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NICK ANDERSON | Washington Post

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The aim is to elevate career development as a priority on campus, by weaving key skills and topics into the curriculum, plugging faculty into the latest industry trends to help them mentor students and ensuring that students get meaningful work experience through internships and similar opportunities.

"We have designed a program that we envision will serve as a model of best practices to solve the unemployment and underemployment crisis among recent college graduates," said Michael L. Lomax, president chief executive of UNCF.

"In today’s marketplace, students need both the knowledge and soft skills to compete in the global economy. Sadly, too many of our nation's talented students are having difficulty finding good jobs after graduation. Our goal is to work with students, faculty, colleges, alumni, and employers to better connect the student experience with the jobs of the future."

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Eighty-seven schools will be eligible for the grants, and UNCF plan to choose winners after an application and vetting process that will begin next month.

Most of those eligible are historically black colleges and universities, such as Howard University in the District of Columbia and Bowie, Coppin and Morgan state universities in Maryland. Others are known as "predominantly black institutions," including City University of New York-Medgar Evers College.

The Lilly Endowment, based in Indianapolis, has supported UNCF for decades. With this gift, Lomax said, Lilly's contributions to UNCF will total more than $100 million.
The largest gift ever to UNCF was $1.6 billion from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, a donation announced in multiple phases, starting in 1999. Another $50 million gift came from the Annenberg Foundation in 1990.

"Lilly Endowment has funded UNCF virtually every year since its founding in 1944," said N. Clay Robbins, the endowment's chairman, president and chief executive. "This grant for the UNCF Career Pathways Initiative builds on this long-standing support and furthers the endowment's belief that a high-quality college education fosters an enhanced quality of life for individuals and their families.

"The initiative will improve the educational experiences of thousands of college students and expand their ability to secure meaningful career opportunities."

Career development is by no means solely a concern for historically black colleges and universities. Throughout higher education, students are looking with increased urgency for programs that will help them navigate the job market.

It is no longer enough for a college to have a career center on campus that students might visit in their senior year. Nowadays, students want help connecting with employers almost from the day they enroll.

Lilly Endowment officials point to career pathway programs at Purdue University, Grace College and Manchester University, all in their home state, as examples of what they hope to promote.

The U.S. Education Department, recognizing that students are keen to find good jobs, recently published alumni salary information for thousands of schools on a government Web site called College Scorecard. Looking at alumni who received financial aid during college, the scorecard shows the share whose salaries soon after leaving school meet or exceed a minimum benchmark. It also shows the median annual earnings of those alumni a decade after starting school.

The Lilly-UNCF initiative seeks to push colleges to forge stronger connections with employers, to learn what skills they need from graduates, so that colleges can tailor academic and extracurricular programs for students. The initiative has a range of goals, including professional development for faculty and "experiential learning" opportunities for students from the outset of college.

Lomax, a former literature professor, said the initiative does not aim to narrow the purpose of liberal arts education. Rather, he said, it aims to add to what colleges are already doing.

"You can do both," he said. "You can learn and pursue the things that are really important to you"—perhaps religion, anthropology or literature.

At the same time, he said, students can develop career skills that will help them get ahead in life.

"These are not antithetical," Lomax said. "They are complementary."
Flipping Molecular Attachments Amps Up Activity of CO2 Catalyst

New understanding may help scientists design more effective catalysts for transforming CO2 to useful products

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Angewandte Chemie International Edition

October 5, 2015

Newswise — UPTON, NY-New research by chemists at the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory and their collaborators offers clues that could help scientists design more effective catalysts for transforming carbon dioxide (CO2) to useful products. The study, published in Angewandte Chemie International Edition, reveals how a simple rearrangement of molecular attachments on an iridium hydride
catalyst can greatly improve its ability to coax notoriously stable CO2 molecules to react.

The research, which combined laboratory experiments with theoretical analysis, shows that, in the dark, only one of the two molecular arrangements can effectively transform CO2 to formate (HCOO−), a precursor of methanol. In the presence of light, however, both species form a common intermediate that can transform CO2 to carbon monoxide (CO), a useful raw material for making fuels and industrial chemicals.

