attention should be paid, Harlan said, to designing cities with heat in mind; the use of tree cover and landscaping around buildings that can reduce temperatures. And buildings themselves must be better designed to repel heat and create comfortable interior environments while controlling energy usage, she said.

The trend toward a warming climate—and the resulting miserable heat that people will have to suffer—should be approached sensibly, Harlan said.

"We need to look toward the future and do the kind of planning to change lifestyles and address climate change issues," Harlan said.

"A lot of what the future holds involves a public policy discussion and everyone's recognition of what they need to do to protect themselves."
325,000 New York public employees make under $15 an hour

Posted on July 7, 2015 at 3:49 pm by Jeff Waggoner in General, Minimum Wage

Given the fight for $15 an hour for fast-food workers, State Worker asked the Fiscal Policy Institute for figures on how many public employees in New York state make under $15.

It's 325,000.

James Parrott, an economist for FPI, said that the 325,000 include all public employees — federal, state and local, as well as full and part-time workers.

This includes summer workers, such as lifeguards and mowers, Parrott said, and work-study students at SUNY and CUNY.

"We know that about 4,000 school crossing guards in New York City only recently had their wages raised to $11.50 an hour wage floor," he said. "So some of the government workers are adults working full-time or close to full-time."

A request for data on how many state workers make under $15 an hour was not immediately available from state sources.

Factoring in everyone, some 24 percent of all government workers in New York make make under $15 an hour, and according to the FPI, 11 percent are paid under $10.50.

But pay in the food industry is far worse: 56 percent are paid under $10.50 an hour, so the push for higher wages is starting there.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo pitched a minimum wage plan earlier this year that would bring the wage up to $10.50 per hour statewide and up to $11.50 per hour in New York City. No minimum wage increase was approved before lawmakers left for the year last month.

Cuomo has empaneled a wage board to look at the pay for fast food workers. It's expected that board will recommend a raise for that sector.

Parrott, who has testified to the Fast-Food Wage Board, determined these figures while researching the the fast-food worker pay issue:

...and in the course of that, we did run Current Population Survey data for 2014 to see how many workers across all sectors are paid below $15 an hour. We were not able to break out State government, but can report the numbers for all government workers in NYS (so this includes local and federal government as well.)

Across all sectors of the economy, 39 percent of NYS workers are paid < $15. In government, it's 24 percent, and in food services (which includes fast-food), it's 79%, the highest among all sectors.

So it is very reasonable to start with fast-food — it's also the lowest-paying of all broad sectors in NYS. 59 percent of all food service workers are paid less than $10.50 an hour, that's nearly three times the 22 percent share of all workers paid less than $10.50 an hour. Only 11 percent of government workers are paid < $10.50.

Within government in NYS, there are about 325,000 workers paid < $15 an hour, with the largest category of workers paid < $15 in Educational Services (37 percent of all government workers paid < $15), followed by public administration (25 percent of the total), and health services (10 percent of the total).
Too close for comfort: Sharks along Atlantic coast

Shark attack
People surround and attend to a 68-year-old man that was bit by a shark in waist-deep water off Ocracoke Island, N.C., Wednesday, July 1, 2015. The man suffered wounds to his ribcage, lower leg, hip and both hands as he tried to fight off the shark. (Laura H. Hefty via AP)

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on July 07, 2015 at 3:28 PM, updated July 07, 2015 at 6:35 PM

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Less than a month into summer, nearly a dozen instances of shark attacks and sightings have been reported along the Atlantic coast.

Eight shark attacks have been documented in the Carolinas since June 11, according to Fox. Victims range from 8 to 68 years old and injuries varied between the very minor to the loss of limbs.

Closer to home, sharks were spotted on Monday in the low waters of the Jersey Shore’s beaches in Avalon and Margate, NBC Philadelphia reports.

Shark sightings become more prevalent in late June and early July for a variety of reasons, says Dr. Charles Kramer, a biology professor at the College of Staten Island.

For one, hotter shoreline temperatures are more hospitable toward the migrating fish that sharks prey upon. So as ocean temperatures heat up to around 70 degrees, migrating fish tend to swim closer to shorelines. These fish attract sharks looking to feed -- often at the same time beachgoers take to the water.

"If you look at these attacks, like the ones in North Carolina, they usually occur shortly after day break, or at dusk," Kramer said. "Those are the hours people tend to be at the beach and in the water. But those are also the prime feeding times for sharks. Like many animals, sharks have a biological rhythm based on the light-dark system."

Lifeguards at the two New Jersey beaches where the sharks were spotted -- which are about 27 miles apart -- cleared the waters. No injuries were reported and, in both occasions, swimmers were allowed back into the ocean.

When there's a shark in Avalon pic.twitter.com/B3dFxtsTLs
— Gabby Short (@gabbyshort99) July 6, 2015

The New Jersey sightings come a month after a partially-eaten dolphin carcass was found in North Wildwood,
which sparked a buzz around sharks along the shore, and just a day after Discovery Channel's premier Shark Week event.

Sighting of something... □□□□□#Avalon #SharkWeek

A photo posted by Shannon (@kazmiryk310) on Jul 6, 20...

Shark attacks are usually accidents. Kramer said morning and evening attacks likely occur when the water is murky and there is low visibility. During these times it's likely a shark could accidentally mistake a swimming human for a fish it preys on.

NBC Philadelphia reported that the Margate shark appeared to be chasing a school of fish. Kramer said he believes that overfishing of schooling species like bluefish and striped bass is one of several factors that could be playing a role in increased shark attacks and sightings.

"Overfishing is definitely a factor," Kramer said. "We're doing it to ourselves. Sharks will follow their food source. And if their food source is scarce, they will follow their prey out to more shallow waters..."

In 2014, there were 72 unprovoked shark attacks worldwide, according to the the Florida Museum of Natural History's International Shark Attack File. Since 1900, the accounts of shark attacks have steadily increased, according the museum.
This, the museum speculates, is most likely due to the rising popularity of waterborne recreation -- there are simply more people in the water.

"It's statistics," said Dr. Jay Dwivedi, an assistant professor of biological sciences at St. John's University, who studies behaviors of sharks and sting rays. "With more humans entering the water and going out into sharks' environment, obviously you will see more attacks...

"Lately there have been a few bull shark sightings along the shore," Dwivedi continued. "That species tends to be a little more aggressive and territorial. If overfishing forces them to start finding places closer to shore to find food sources, incidents could increase."

That being said, shark attacks are still very uncommon. Dwivedi said it's more likely for someone to be struck by lightning or to be a passenger in an airplane crash than it is to get bitten by a shark.

"It's absolutely very rare," Dwivedi said. "Most people don't realize that, if they're swimming off shore at any given point during the summer months, they're usually within 100 yards of smaller shark species without really knowing it."

*Will this summer's shark activity along the Atlantic coast affect how often you venture into ocean waters or change your beach-going habit in any way? Let us know in the comments section below.*
New Book By Paul Moses Tells Of The 'Unlikely Union' Between New York's Irish And Italians

BY ALEX ELLIFSON ON JULY 7, 2015


For Marine Park resident and Brooklyn College journalism professor Paul Moses, the story of the bitter rivalry between New York's Irish and Italian immigrants is personal. His wife Maureen — Bishop Kearney High School's recently retired "Nurse Mo" — is Irish and Moses identifies strongly with his Italian roots. And as Moses told me, there was a time when that kind of marriage would have been very strange.