"There is strong interest in finding ways to reuse CO2 to create a carbon-neutral society," said Brookhaven chemist Etsuko Fujita, who led the experimental portion of this work. "Reactions to produce products such as methanol or hydrocarbons from CO2 would be very useful. But if you think about the energy input and output of these reactions, it's really very difficult," she said.

Finding more efficient catalysts is the key to lowering the energy required to jump-start these reactions. Because various researchers had suggested that the iridium hydride catalyst might be an improvement over other well-known catalysts for producing CO from CO2, Fujita's group undertook this research to investigate its mechanism of action.

"If you understand how a catalyst works, you can often devise ways to modify its function to make it work even better," said Zehid Ertem, whose theoretical analyses provided the framework for understanding the experimental results.

Based on earlier research, the scientists had suspected there might be two varieties of this particular catalyst—different molecular arrangements of the same atoms, known as isomers. And indeed their experiments allowed them to isolate the two varieties.

The only structural difference between the two isomers is a simple flip in positioning of two connected rings of atoms relative to the rest of the molecule—one linked to the central iridium atom by a negatively charged carbon atom, and the other linked by a neutral nitrogen atom. But that simple flip in the positions of these two rings has a dramatic effect on the respective molecules' properties.

For example, the molecule was much more likely to give up what's called a hydride ion—a negatively charged ion consisting of a proton and two electrons—when the carbon-linked ring was in a position opposite the hydride compared with when the nitrogen-linked ring was in that position.

"That's important because the chemical conversion of CO2 to other products such as hydrocarbons can be facilitated when electrons are transferred to CO2 two at a time as they are in hydride ions," Ertem said. "So a catalyst with a higher tendency to release these hydride ions—a higher hydricity—is potentially a much better catalyst.

"While the generation of formate is the first step in a possible sequence of hydride transfer reactions, we envision going further than formate—for example, to methanol," he said.

Another aim of the study was to explore the role of iridium hydride as a proposed key intermediate in the conversion of CO2 to CO. But as it turns out, the intermediate is a form of the molecule that lacks the hydride but has the carbon-linked ring in the position opposite where the hydride would attach.

"In fact, no matter which isomer we started with, the theoretical calculations show that this species with the carbon positioned opposite the vacant hydride position forms as an intermediate, which then catalyzes the conversion of CO2 to CO," Ertem said.

"Because that intermediate is so reactive," Fujita added, "it is extremely hard to isolate experimentally—which is one reason the theoretical analysis was so important to this study. The theoretical analysis corroborated all the measurements we could make and predicted the existence of this one key intermediate," she said.

The theoretical calculations also offered insight into why the positioning of the carbon atom is so essential to the reactivity of this species—and may suggest strategies for the rational design of more effective catalysts.

"In the ground state, the length of the metal-hydride bond is significantly longer in the isomer where the carbon is opposite the hydride than it is in the flipped isomer where the nitrogen atom is opposite the hydride," said Ertem. "Unlike the neutral nitrogen atom, the negatively charged carbon 'pushes' electrons through the metal atom toward the hydride ion, lengthening the metal-hydride bond and increasing the hydricity. That, in turn, makes it easier for the hydride to be given up during reactions when the carbon is in this position."
A next step might be trying to design an even more reactive catalyst by adding strong electron-donating groups.

Fujita and Ertem collaborated with these additional co-authors on this study: Kornal Garg, Brookhaven Lab; Yasuo Matsubara, Brookhaven Lab and Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), now at Kanagawa University; Anna Lewandowska-Andralojc, Brookhaven Lab, now at Adam Mickiewicz University; Shunsuke Sato, JST and Toyota Central R&D Labs, Inc.; David Szalda, Baruch College, City University of New York; and James Muckerman, Brookhaven Lab.

This work was supported by the DOE Office of Science and by JST.

_Brookhaven National Laboratory is supported by the Office of Science of the U.S. Department of Energy. The Office of Science is the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States, and is working to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. For more information, please visit science.energy.gov [http://science.energy.gov/].

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Vivian Stromberg, Who Worked to Aid Women, Dies at 74

By WILLIAM GRIMES  OCT. 5, 2015

Vivian Stromberg, a founder and later the executive director of Madre, an aid and human rights organization that supports women's groups around the world, died on Sept. 24 at her home in Brooklyn. She was 74.

The cause was end-stage liver disease, her daughter Daniella Stromberg said.

Ms. Stromberg was an elementary school music teacher in the South Bronx in the early 1980s when she joined a group of women hoping to rally public opinion against American support for the contras, the rebels trying to overthrow the left-wing Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

The group, which included the actress Susan Sarandon, toured the United States, reading testimony from Nicaraguan women whose children had been killed by the contras. Members of the group later traveled to Nicaragua, where the women they talked to urged them to create an organization in the United States that might change American policy. Madre was formed in 1983 by the poet Kathy Engel, who became its first executive director. Ms. Stromberg served as one of the founding board members and became executive director in 1990. She retired in 2011.

The organization works with local women's groups in the United States, Central
America, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Africa to alleviate suffering caused by war and natural disasters, and to promote human rights. Its first project was to send a ton of baby cereal and powdered milk to Nicaragua.

When organizing aid projects, Ms. Stromberg often began by listening to the women she intended to work with. Their testimony sometimes led her in unexpected directions. As part of its relief efforts in the former Yugoslavia in 1993, for example, Madre distributed candy and other small items to mothers at a refugee camp.

"We learned from these women that it felt terrible not to be able to respond to their kids’ simplest requests," she told Ms. magazine in 1999.

Vivian Hoffman was born on Aug. 16, 1941, in Brooklyn and grew up in the Brighton Beach neighborhood. After earning a degree in education from the City University of New York, she began teaching sixth grade at Public School 31 in the South Bronx. As a child she had studied piano and violin at the after-school programs at the Juilliard School, and in her last 12 years as a teacher, she taught music.

While in college she joined the Freedom Riders, who traveled by bus across the South in mixed-race groups to challenge racial segregation. She went on to become active in the antiwar movement, and in 1982, she helped organize a rally in Central Park in support of a freeze on nuclear weapons, which drew more than half a million demonstrators.

An early marriage ended in divorce. In addition to her daughter Daniella, she is survived by another daughter, Nicole Stromberg; a goddaughter, Monica Aleman; and three grandchildren.

After becoming executive director of Madre, Ms. Stromberg, working with a Jordanian women’s group, organized a truck convoy to drive 10 tons of milk and medicine from Amman, Jordan, to Baghdad in the aftermath of the first Persian Gulf war.

Madre, which has directed about $34 million in humanitarian aid to its various projects, often concentrates on addressing problems of survival, but with the goal of developing leaders who can then press for women’s rights.
“When you know your rights, instead of begging for something, you start asking that it not be taken away,” Ms. Stromberg told O Magazine in 2008. “Your whole body language changes; you stop crying.”

A version of this article appears in print on October 6, 2015, on page B18 of the New York edition with the headline: Vivian Stromberg, 74; Worked to Aid Women.
Anthropology association task force recommends the group take action in response to Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Submitted by Elizabeth Redden on October 6, 2015 - 3:00am

A task force charged with recommending how the American Anthropological Association (AAA) should respond to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has outlined a range of possible actions the group can take, from issuing a statement censuring the Israeli government -- a step the task force supports but considers to be, by itself, insufficient -- to boycotting Israeli universities.

The task force refrains from making a recommendation for or against academic boycott, opting instead to address the pros and cons of the tactic and issues for the association to consider if it were to enact one. The task force does, however, recommend that the AAA should take action of some kind in response to the numerous human rights and academic freedom violations it ascribes to the Israeli government.

"We are of the unanimous opinion that, in terms of these principles, there is a strong case for the association to take action on this issue and that the association should do so," the task force report states. (The task force identifies a set of eight principles that informed its recommendations, including AAA's commitments to human rights, to academic freedom, and to advocacy for minority, disadvantaged and indigenous groups.)