It's been close to a century since these two groups feuded for political, economic, and religious clout in New York City. But the legacy of their battles and eventual reconciliation is woven into the character of many neighborhoods, particularly in southern Brooklyn.

Moses' new book, An Unlikely Union: The Love-Hate Story of New York's Irish and Italians, explores the long, colorful history of these two immigrant groups as they strove for acceptance in American society, first as rivals and then as allies. The book is published by New York University Press and officially releases on Tuesday, July 7. Though it was made available for
This is Moses' second book. His first, *The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace*, details the encounter between St. Francis of Assisi and the Sultan of Egypt during the Crusades. Moses is also a former editor at Newsday, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, and my former professor at Brooklyn College.

Below is an interview between Moses and myself, in which we talk about the inspiration for his new book, how the union between Irish and Italian immigrants helped shaped neighborhoods in southern Brooklyn, and what their story can tell us about the new wave of Catholic immigrants settling in New York today.

Sheepshead Bites: What inspired you to write this book?

Paul Moses: The inspiration came from my own family life. I'm half Italian. My wife Maureen, her ancestry is Irish. And I got to thinking about how, at one time, that would have been considered unusual. And as I researched, I could see that the rivalry between the Irish and the Italians was even more intense than I had realized. And so I began to see the arc of a story there. How did we get from that place where the Irish and Italians were rivals to the place where they were marrying each other on a very large scale here in Brooklyn and Manhattan, in the suburbs, and in other major cities like Boston and Chicago.

There's been a lot written about Irish and Italian immigrants in New York City. What part of that story did you feel was missing and needed to be told?

There's a lot written about the Irish or the Italians. But nobody has really explored their relationship. In fact, I found out there are very few books out there on any relationships between ethnic groups. I think there are other ethnic groups that would be interesting to study too. But I think the Irish and the Italians are the ones that I know the best. So that's really what this book does. It's the history of their relationship and how it went from being rather stormy to having two groups that closely identify with each other.

Was this a book that you wanted to write for a long time, or was there a specific moment when you realized this was what your next book was going to be about?

I was finishing up my previous book, which is called *The Saint and the Sultan*. It tells the story of an encounter during the crusades between Francis of Assisi and the Sultan of Egypt. And the basic point of it is that even though Christians and Muslims were at war with each other, Francis and the Sultan managed to meet with each other peacefully and respectfully. It was a story about peacemaking. At that point, as I was writing this story about peacemaking in medieval times, I just looked at my own household and realized there was a story about peacemaking between the Irish and Italians.

What were some of the important milestones in those two groups reconciling?
One thing I noticed was Italians voted for an Irish-born candidate for mayor in 1941, Bill O'Dwyer, over one of their own, Fiorello LaGuardia. So I considered that to be somewhat of a milestone. LaGuardia had swept the Italian vote in the previous two elections. So that was a sign of the change that was coming.

During the war years, I think Italians began achieving real acceptance in American society. They really had to prove their patriotism because the United States was at war with Italy. And they did prove their patriotism. After the war, people began moving out of the old ethnic communities into residential communities like Sheepshead Bay and Marine Park and elsewhere in southern Brooklyn. They moved to Queens and eventually Staten Island and suburbs on Long Island. And as they moved into these neighborhoods, they began to see each other as friends and not as members of some rival ethnic group.

*How did the stories described in your book shape neighborhoods like Sheepshead Bay and Bensonhurst, or other neighborhoods in the outer boroughs?*

I think neighborhoods like Sheepshead Bay, Bensonhurst, and across southern Brooklyn, and also the Brownstone areas in Brooklyn, are very much part of this story. Because they are places where the Irish and Italians did mix together. Sometimes uneasily at first and later becoming close to one another. I'm sure there are many people across southern Brooklyn, and many families like my own, that have both Irish and Italian ancestry, mixed often with Jewish ancestry. So our neighborhoods are part of this story. And in fact, they are places where people left the old ethnic neighborhoods like Little Italy to move further out when the subways were built. They are places where people learned to mix more easily than maybe was the case in the old days in Lower Manhattan.

And now, of course, they are being reshaped by new immigration that adds a lot to our community, just as the previous migrations helped to shape our great city.

*A review about your book in Commonweal talked about how labor issues were particularly divisive among these two groups, but eventually labor was something that seemed to draw them closer together.***

Within labor, that was a long struggle. The Irish were already well established in their labor unions when the Italians began to arrive in large numbers in the 1880s. And the Italians were willing to work for less money and for longer hours. And of course, employers liked that and played the Italians and Irish against each other.

The Italians were used as strikebreakers. And so there were very bad feelings between Irish and Italian laborers. There were frequent street fights. And it took a while before the labor movement began to realize that they would be better off bringing in the Italians as members than having them be strikebreakers.

But that process took a long time. Even within unions, there were tensions between Irish locals and Italian locals. You would see that very often on the waterfront. Irish locals remained strong on the Manhattan waterfront and Italian locals were strong on the Brooklyn waterfront. So that rivalry continued for quite a while.

*Today, there is a new immigrant story taking place in America and New York, with so many Catholics from Latin America immigrating to the United States. What are some of*
the similarities you see between what’s happening today and the stories you discovered while writing this book?

Well, when I read about Donald Trump’s comments about Mexicans, he was saying the same things about Mexicans that people once said about the Italian immigrants. And so I do see a lot of similarities between what’s happening now and what happened then. The different groups are following the same path towards acceptance.

And recently, when two police officers were shot in that terrible tragedy, one of them Asian American and the other Latino, a lot of remarks were made that they are not Irish and Italian, they are Latino and Chinese. And it’s a sign of ethnic change in the police department. And indeed, I think that shooting was kind of a landmark in the life of the city because just as Italians once had to struggle to be accepted into the Irish-dominated NYPD, now these groups are making their presence felt in the NYPD and in the city at large. So I see events like that all the time that make me think about what I’ve written about the Irish and Italians.

Your book also talks about the struggle between the Irish and Italians for acceptance within New York’s Catholic Church. Do you think that’s taking place today with the arrival of Catholics from Latin America?

I think that some Latinos may identify with the struggle of the Italians to gain acceptance within the Catholic Church in New York. I think that may be the case. The Italians had very different ways of worshiping than the Irish, who were in charge. And Italians were very angry when they felt they were getting second-class treatment. For example, they were required to hold their services in church basements rather than the main church. And those clashes lasted for a long time. There were powerful Italian church leaders in Italy who tried to intervene in New York to help the Italian immigrants. And for Latinos, even though their numbers are so large within the church, I think it’s also been a bit of a struggle in the United States to get their due share of bishops and other leadership positions. So I think there are parallels but I’m hoping that [my book] contributes to the discussion about Latinos in the American Catholic Church.
Why Do So Few Women Bike In NYC?

by Lauren Evans in News on Jul 7, 2015 2:25 pm

The Lohans using Citibike last October (via Pacific Coast News)

In its two-year life span, Citibike has been through a lot. The still-fledgling bike share system has been cursed by neighborhood groups, chastised by users, plagued with technical glitches, changed hands and recently, been given a design upgrade. Throughout all this, though, the program faces a particular challenge, one that can't be resolved by community vote or improved by a technology upgrade: Women aren't riding Citibike. But then, women aren't biking in general.

The Times reports today that women comprise only a third of Citibike's members, and that only around a quarter of Citibike trips are taken by women. This, however, is roughly in keeping with the data on female cyclists overall—a study from Hunter College last year revealed that only 21.1 percent of
riders are female. If anything, Citi Bike has been instrumental in increasing the number of lady riders, since the percentage of women Citi Bikers is 31.1 percent—a full 10 points higher.

So the larger question is perhaps not "why don't more women ride Citi Bike? It's "why don't more women bike, period?"

Safety is one issue: The Hunter study found women are much more inclined to ride in bike lanes, follow traffic rules and wear helmets. A report from NYU's Rudin Center for Transportation says that women tend to choose Citi Bike stations with fewer lanes of traffic, fewer trucks and in some cases, fast access to bridge entrances. With Citi Bike poised to expand its stations in the outer boroughs, it's reasonable to assume that more women will take up Citi Bike. For women riders in general, though, it's up to DOT to create infrastructure in which women feel comfortable riding—82 percent of female cyclists stick to riding in bike lanes only, versus 64 percent of men.

"There's a huge underlying structural problem, why women—not just women—but why a lot of people don't feel safe riding bikes in New York City, and it's due to a lack of safe, well-maintained infrastructure, and sometimes a lack of enforcement by the police department," said Dani Simons, the director of communications for Citi Bike's parent company, Motivate. "You look at Copenhagen, and it feels as natural as walking to get on a bike, and you look at New York and it's like there's a lot more people now riding than ever before, but there's still a small fraction, compared to the almost nine million people that live in the city."

But safety is just one factor. Also mentioned by the Times is the problem of carrying children. Make no mistake—it's not OK to just wedge little Tyndals on the handlebars and head for Flatbush Avenue. But it's certainly possible to outfit your own bike with child-carrying devices like trailers or child seats, or better yet, cargo bikes.

Casey Aschenhurt, director of the female cyclist advocacy group We Bike NYC, says that biking with kids is tied to confidence in one's cycling ability in general. "If you don't feel like a very experienced rider by yourself, it can feel very daunting to have your kid on the bike with you," she said. (For more information on riding with kids, click here.)

And then there's this: "I wouldn't want to be gross the whole day," one 21-year-old woman told the Times. Well, yes. OK. However. As Simons points out, there are various workarounds to sitting around feeling disgusting all day.

"I think the concern is real, but it's surmountable, and people deal with that in all different ways," she said. The heft of Citi Bike forces riders to go slow: "It's not like you're 'in it to win it' when you're on a Citi Bike," she added. Face wipes are remarkably effective for dabling away sweat. If you feel gross after riding, consider a change of clothes, or hopping off a few blocks ahead of your destination and giving yourself some time to rearrange your hair and let yourself dry off. Hint: Body parts are kept freezing in the summer. "I've definitely employed that tactic," said Simons. "Like, ok, I need to just get to the meeting ten minutes early so I have a chance to catch my breath for a minute. But it's still worth it to me. You can have the same experience in the subway, by the way."

Ultimately, the solution is to tip women toward cycling by eliminating the barriers that have thus far prevented them from riding, Aschenhurt said. To that end, We Bike NYC has several forums for women looking to get into cycling. Click here for some information on group rides, and more information on the group in general here.

Update, 5:30 p.m.: The DOT points out that several projects are in the works to improve cycling infrastructure around the city. Take a look here.

Contact the author of this article or email tips@gothamist.com with further questions, comments or tips.
Puerto Ricans fleeing economic woes for US

NEW YORK (CNN) - More than 8,000 kilometers (4,900 miles) from Greece, Puerto Rico is also facing a financial crisis. The U.S. Caribbean territory is being dubbed "America's Greece." The economic crisis on the island is forcing many young people to move to the mainland United States in search of better opportunities.

On the streets of Upper Manhattan, in the neighborhood called Spanish Harlem, there is anger in the air over the crisis in Puerto Rico.

"It's not the same situation like what's going on in Greece. This is an American territory, we're American citizens, we're not Greece," said Carlos Trujillo, a street vendor. Puerto Ricans are well established. They've been settling in New York for generations, seeking new opportunities. Notable transplants have included singer Ricky Martin, actors Benicio del Toro, and Rita Moreno.

But few migrations have been as large as this one. So great that in Spanish they call it "el exodo," the exodus. More Puerto Ricans now live in the mainland U.S. than in Puerto Rico itself, with central Florida becoming a prime destination.

"We have about 5.1 million Puerto Ricans in the States and less than 3.5 million in Puerto Rico - it's a huge swing," said Edwin Melendez, director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College. Larisa and Vanessa Santiago have moved to the mainland from Puerto Rico. Their brother Kevin may follow soon.

They feared for their futures in Puerto Rico as unemployment soared to 12.5 percent.

"I probably would have been living with my mother or my parents for support. I want to grow professionally, economically and that's not going to happen until the economical status works better," said Larissa Santiago.

But the decisions have been gut wrenching. "It's hard to leave your country for another place, another language, another culture to do what you really want. I have to do it, but then I have all this feeling that I'm definitely coming back," said Vanessa Santiago.

Some Puerto Ricans are already moving back to the island, lured by cheap rents and a spirit of entrepreneurship. Artist Sofia Maldonado lived in New York for years. And now she sees new opportunity in her homeland.

"If you are a freelancer, creative and are willing to re-invent yourself there is definitely a new movement of my generation. The people that are coming back or are staying see the possibilities of in a way rescuing the country," said Sofia Maldonado, who moved back to Puerto Rico.

For the short term, experts predict new waves of Puerto Ricans coming to the mainland, seeking shelter from the Caribbean island's economic crisis.

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Top district attorney accused of being sexist after he loses 11 female staff in a year over claims he is rude to women

- Brooklyn DA Ken Thompson is said to have lost 11 female staff in a year
- Accused of being allegedly rude to the female staff who work for him
- Thompson's office branded the allegation a 'despicable smear'

By SAM MATTHEW FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 06:53 EST, 8 July 2015 | UPDATED: 07:50 EST, 8 July 2015

A top district attorney is said to have lost 11 female staff in the last year because he is allegedly rude to women, it has been reported.

Brooklyn DA Ken Thompson, who has made a name for himself representing women victims of sexual abuse, has been accused of having 'a problem' with women who are 'self-assured.'

Among the staff said to have quit or been ousted are a prosecutor, top aide, executive assistant, community coordinator and five spokeswomen.

The allegations have been strongly denied by Thompson's office who branded them 'a despicable smear.'
One ex-employee, who declined to be named, reportedly told the New York Post: ‘There is a problem there with how he treats women.’

Another alleges that he did not give female colleagues as much room to make mistakes as male counterparts.

Thompson attended John Jay College of Criminal Justice after deciding at 18 not to follow his mother into the police force.

He has previously credited his mother for making him the man that he is today.

He told the New York Times: ‘I am what I am today because of my mother.’

In 2003 he founded Thompson Wgdor L.L.P, which mainly represent plaintiffs in discrimination cases.

He famously represented Nafissatou Diallo, an African working as a housekeeper in a Manhattan hotel, against Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who led the International Monetary Fund.

Thompson replaced Charles Hynes as DA in 2013.