"As viewed through the frame of 'settler colonialism,' Palestinians constitute a disadvantaged group whose human rights are under threat, and some Palestinian civil society groups have asked AAA to intervene on their behalf," the report continues. "The State of Israel systematically limits the academic freedom of faculty and students in the West Bank and Gaza and also, in more subtle ways, of Jewish and Palestinian academics in Israel itself. Anthropologists who have a covenantal relationship with Palestinians in their research are, broadly, unanimous in their perception of injustice toward the Palestinian community and in urging the association to take some kind of action. And there is a substantial community within the association that, in accordance with the association's democratic traditions, has invested considerable effort in making the case that the association should take action on this issue. If ever there was a time when this was a fringe issue within the association, that time has passed."

More than 1,000 anthropologists have signed a petition supporting the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. About half a dozen U.S.-based scholarly associations have endorsed the academic boycott of Israeli universities, the American Studies Association being the most prominent among them. "If the AAA were to follow suit, it would be by far the largest academic association to do so," the task force's report states (the association counts about 11,000 members).
The task force's report describes an academic boycott as "the most provocative of the actions available" to the association, and notes opposition to the tactic on academic freedom grounds: "there is an inherent tension between an academic boycott and the commitment to 'the dissemination of anthropological knowledge' foregrounded in the association's mission statement," the task force writes. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) opposes academic boycotts for cutting off the free exchange of ideas.

Yet the task force spoke to some anthropologists who argued that a boycott is a powerful tool to influence public policy within Israel. As the report states, "A number of our interlocutors felt the same way as the Middle Eastern Studies specialist we interviewed who said, 'A year ago I would have said a boycott was ineffective. I'm no longer sure of that. It has an effect on public debate in Israel, just the word 'boycott.' The perception is that Israel is being South Africanized.'"

Similarly, the pro-boycott petition signed by more than 1,000 anthropologists describes boycott as "the only nonviolent form of pressure that could persuade Israelis to call for -- and act for -- meaningful change that could lead to a just peace."

The task force notes that an academic boycott could include "any of a number of subcomponents" that AAA could "pick and choose as if ordering from a menu." These could include refusing to provide AAA's electronic database, AnthroSource, to Israeli universities (an action that would, the task force notes, violate the association's contract with its publisher); banning job postings from Israeli universities and prohibiting Israeli anthropology departments from using conference facilities for interviews; and declining to list Israeli departments in AAA materials.

Other components of a potential boycott identified by the task force include: "a ban on joint conferences and events; a requirement that AAA journal editors not acknowledge Israeli state funding in articles they publish; refraining from inviting Israeli university officials to official AAA events; recommending that AAA members decline invitations for visiting appointments at Israeli universities, from working on projects funded by the Israeli government, from research that requires Israeli state permits, or from working with special collections at Israeli universities and libraries; and a policy of discouraging members from refereeing tenure and promotion cases at Israeli institutions, or grant proposals for the Israel Science Foundation."

The task force writes that it "does not support denying individual Israeli academics the right to register for AAA conferences or to publish in AAA journals, even if their expenses have been paid for by their institutions. If the association were to undertake an academic boycott, we would urge it to emphasize that the boycott is of Israeli institutions, not individuals, and to acknowledge that some Israeli anthropologists have been quite critical of the political system within which they live."

The task force also identifies a number of other actions, aside from an academic boycott, that the anthropological association could take. These include:

- No action. The task force does not recommend this.
- A statement condemning Israeli government policy toward Palestinians. The task force unanimously recommends this while also noting that a statement of censure or concern "would in our view be an insufficient course of action if it were the only action undertaken."
- A letter to the U.S. government. The task force recommends that any statement of censure of the Israeli government be accompanied by a letter "to relevant U.S. government agencies drawing attention to the ways in which U.S. government resources and policies contribute to policies in Israel/Palestine that violate academic freedom and disenfranchise Palestinians."
- A letter-writing campaign in the tradition of the Middle East Studies Association's Committee on Academic Freedom, which regularly writes letters to foreign government and university leaders about alleged violations of academic freedom throughout the Middle East.
- Applying pressure on Israel regarding archaeological issues. The task force recommends that AAA "enter into conversations" with archaeological associations about excavations in the West Bank and East Jerusalem "and, more generally, the politicization of the archaeological record in Israel."
- Providing resources to Palestinian universities. The task force records its dismay at teaching
and research conditions for Palestinian scholars and recommends that AAA could, for example, consider making AnthroSource freely available to Palestinian universities or establishing fellowships to support the travel of Palestinian academics, among other options.

- Economic boycott. The task force acknowledges its limited leverage in this regard, but observes that AAA could encourage members to boycott products from Israeli settlements and could "articulate an investment policy statement to ensure it does not invest in companies that have been spotlighted by pro-Palestinian activists as particularly complicit with violations of Palestinians' basic rights."

- A targeted boycott of selected Israeli faculty and institutions. The task force expresses skepticism about the option of a selective, as opposed to a blanket, boycott, citing both its own lack of resources to determine appropriate boycott targets and the special condemnation the AAUP reserves for selective boycotts "that entail an ideological litmus test."

The task force recommends that the executive board consider the impact of whatever actions it takes on Israeli anthropologists and to the association itself. One person the task force spoke with discussed the risk of lawsuits filed by boycott opponents. "Others warned that members of Congress might seek ways to punish the AAA and the discipline of anthropology for a strong stance on this issue by cutting public support for anthropological research."

Over all, the task force's report offers a highly critical assessment of the effect of Israeli government policies on the lives -- and academic careers -- of Palestinians. A significant section of the report discusses human rights issues, with a dual focus on "structural inequalities in terms of access to resources, education and health outcomes" and "the complex system of identity cards, checkpoints and other restrictions that has been put in place to control the movement of Palestinians, with particular attention to the case of Jerusalem."

"Throughout, we see a tragic instance of victims of one of the most egregious instances of nationalism/colonialism creating a system of oppression with echoes of the very system they had managed to escape," the report states.

Only one of the six task force members had previously conducted fieldwork in the Middle East region. Members of the task force interviewed about 120 people it identified as having expertise on relevant issues in the region. Three of the task force members took a 10-day trip to Israel and the West Bank in May.

"What we have been saying for quite some time now is that we want to have a good conversation about this important issue, and I think this task force report has provided us an important tool with which we can have that conversation," said Alisse Waterston, the president-elect of AAA and a professor of anthropology at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Waterston said she expects lively conversations on the topic at the association's annual conference in Denver in November. "I'm sure it will be the talk of the town, or one of the talks of the town, when we meet in about a month, and we have to wait and see what feedback we get from the membership on this issue. I'm sure there will be multiple points of view," she said.

The leaders of the Anthropologists for the Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions campaign plan to propose a resolution supporting the boycott of Israeli academic institutions at the business meeting during the annual conference. "We appreciate the diligence with which the task force conducted its research and the thoroughness of its report, and welcome the task force's unanimous recommendation that AAA take substantive action on the situation in Israel/Palestine," members of the campaign's organizing collective wrote in a statement.

"We also note the report's observation that merely censuring Israel would by itself be an 'insufficient course of action,' and look forward to continued discussion of an academic boycott of Israeli institutions at the annual meeting this November. The boycott we have proposed would apply to Israeli academic institutions, not individual scholars, and it would not impose any binding action on individual AAA members, who would remain free to decide whether and how to implement the boycott in their own professional practice."
Harvey E. Goldberg, the president of the Israeli Anthropological Association (IAA) and a professor emeritus of anthropology at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, will be among those advocating against a boycott. "To me the basic questions are not so much the details of the report but what are the premises of this whole enterprise, of a certain group of anthropologists who happen to represent the largest association, the most influential association with the most funds and so forth starting to exert judgment on anthropologists in a part of the world that is very conflicted, very complex, as if nothing else was going on in the world that was worthy of attention," Goldberg said.