Spokesman Oren Yaniv reportedly told the New York Post that Thompson has hired and promoted more women since taking office.

‘He appointed many women to key leadership positions and treats all employees professionally and respectfully,’ he said.

A spokesman for the district attorney branded the allegations a ‘despicable smear’
Global warming and clean energy in Asia

The Oxford Handbook of the Macroeconomics of Global Warming

BUY NOW
The year 1896 was "a very good year" for many reasons. It was in that year that Puccini's opera, La Bohème, premiered, gold was discovered in the Yukon, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average finished its first year at around 41. But perhaps closer to our subject, two other events stand out. Firstly, Henry Ford introduced the gasoline-fueled automobile to America and, secondly, Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius suggested that a greenhouse-like warming of the planet could result from increasing atmospheric CO₂. Thus, the possibility that the industrial revolution would ultimately become incompatible with the physical environment was first envisioned.

Modern industry is foundational for contemporary society. Yet, its dependence upon fossil fuels, primarily, and upon other chemicals, secondarily, threatens to destroy that very same society. One should note, at the outset, that those industrial processes do not so much create greenhouse gases, as they are termed, but rather release them. In fact, the term "fossil fuels" originates in the idea that they—petroleum, coal, and natural gas—originate in the decayed remains of plants and animals that lived long ago. Although not universally accepted, this theory originates with the 18th century Russian chemist Mikhail Lomonosov, who first argued: "Rock oil originates as tiny bodies of animals buried in the sediments which, under the influence of increased temperature and pressure acting during an unimaginable long period of time, transform into rock oil."

Thus, global warming threatens to restore our planet to an ancient equilibrium—an equilibrium that was home to tropical plants and dinosaurs, but not to man.

It is because of this integration with our economic system that the problem is so complex. And, in particular, because of the way our economic system incorporates so much of society, climate change issues are, indeed, issues for every man and woman on the planet.

As the chemist Nathan Lewis has said: "The currency of the world is not the dollar, it's the joule" (Lewis, Nathan S. (2007), "Powering the Planet" (http://www.pnas.org/content/103/43/15729), Engineering and Science). Thus, the value in modern industrial processes is that they harness energy, focusing the transformational power of machines into production. Unfortunately, although there are numerous sources of energy which are not accompanied by the emission of greenhouse gases—solar and wind—the technology of transmission and storage of energy is still in its infancy.

Fossil fuels are simply one of the most efficient forms of stored energy. They are also a convenient form in which to transport energy to the places where it is needed.

Fossil fuels are integrated not only into our economy, but into our society as well. The automobile, for example, is as much a cultural icon as it is a means of transportation. Thus, the economic consequences of energy production, use, storage, and transmission, as well as any attempts to control these processes, will reflect in the political arena, in daily life, on Wall Street, and on the global economy through a plethora of intricate, often interlocking, mechanisms.
Western society has developed itself, largely oblivious to concerns of climatic change. The benefits in terms of quality of life are manifest, and they have become, arguably, the West's primary export to the rest of the world. The so-called 'under-developed' world has bought-in to the program and now seeks to align itself, economically, if not culturally, with the West. Yet, just as this dream begins to appear real, the limitations imposed by global warming are becoming apparent.

![Annual GDP Growth Rate](image)

*Figure 1. Image Credit: “Annual GDP Growth Rate for China, India and U.S.”, used with permission from the authors. Data Source: The World Bank; National Bureau of Statistics of China; Central Statistics Office of India; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

China, in particular, and Asia, in general, has stepped up to the plate, as it were. GDP growth rates in Asia have been in the high single digits for decades, double or triple that found in the US. In Figure 1, we can see that China and India, representing a significant portion of the world's population, are growing rapidly.

Yet, this growth has come with an environmental cost. As outlined earlier, the expenditure of energy, largely derived from fossil fuels, is matching Asia's economic growth. Figure 2 shows individual country's CO₂ emissions as a percentage of global CO₂ emissions.

![Top 10 Emitters of CO₂](image)

*Figure 2. Image Credit: “Top Ten Emitters of CO₂, 2014”, used with permission from the authors. Data © Statista 2015.*

Obviously, the West cannot simply say "slow down" to Asia. This is a non-starter. Yet, one cannot escape the facts. Global warming will, ultimately, though its devastating effects on global systems, destroy the very economic engine that fuels Asian (and Western) development.

The challenge of Asia is to figure out how to maintain its development, while addressing the issues surrounding greenhouse emissions.

This may not be as farfetched as it sounds. Most of Western development took place in a crude industrial environment. The internal combustion engine, for example, is largely a nineteenth century technology, although it was conceived of earlier.
Yet, from modern computers to advanced materials, Asia today has the advantage of a century of innovation and technological progress. It need not wade through the swamp of carbureted engines and untreated exhausts that the West passed through. Nowadays, computer-controlled fuel injection is available and catalytic converters reduce noxious emissions. But there are also advances in solar panels and wind generation, computer control of electrical networks, etc. New “green” technologies are not only beneficial to the environment; they are also an important economic engine in and of themselves, providing entrepreneurial opportunity and jobs to those nations which adopt them.

Asia is well-aware of this. China has been a “high speed” investor in clean energy since 2004. In fact, according to recent data from The Bloomberg New Energy Finance Report, China leads the world in renewable energy investment, spending a total of $89.5 billion on wind, solar, and other renewable projects in 2014 alone. Thus, rather than trying to contain Asian growth, sound market principles suggest that exactly the opposite strategy may encompass the best hope of finding a solution to the problem of global warming.

NYPD veteran picked as new city police chief

Burlington's police chief designee says he plans to immerse himself in city life, including possibly living in the Hill section that is known for its nighttime noise complaints about the college-aged students.

Deputy Inspector Brandon del Pozo, an 18-year veteran with various command-level jobs within the New York Police Department, is expected to take over in Burlington on Sept. 1.

Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger introduced del Pozo to the rank-and-file of the Burlington Police Department on Tuesday morning and later announced his appointment at a news conference.

The appointment is subject to approval by the City Council, which meets to consider it as early as Monday.

"I will see the noise first hand," del Pozo said about living in the midst of students from the University of Vermont, Champlain College and other institutions traveling to and from downtown bars in the early morning.

He said he also plans to bike to work.

Del Pozo, 40, also showed he is not afraid to jump into action. While searching Tuesday for a possible family home in Burlington, a woman took a tumble on a nearby sidewalk and he called 911. He said he introduced himself to the ambulance crew from the Burlington Fire Department.

"Being a cop is one of the best jobs," del Pozo said at the news conference. "The second best is leading the police."

Del Pozo, the commanding officer in the Strategic Initiatives Office at NYPD headquarters, is no stranger to Vermont.

National Guard experience

Besides his police experience, del Pozo also has more than eight years with the Army National Guard and his military training included at the Mountain Warfare School in Jericho from 2003 to 2004.

He also has spent time with his family in Vermont during the summer and winter for rock and ice climbing, camping and skiing.
Del Pozo said his first time in Burlington was 1996 and stopped with a friend at the Burlington Pub and Brewery. He said he got a good feel for the city during the visit. He and his wife spent their first anniversary in Burlington.

Del Pozo said the chief’s post in Burlington is the only other job he has applied for besides his application to NYPD.

Burlington is seeking a permanent replacement for Police Chief Michael Schirling, who retired after 25 years of service on June 30.