Goldberg also said that while he recognizes the task force report as representing a serious effort, he personally wouldn't attempt to write a report about a country about which he was not an expert after a 10-day visit.

The IAA approved a resolution in June calling on Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied after the 1967 war, to end "the siege" of Gaza and to cooperate in its reconstruction, to recognize the full and equal rights of Palestinian and Bedouin citizens within Israel, and to put in place a "spectrum of dignified, just and effective solutions to the tragedy of Palestinian refugees." The IAA statement also opposes academic boycotts.

"Recognizing the important role that moderate segments in Israeli society, including academics, have played over the years in the difficult struggle for peace in the region, the IAA calls on anthropologists and academics abroad to resist conflating academic institutions with government policies and actions, and to oppose initiatives to boycott universities in Israel," the resolution states. "Associating academic institutions with the political regimes they operate in defies in the face of anthropology's most enduring contribution to intellectual and political sensibilities: its ability to recognize and articulate nuance, deal with social and cultural complexity and avoid essentialization."

CUNY Unions Give Wake-Up Call To Chancellor Over Long Delay on Pacts

By DAN ROSENBLUM | Posted: Monday, October 5, 2015 5:30 pm

Early Oct. 1, hundreds of Professors and lecturers who were brandishing signs, wearing academic regalia and holding alarm clocks gathered outside a bulky high-rise apartment building on East 68th St. that’s home to City University of New York Chancellor James Milliken.

“We’re here to wake him up with an alarm clock and say the time is now,” said Cheryl Wu, who has worked in the Bursar’s Office for 19 years. Over that time, she said, her co-workers have been expected to work more, while not receiving a raise for the past six years.

35,000 Affected by Delay

She is one of roughly 25,000 members of the Professional Staff Congress, which represents university instructors, and 10,000 CUNY clerical, administrative and maintenance staffers in District Council 37 who are working under contracts that expired in 2010. After the Bloomberg administration cut off negotiations with municipal unions following the 2008 national financial crisis, the unions have been agitating for a new contract since Bill de Blasio took office in January 2014. Because CUNY is funded by a mix of state and city money, along with student tuition, a deal requires both the Mayor and Governor to sign off on it.

PSC President Barbara Bowen said the union put forward an economic offer, but hasn’t yet heard a counter-proposal from the university. She said educators have gotten increasingly frustrated and some are taking more-lucrative positions elsewhere. The average salary at the university’s four-year facilities is $115,000 for a Professor and $76,570 for an Assistant Professor, according to the PSC. Those salaries are below other public universities and far less than the $223,900 and $114,100 salaries earned, respectively, at Columbia University. Thousands of part-time and adjunct lecturers earn far less.

“If our contract isn’t settled, our members, the CUNY faculty, are starting to leave,” Ms. Bowen said. “They’re not able to do their jobs in the way they want to do their jobs.”
CUNY's Standing At Stake

She said the loss of talented educators could threaten the university’s “world-class” status as an academic and economic rung for poor and minority students.

DC 37, which bargains separately, is also frustrated over the impasse. At the rally, its executive director, Henry Garrido, said there’s been “no substantive discussion” and wondered why Governor Cuomo was mulling free tuition at community colleges while the bargaining sat unresolved.

“You can’t propose free tuition when you haven’t dealt with one of the most fundamental responsibilities as a chief negotiator for the State of New York,” he said.

Mr. Garrido added that because CUNY employees are on the city’s health-insurance plan, some of those liabilities should have been offset following last year’s agreement with the Municipal Labor Committee, in which the de Blasio administration was able to draw $1 billion from the joint Health Insurance Stabilization Fund for benefits. Nonetheless, he said the state’s pattern—which consisted of a three-year wage freeze followed by two 2-percent raises—has dominated the conversation during bargaining sessions.

Unfair Benchmark?

“It’s apples to oranges, it’s not an equal comparison because the state pattern had a lot of health-insurance costs in it,” he said. “That’s not the case anymore here. That’s already been taken care of.”