Del Pozo tipped his hat to the work of Schirling:

"I think he has left the department in great, great shape."

Burlington Deputy Police Chief Jan Wright became the interim chief on July 1 and said she was prepared to serve until the new chief was in place.

Del Pozo’s starting annual salary is expected to be $114,363. Schirling earned $118,215 in his final year.

Under the city charter the police chief is required to live in Burlington. He and his wife, Sarah Carnevale, a licensed teacher, have two sons, Zane, 7, and Rex, 3.

Del Pozo’s background

Weinberger said it was a combination of del Pozo’s command experience, educational training and his work "with underrepresented communities."

Del Pozo joined New York Police Department in April 1997 and has risen "steadily and rapidly" through the ranks, the mayor said. del Pozo twice served as a precinct commander: for the Bronx from 2009 to 2011 and Greenwich Village and West Village from 2011 to 2013.

He was a commanding Officer for Project Management in the Office of Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly for five months before getting his present post dealing with strategic initiatives in January 2014 under new NYPD Commissioner William Bratton.

Del Pozo said he hopes to take some leadership qualities that both Kelly and Bratton demonstrated as police commissioners.

"I'd like to take some from both playbooks," del Pozo said. He did say he believed in police officers getting out of squad cars and mingling with the public.

While the New York City Mayor has clashed with the NYPD it was not any unhappiness that caused him to move on. He said he wished Schirling had actually stayed on six months or more.

Del Pozo acknowledged under questioning that by leaving before his 20-year anniversary he stands to lose $12,000 a year for the rest of his life in supplemental retirement funds.

He is a 1996 graduate of Dartmouth College, where he majored in philosophy. He has a master's degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2004, a master's degree in criminal justice from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in 2009, and a master's degree of philosophy from the City University of New York in 2012. He has completed all but his dissertation for his doctorate in philosophy.

Del Pozo created the NYPD’s intelligence post covering the Middle East based in Amman, Jordan, and also did work in Israel, Turkey, India, Japan, Singapore and Thailand from 2005 to 2007.

He returned to NYC to be the supervising officer in the intelligence division and was promoted to lieutenant and served two years. He also had one-year experience with the Internal Affairs Division.

Del Pozo also was a commanding officer in 2009 for Internal Affairs at NYPD, which has more than 34,000 police officers.

By comparison, he will take over a city department with about 100 police officers and about 35 civilians.

Search for a chief

Schirling, who announced his retirement as chief March 17, was well known throughout the city and was a frequent visitor to all kinds of meetings for political, social and fraternal groups.

"Michael Schirling has been one of the great chiefs of the proud, 150-year-old Burlington Police Department," Weinberger said during a news conference announcing his plan to retire.
He said Schirling, 45, modernized the department, deepened its community ties, and confronted squarely growing social challenges.

The mayor promised a nationwide search would be undertaken.

A special chief screening committee, which included members of the Burlington Police Commission, private citizens and retired high-ranking police officers combed through the applications and helped find the finalists.

Weinberger said about 30 applications were received and the City Human Resources Department determined met the minimum qualifications the city was seeking.

The committee interviewed eight candidates and four were named finalists. One Burlington police lieutenant was among the finalists. The other two were from Florida and Maryland.

The four finalists made presentations to the screening committee the week on June 7 before forwarding names to the mayor. He estimated each finalist went through meetings with about 50 people, including the state's attorney's office, courts and mental health.

"All could have been good chiefs," the mayor said.

A background check, contract negotiations and a possible start date were among the final steps over the last month.

This story was first posted on July 8, 2015. Contact Mike Donoghue at 660-1845 or mdonoghue@freepressmedia.com. Follow Mike on Twitter at www.twitter.com/FreepsMikeD. (http://www.twitter.com/FreepsMikeD).

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Not Having To Choose Between Income And Experience

New York Jewish Foundation for Education of Women summer internships

Pilot program gives Jewish female CUNY students funding for unpaid summer internships.

Tue, 07/07/2015
Hannah Dreyfus
Staff Writer
Story Includes Video:
0

Isabel Goldin, a first-generation American and marketing major at Baruch College, needed a waitstaff gig to support her unpaid internship at Valor International, a start-up e-commerce company. Though she wanted to focus on the job full time, her family obligations made that impossible.

"My parents never asked me for anything, but the expenses of every day living weigh on them," said Goldin, 22, whose parents emigrated from Soviet Georgia in 1992. Her father, a former professor, was not able to transfer his Ph.D. in the United States, and her mother was diagnosed with cancer shortly after their move. Both are currently unable to work.

A realist, Goldin hopes a career in business will help her family move forward. "Money makes a difference," she said, "some sort of paycheck is a non-negotiable for me, but internships are necessary to move your career forward."

This summer, for the first time, Goldin won't have to choose. Hillel at Baruch College, with support from UJA-Federation of New York and the Jewish Foundation for Education of Women (JFEW), is piloting a paid internship program for 23 Jewish women in financial need. Participants, lower income City University of New York (CUNY) students, face challenges in accessing and securing competitive internships without sacrificing necessary summer earnings.

"We don’t want these talented young women to have to choose between income and career aspirations," said Elizabeth Leiman Kralew, executive director of JFEW. "We’re leveling the playing field."

The nearly $100,000 CUNY Hillel Summer Internship Program grant will include a biweekly salary for the two-month internship and will cover New York state social security and Medicare
taxes for all participants. For an eight-week internship, participants received a total of $3,500, about $10 an hour.

The internships, which also include positions at NBA Coaches Association, Mount Sinai Medical School, Infinity Group and Childhood Cancer Society, were facilitated in part by the program coordinator, Amy-Louise Goldberg, an employee of Baruch Hillel.

"My job was to bring opportunities to the students' attention," said Goldberg, who noted that about half the students selected found the internships they wanted on their own.

According to Ilya Bratman, executive director of the Baruch College Hillel, nearly 50 students applied for 23 spots. Applicants were chosen based on academic excellence (a minimum grade point average of 3.0 was required), past participation in Hillel programming, and demonstrated financial need.

"We're primed to provide opportunities to those who might not otherwise not have them," he said. "Fostering growth through young women is one sure way to pay it forward."

Similar to Goldin, a significant number of those selected came from immigrant homes.

Ilana Krugolets, 19, a media and psychology major at Hunter College, is also a first-generation American. Her parents, refugees from the former Soviet Union, moved to Brooklyn in the 1990s.

Krugolets hopes to pursue a career in television production. Through the help of the CUNY Hillel Summer Internship Program, she was able to secure a position at NYC media, the radio, television, and online media network of the City of New York.

Without the scholarship money, Krugolets said she’d be tutoring or giving singing lessons on the side to pay for her time. "Experience pays in the long term, but not the short term," she said. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to shadow producers and editors — the connections I'm making in the industry are invaluable."

Elisabeth Kostin, the point person from UJA-Federation responsible for the internship program, attested to the critical importance of internships for the long-term career goals of any college student.

"Young adults are finding it extremely difficult to find good jobs after they graduate from college if they haven't already made connections in the field," she said. "This internship program will help these young women lay the groundwork for their careers — it's a foundation they'll build upon for years to come."

Bratman also said that one of the program's goals is to instill participants with an understanding of the importance of giving back.