Mr. Cuomo’s press office did not respond to a request for comment.

Chancellor Milliken has been sympathetic. He wrote in a Sept. 10 message to staffers that they’ve gone “far too long without a new contract and across-the-board salary increases” and pledged to lobby on their behalf. He added: “We are continuing to work with state and city leaders to be in a position to make a fair offer, while at the same time we are working at the bargaining table on non-economic elements of a proposed contract.”

A university spokesman said Mr. Milliken was not at home during the protest and was attending an awards event hosted by The Daily News.

In a statement released last week, Board of Trustees Chairman Berno Schmidt said the board and Chancellor considered reaching a deal their “highest priority.” He pointed to the university attaining record enrollment levels, launching a new medical and film school, expanding the Accelerated Studies in Associate Programs and increasing scholarships for undocumented students. “None of this could have taken place without the commitment and efforts of dedicated faculty and staff,” he wrote.

Cost-of-Living Concern

Inez Barron, Chair of the City Council’s Higher Education Committee, said in an interview earlier last week that she’d like to see a new contract, particularly since CUNY officials have told her that
wage issues are an obstacle to recruiting diverse candidates. "The cost of living is so much higher here in New York City and people can get at least the same salary or more at other institutions and be able to live comfortably where they are," she said.

Specifically, the PSC is asking for Mr. Milliken to team with the union and advocate more publicly for a contract, oppose mandatory annual tuition increases, agree to non-economic terms and stop using unrestricted reserves on high-paid management positions while cutting hours and positions for rank-and-file staff.

As the instructors, who were corralled in two sets of barriers, marched, chanted and posed with a cardboard cutout of the Chancellor, the PSC promised a more-active campaign if its demands weren't met. The union has been conducting civil-disobedience training sessions and is planning for potentially more-active protests early next month. "We are prepared, if necessary, to take some more-disruptive action," Ms. Bowen said.

**Questions Priorities**

Stafford Grégoire, an Assistant English Professor at LaGuardia Community College, wanted his union to have the political heft that uniformed unions enjoyed and blamed the Governor for obstructing negotiations.

He said that he could use the money because two of his children were attending college and that in his decade with CUNY, he'd seen more resources going toward administrative costs and away from necessities such as counseling for students.

"There's always cookies and there's always coffee, but there's rarely pay raises or ways to make things easier for students," he said.
Chantal Akerman, Pioneering Belgian Filmmaker, Dies at 65

By RACHEL DONADIO and CARA BUCKLEY   OCT. 6, 2015

PARIS — Chantal Akerman, the Belgian filmmaker whose ruminative, meticulous observation of women’s everyday and inner lives, often using long, protracted takes, made her a pioneer in feminist and experimental filmmaking and influenced generations of directors, has died in Paris. She was 65.

Her death was confirmed by her sister, Sylviane Akerman, and by Nicola Mazzanti, the director of the Royal Belgian Film Archive, which had worked closely with Ms. Akerman over the years and restored her films. Mr. Mazzanti said the cause and precise date of her death, which he said he believed had occurred in the past few days, were not yet known.

Born in Brussels to Polish Holocaust survivors, Chantal Akerman was inspired to begin making films after seeing Jean-Luc Godard’s 1965 “Pierrot le Fou” as a teenager. At age 25, she made her groundbreaking 1975 film, “Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles,” which follows a housewife in real time over the course of more than three hours as she prepares food, does chores, and receives clients paying for sex. The minimalist repetition builds up quietly to a traumatic climax.

“‘Jeanne Dielman’ is a film that created, overnight, a new way of making films, a
new way of telling stories, a new way of telling time," Mr. Mazzanti said. "There are filmmakers who are good, filmmakers who are great, filmmakers who are in film history. And then there are a few filmmakers who change film history."

Directors like Todd Haynes, Sally Potter and Michael Haneke have credited Ms. Akerman as a major influence. J. Hoberman, a former film critic for The Village Voice, likened her to Mr. Godard and to the German director Rainer Werner Fassbinder, once calling her "arguably the most important European director of her generation."