"We hope all of these women will go on to become philanthropists in their own right," he said. "There's no better way to demonstrate the importance of these programs than by participating in them personally."

Goldin, who has already been on the job for a month, is using the time to ask all the questions she can.
"I'm here to learn, and I know this is an opportunity I won't get back," she said, speaking well before 9 a.m. as she rode the subway from Brooklyn on her way into work. "For the first time in a long time, my job is my sole focus. I'm going to make it count."

editor@jewishweek.org
BMCC Leads National Trend for Community Colleges

JULY 7, 2015

Community colleges are often linked with workforce development, and while it's true that the 30-plus associate degree programs at BMCC reflect growth industries such as computer information systems, allied health and the sciences, they also reflect the arts and humanities.

"Community college students deserve the full array of options that private college students avail themselves of," says Dean for Academic Programs, Erwin Wong, referring to four new majors at BMCC: Art Foundations (including Art History and Studio Art), Sociology and Modern Languages.

Expanding the mission of community colleges
"The primary mission of many community colleges is vocational education," says Dean Wong, "but the trend these days nationally and certainly within CUNY is dual: workforce development and academic preparation for seamless transfer to a senior institution."

In that sense, the new majors reflect a benefit BMCC offers as a community college within the larger CUNY system, Wong emphasizes.

In Fall 2015, BMCC will begin offering the new Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree program in Sociology, with graduates on track to transfer into the B.A. in Sociology program at Brooklyn College, CUNY.

Also in Fall 2015, students will be able to choose either the Associate of Science (A.S.) program in Studio Art, or the Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree program in Art
History. Both will connect theory and practice, and link to a Bachelor of Arts in Art History at Queens College, CUNY.

In Spring 2016, BMCC will launch the new Associate of Arts (A.A.) in Modern Languages program with three concentrations: Spanish, French and Italian. The Modern Language program is articulated with bachelor's degree programs in French, Italian, Spanish, Romance Languages and Translation at Hunter College, CUNY.

A new model for student retention
"Part of the reason we are aggressively pursuing these new Liberal Arts degrees in art history, studio art, modern languages and sociology is to improve our student retention, persistence and degree completion," says Dean Wong.

Liberal Arts majors, he explains, are more motivated to complete their degrees when they have more degree choices in the arts and humanities.

Also, the new degree programs "reflect what we learned through a U.S. Department of Education Title V grant that enabled us to examine the way we delivered academic advisement to Liberal Arts majors," he says.

Each new degree program will provide what is referred to as "developmental advisement," assigning students to dedicated faculty and academic advisors who work with them from the time they select their major, to graduation.

The Title V study, he says, found that students advised in this way were more likely to persist through academic challenges and complete their degrees, than students who weren't.

The value of a rigorous liberal arts education
Graduates of the new Modern Languages program, Wong says, "will stand out from their professional peers who are monolingual," and be uniquely qualified to pursue careers in international affairs, business, education and translation in both the public and private sectors.

Likewise, a degree in Sociology prepares graduates for careers in fields as diverse as urban planning, marketing, community organizing and human resources, while Art History and Studio Art majors will be prepared for careers in the fine and applied arts, he says, adding that there are more than 50,000 arts-related businesses in New York State, providing over 300,000 jobs.

In addition, says Wong, the new programs are inherently interdisciplinary, "and prepare students for an increasingly global workplace. Employees expect their workforce to understand social issues as well as the bottom line. They recognize the value of a rigorous liberal arts education."
HERE'S WHY MASS MURDER BORES YOU

BY LAURA SECORUN PALET (HTTP://WWW.OZY.COM/OZY-TRIBE/LAURA-SECORUN-PALET/31234) • JUL 08 • 2015

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE
Because all of us care a little bit about caring about others.

You dive to change the channel when that unbearable Sarah McLachlan animal-cruelty ad comes on. But when you hear there’s been an earthquake in South America and thousands are feared dead ... you just shrug. You’re colder than that lone, shriveled ice cube in the back of your otherwise empty freezer. You know you should feel sad. Instead, you just feel mildly inconvenienced: What if the earthquake affects coffee production? Your Costa Rican vacay? Don’t worry — you’re not a psychopath, at least not because of this. You simply suffer from what scientists call “emotional innumeracy.”

It turns out that our ability to empathize is seriously limited. A study (http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022103107000698) published by *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* shows:
100,000 PEOPLE

saddens us no more than the deaths of

5 PEOPLE

The study broke up 173 Duke University students, 44 percent of whom were women, into two groups. Half of the first group of participants were asked how sad they would feel, on a scale of 1 to 9, if they read an article about the deaths of five people; the other half were asked the same question, but regarding the deaths of 10,000. The “forecasters” who got the 10,000-person question predicted greater sadness. A second group, also split in half, actually read these articles and reported on their feelings at the end. There was no difference in emotion between those who had read about five deaths versus 10,000.

This might ring a bell. The results of this study are a sort of cousin to the findings of what you might know as the train-tracks dilemma (http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/12/111201105443.htm), conducted in 2011 by Michigan State University researchers. Participants were in a 3-D setting, operating an out-of-control train that, if unstopped, would hit and kill five people. But if the conductor were to switch tracks, she’d kill only one person. Should the conductor intervene? In that study, the opposite seemed to be true: 9 out of 10 participants would kill one to save five — prioritizing the greater number of people over the individual.

The reason this study seemingly opposes the findings in Journal of Experimental Social Psychology is because we can’t handle numbers that large and make rational or emotional judgments about them, says study author Carlos Navarrete, associate professor of psychology at Michigan State University: “Seeing and feeling those people in front of you changes how you react,” he says. “Our brains are evolved to deal with small numbers, definitely not 10,000. You can make rational choices about killing one to save five but not between 10,000 and five.” And experts say natural evolution is not likely to make us more caring, either. For that to happen, people who sympathized with groups should be more likely to survive and pass on their genes, says George Loewenstein, professor of
economics and psychology in the social and decision sciences department at Carnegie Mellon University. "Nothing suggests that this is an evolutionary trend."

Take heart! There may be an antidote for your lack of one. According to the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* study, seeing pictures of death and suffering does provide some empathic perspective. The picture of 1,000 dead bodies, for example, makes the viewer sadder than that of 10 dead bodies. But gruesome imagery can desensitize us and, if there are too many people in the picture, our brain is likely to start seeing them as just dots and lines. In other words, the same "emotional innumeracy."

Add to this our many *other empathy* (http://www.ozy.com/acumen/you-can-buy-empathy-for-12/36733) biases like race, sex or cuteness and you’ve got yourself a seriously skewed moral compass. Some argue that we should just stop listening to our heart for direction in the face of vast human suffering. Jesse Prinz, professor of philosophy and director of the Committee for Interdisciplinary Science Studies at the City University of New York, says empathy is "very important for personal relationships," but points to reason as "essential for allocating resources fairly in a world that is full of moral crises."

So feel free to have a meltdown over breakups or family dysfunction. But when it comes to pandemics, genocide or famine, don’t trust your gut. You’ll be a better person.
Robert Solow in Conversation With Paul Krugman: "Inequality: What Can Be Done?"

By Janet Gornick (/author/itemlist/user/51154), The Graduate Center, CUNY (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGmUtJKTaqc) | Video Interview


Solow and Krugman’s conversation was introduced and moderated by LIS Director Janet Gornick, professor of Political Science and Sociology at the Graduate Center.

The British economist and renowned inequality scholar Tony Atkinson (Oxford and London School of Economics) argues that economic inequality has reached unacceptable levels in many countries. In this ambitious book, Atkinson lays out an agenda for reducing inequality. His policy proposals span five areas: technology, employment, the sharing of capital, taxation, and social security.

*Inequality: What Can Be Done?* is a vigorous and powerful call to action, rich in theory, evidence, and practical experience. Solow and Krugman examine the desirability, viability, and feasibility of Atkinson’s policy recommendations - with an eye toward translating his arguments into the United States context.

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JANET GORNICK (/AUTHOR/ITEMLIST/USER/51154)

Professor of Political Science and Sociology, Janet Gornick is Luxembourg Income Study Center Director and Director of LIS in Luxembourg. Professor Gornick, who has been associated with LIS and using LIS data for over twenty years, brings considerable expertise on working with the LIS data to The Graduate Center at the City University of New York.
NEW YORK (AP) - An online walking tour and a sightseeing pub crawl offer new ways to explore Harlem.

The free walking tour was created by the Museum of Modern Art in conjunction with an exhibition of Jacob Lawrence's "Migration Series" paintings. The paintings tell the story of African-Americans who moved from the rural South to Northern cities in the early decades of the 20th century. Lawrence lived in Harlem, and the walking tour highlights the places where he studied art, did research and found inspiration.

The tour - http://www.Moma.org/harlemwalkingtour - includes a map, images, narration and interviews showcasing a dozen Harlem locations. They include Harlem Hospital, where the first floor is decorated with murals created by one of Lawrence's mentors, Charles Alston; the Abyssinian Baptist Church, which Lawrence's family joined in 1930; and cultural institutions like the Schomburg Center, a public library site where Lawrence did much of his research.

The MOMA exhibit is up through Sept. 7 but the tour will be available online well beyond that, offering a look at the neighborhood even if you can't do the tour in person.

The walking tour is also being incorporated into a monthly pub crawl for Harlem newcomers. Eat Sip N' See describes itself as "part sightseeing tour and part bar, pub, restaurant crawl" with events scheduled for July 30, Aug. 28 and one on Sept. 25 aimed at students from Columbia University and City University of New York. Details on tickets and registration at http://www.harlem5ive.com/. Proceeds from the crawl benefit a fund for restoring the Harlem Hospital murals highlighted on the MOMA Jacob Lawrence trail. The crawl meets at the hospital and participants are also supplied with a link to the walking tour.
Connecting In Cuba

By Cami Téllez

For nearly two decades, Cuba’s regime has engaged in an active effort to deprive its citizens of Internet access. The United Nation’s International Telecommunications Union ranked the island nation 125 out of the 166 in Internet connectivity in all of the countries in the world along with the lowest web penetration in the entire Western Hemisphere. On average, around 5 percent of Cubans have access to the Internet, while some experts say that number is closer to 3 percent. The lack of technology in Cuba has greatly inhibited the development of the nation and set Cubans generations behind the rest of the rapidly developing nations. However, with recent talks to normalize relations with the U.S. and a new spirit of cooperation within the Cuban government, the world is hopeful that Cuba will perhaps enter a new technological age.

Sebastian Aroos, Associate Director of the Cuban Research Institute at Florida International University spoke with World Policy Journal to express his vision for the reality of Cuba. “Even the regime’s elite acknowledge that widespread broadband access is fundamental to grow and diversify a modern economy,” he said. However, as much as the regime may like a more advanced economy, they have prioritized for many years their grip on the Cuban people over allowing their citizens access to a free-flow of information. For the majority of Cuban’s the only access they have to the web is Cuba’s intranet, which is available through ETECSA (Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba S.A.), a government-controlled office that is bound to the censorship rules of the regime.

Cuba has had a long history of aggressively censoring the Internet. In 1996, the Cuban government approved Decree-Law 209, which states that citizens cannot use the Internet “in violation of Cuban society’s moral principles or the country’s laws.” Cuba’s justice system penalizes any online endeavor
considered "against the national independence" or "pre-criminal danger to society," leaving the government a significant amount of leeway when trying to dissident users of the Internet.

In January of 2014, more than 3,000 known pro-internet activists and bloggers were detained by government officials at the Carribean and Latin American States summit (CELAC). Many dissident pro-democracy voices that have phone numbers associated with Twitter had their phones blocked in the past few years. Government-installed software to monitor email accounts in offices is still common in Cuba. Ultimately, is clear that the government's attitude towards the Internet is still aimed towards preserving Castro's socialist society and stamping out any inklings of a conflict or revolution.

However, there have been some recent improvements that represent a glimmer of hope for Cubans. At the beginning of 2008, the regime allowed Cubans to buy personal computers and a select few citizens are allowed to connect to the World Wide Web through a government-issued permit. However, these passes are granted to only a handful of officials, doctors, and professors and the price of computers is prohibitive to most Cubans. In June of 2013, high-speed internet was available to Cuban citizens, but only in restricted "CyberPoints" at the high price of $5 an hour, a fee that very few can afford on the already impoverished island where the average salary is $20 a month.

To solve the infrastructural crisis of a slow connection, the government partnered with Venezuela in 2010 to tap into the underwater fiber optic cable for Internet that runs between both countries called ALBA-1. The announcement came with promises of increased data transmission by 3,000 fold at a cost to the island of $72 million dollars. Yet for two years, the Cuban government was silent on the activation of ALBA-1. NPR reported in 2011 that the regime was alarmed by the integral role that social media was playing in the Arab Spring and was afraid that expanding access to the Internet would grant a means of subversion for the Cuban people.

In 2013, ETCSA finally announced that the cable would be activated, but it "will not mean that possibilities for access will automatically multiply." Many believe that the Cuban government is creating intra-Cuban social media sites like RedSocial ("Social Network" in Spanish), a Facebook knockoff they launched in 2011, before they open the Internet to more people. Ted Henken, chair of Baruch College's Sociology and Anthropology Department and blogger at elvuma.blogspot.com remarks, "looking forward it will be interesting to see how much the Internet changes Cuba, or how much Cuba changes the Internet in it's own authoritarian image."

However, many shrewd Cubans have found ways around the harsh censorship and high prices to gain access to worldwide information. Enter "Paquete Semanal" (Weekly Packet), a collection of content spanning from news articles to TV shows that Cubans can illegally purchase on flash drives from their neighbors. While this method has given many smart Cuban citizens a way to educate themselves, it is still dangerous since it is against the law.

In the past few months, Airbnb, the online room and home rental start up, has entered the Cuban market with over 1,000 locales for users of the site. Many see the company's strong presence as a sign that the island will become a hot tourist destination for Americans, as it once was in the early 1950s, now that Obama's administration has lifted many traveling bans. Since Cuba has no major exports, tourism driven by the Internet could be the force necessary to revitalize the impoverished nation's economy.

However, the more interesting question here is, will the increased economic gains afforded by internet-driven tourism actually give way to democratic reform? José Azel, senior scholar at the Institute for Cuban Studies at UMiami, has a more pessimistic vision for the island's future: "for over 50 years more than 3 million tourists from all over the world have visited Cuba and they have not been able to impact Cuba's government, why would we believe that American tourism is any different?" Furthermore, the majority of hotels and tourist areas are already owned by Castro's regime, so any economic advances made by these ventures and expansions will go directly to strengthening the wallets of the upper echelon of Cuba's government, making it unlikely that they will trickle down to improve the overall quality of life on the island.
Despite these difficult realities, many experts and diplomats have championed Cuba's supposed "new direction" as talks with the U.S. demonstrate some openness from the regime. Yet Sebastian Arcos refutes that vision for the island. "The question here is whether or not Cuba is engaged in a transition to democracy... the short answer is no... the Cuban regime is moving to stand still; it is only making the absolutely minimal reforms necessary to remain in power," he remarks. If the island is moving in any direction, it seems to be towards Putin's Russian model, Arcos argues: "it seems like the model favored by the Cuban regime is Putin's Russia: a slow transition to crony-capitalism and controlled elections, with the elites in control all the way." Azel agrees, "it seems that Cuba is moving towards a kleptocracy because currently the military controls around 80 percent of the economy, just as in Russia where ex-KGB members hold positions of power in the economy."

As Cuba moves forward with plans to open an embassy in the U.S., the world is looking to the nation for any sign of modernization after decades of extreme censorship and bans on even the most basic technology. While there have been a number of very surface-level changes, it is clear that the regime is a long ways off from allowing Cubans true Internet freedom.

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Alliance For Downtown New York Board Of Directors Elects Dennis Friedrich, Brookfield Office CEO, As New Chairman

July 8, 2015
by RealEstateRama


The Alliance for Downtown New York’s Board of Directors last night unanimously elected Brookfield Properties Partners’ Global Office CEO Dennis Friedrich as its new Chairman. Friedrich replaces Robert Douglass, who has served as the Alliance’s Chairman since its inception in 1995 and will remain a member on the Board of Directors.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – July 8, 2015 (RealEstateRama) — The Alliance for Downtown New York’s Board of Directors last night unanimously elected Brookfield Properties Partners’ Global Office CEO Dennis Friedrich as its new Chairman. Friedrich replaces Robert Douglass, who has served as the Alliance’s Chairman since its inception in 1995 and will remain a member on the Board of Directors.

“I’m incredibly excited to welcome Dennis and look forward to all that he will do to move the Alliance into its next era as Chair. Dennis brings a wealth of experience and a new perspective, and I am very much looking forward to our work together,” said Downtown Alliance President Jessica Lappin. “On behalf of the Board, the Alliance staff and myself, I want to extend our deepest gratitude to former Chair Robert Douglass. I thank him for his vision, dedication and twenty years of unparalleled leadership. He’s been a great mentor not just to me, but to my predecessors and to countless members of the Alliance staff. His mark on our Lower Manhattan, our city and state are indelible.”

“Helping lead this organization has been a wonderful honor, one of the great highlights of my life,” said former Chair Douglass. “The Alliance is now in very good hands and I am confident we will continue to achieve great things in the months and years ahead.”

“It is a very exciting time for Lower Manhattan, and I believe our brightest, most vibrant days are ahead of us,” said Dennis Friedrich, the Alliance’s incoming chair. “Lower Manhattan’s renaissance has only just begun. The Alliance is the guardian of the interests of Lower Manhattan, and our mission is as critical now as it has ever been. I feel proud and privileged to take on the responsibilities of chair.”

Brookfield is the largest property owner in the Lower Manhattan market, with seven office buildings and a total of 12.9 million square feet. The firm has played a strong role in Lower Manhattan’s revitalization and the resurgence of its office market. Following Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Brookfield pumped 30 million gallons of seawater out of the lower levels of One New York Plaza and invested $13 million in the renovation of its retail. Under Friedrich’s leadership, Brookfield has leased 14.7 million square feet of space in Lower Manhattan since 9/11, bringing an array of new and diverse tenants downtown, including Time Inc., Hudson’s Bay Corp. and Revlon.

Dennis Friedrich was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Brookfield Properties in July 2012 following a year as President and Global Chief Investment Officer. At Brookfield, he was integral in executing Morgan Stanley’s 1.2 million square foot lease at Lower Manhattan’s One New York Plaza and currently oversees global development at properties including Brookfield Place. He has been instrumental in the growth of Brookfield’s portfolio in Lower Manhattan, leading the strategic acquisitions of 200 Vesey Street in 2002, One New York Plaza in 2006 and One North End Avenue (NYMEX) in 2014.

Prior to his appointment as CEO, he was Chief Executive Officer of U.S. Commercial Operations since 2009. Previously, he was President of Brookfield Office Properties’ U.S. Commercial Operations, following two years as Chief Operating Officer of U.S. Commercial Operations. Prior to joining Brookfield Office Properties, Dennis was co-head of Jones Lang LaSalle’s tenant advisory practice in New York. He holds a business degree in finance from Baruch College and is a member of the Real Estate Board of New York.
Search begins for Cumberland County College president

VINELAND – The search is on for the next leader of Cumberland County College.

The college's Board of Trustees met in a special meeting Tuesday to vote on a resolution awarding $30,000 to the Washington, D.C.,-based Association of Community College Trustees to lead the search for the successor to departing President Thomas A. Isekenegbe.

Isekenegbe's last day is slated for Aug. 7 before he heads off to his new role as president of Bronx Community College of the University of New York.

He has served as the CCC's president since 2009 and announced his planned departure June 29. The college formally disclosed his leaving last week.

On Tuesday, the seven present members of the board — who unanimously approved the resolution — learned from ACCT Operations Officer Laurie Savona about the process and timeline going forward.

"We'll do everything we can do to get you through," Savona said.

When it comes to a timeline, July will mark the beginning of the forming of a search committee at CCC to seek proper candidates for its next president, identifying the characteristics of the leader they ultimately seek.

"The advantage of starting now is that we can start recruitment immediately," Savona said. "We're letting prospective candidates know that we are looking."


The committee should consist of at least some of the college's board of trustees along with community and foundation members, Savona said, with a CCC trustee member required to be the committee's chair.
CCC has until September to form the committee, and the second full week of that month after the Labor Day holiday will mark open public forums at the college to form a profile of their ideal candidate, Savona said.

ACCT will help the college whittle the selection down to three to five final candidates later in the year for CCC to pick from, with interviews and tours of the campus tentatively planned for early 2016.

March will mark the target month for final selection and June 1, 2016, would be the official start date for the college's next president.

As for finding an interim president, the board tabled a resolution awarding an undetermined amount of money to ACCT to also search for that person. That will be revisited at the board's next proper meeting on July 15.

Trustee member Michael DeLeon spoke of the excitement he felt in searching for CCC's next leader.

"I'm definitely really excited," he said. "Cumberland County right now is moving in a direction we've never moved in. The leadership of this county and the (CCC) board of trustees has real vision coming into play right now, and it's going to revolve around this campus."

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BERNARD SCHNEIDER
SCHNEIDER--Bernard G.,
of Greenwich, CT passed away suddenly on July 2 at the age of 71. He will be deeply missed by his wife Frances, and children Andrew and Jessica and son-in-law Scott. A native of Brooklyn, NY, Bernard studied economics at Brooklyn College and Princeton University and earned a law degree from NYU. Although he spent most of his professional life as an attorney, he was also a lifelong advocate of education, serving on two school boards and working as a high school math teacher late in his career. Memorial donations may be made to shalva.org.