From the outset, Ms. Akerman was captivated by the violence that can erupt within the quotidian. Her first film, "Saute Ma Ville," or "Blow Up My City," was a black-and-white 13-minute short that she made at age 18. It shows her destroying her kitchen, then blowing it up with gas.

Elements of angst and alienation permeate Ms. Akerman's films — she made more than 40 — and she sought to break free of linear narratives and direct explication in both her cinematic essays and in her documentary work, preferring instead to leave essential things unsaid. The generational trauma of the Holocaust was a lingering theme, albeit below the surface. In recent decades, she had explored her own Jewish identity.

Her latest film, "No Home Movie," currently showing at the New York Film Festival, captured lengthy conversations between Ms. Akerman and her ailing mother, Natalia, a survivor of Auschwitz who died in 2014. Making the film, which circles around her mother's inability to talk about her experience at the death camp, took a heavy emotional toll on the director. "I think if I knew I was going to do this, I wouldn't have dared to do it," she told The New York Times in a recent interview.

At its premiere at the Locarno Film Festival in Switzerland, "No Home Movie" was booed, devastating Ms. Akerman, who friends said had been in a dark place of late, and who had previously had emotional breakdowns.

"Many people never understood her cinema," Mr. Mazzanti said. He likened some critical comments to the way some people look at a drip painting by Jackson Pollock "and say, 'I could do that.' "
Ms. Akerman's most commercial film is "A Couch in New York" (1996), about an apartment swap between a New York psychologist and a young Parisian woman. It starred William Hurt and Juliette Binoche. Her most recent feature was "Almayer's Folly" (2011), an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's debut novel, which she shot in Cambodia. She also directed "The Captive" (2000), an adaptation from Proust, whose work she said had always been important to her.

Her other films include "News From Home" (1977), cinematic letters home from her time in New York; and "A Whole Night" (1982), about the tug of war between lovers. She also made travelogues, including ones about post-Communist Eastern Europe in "From the East" (1993), about the American South for "South" (1999) and about Israel for "Over There" (2006).

Ms. Akerman also worked in video, and her 2007 video installation, "Women From Antwerp," which depicts moody women smoking in the northern city, was shown at the Marian Goodman Gallery in New York as well as in London. In 2011, Ms. Akerman joined City College in New York as a visiting lecturer but was not teaching this semester.

Mr. Mazzanti recalled asking Ms. Akerman how she had edited "Hotel Monterey," a silent film about a Lower Manhattan hotel that she had made in 1972. "She said, 'I was breathing, and then at one point I understood it was the time to cut. It was my breathing that decided the length of my shots,'" he said. "That's Chantal Akerman. She breathed through the films," he said. "She was cinema."

**Correction: October 6, 2015**
Because of an editing error, an earlier version of this article misstated the institution that Chantal Akerman joined as a visiting lecturer. It was City College of New York, not City College of London.

Rachel Donadio reported from Paris, and Cara Buckley from New York.
TELEVISION

What’s On TV Tuesday

By KATHRYN SHATTUCK OCT. 6, 2015

1:50 P.M. (Cinemax) LOVE & BASKETBALL (2000) Gina Prince-Bythewood ("Beyond the Lights") made her directorial debut with this tale about Monica (Kyla Pratt as a girl and Sanaa Lathan as a teenager) and Quincy (Glenndon Chatman and Omar Epps), next-door neighbors and aspiring basketball players who let the game get in the way of their love. "There are moments in ‘Love and Basketball’ that are as evocative as a Sports Illustrated photo from a few years ago, of a boy standing next to his date, the homecoming queen, who is also the team’s place-kicker," Elvis Mitchell wrote in The New York Times. "The edge between Monica and Quincy in their one-on-one games gives Mr. Epps something to play off." But Ms. Lathan’s watchable no-nonsense turn — at once petulant and winsome — makes it her movie, he added, "and she shines." (Image: Ms. Lathan and Mr. Epps.)

8 P.M. (CUNY) SCIENCE & U! This women’s health episode presents new information on heart attacks, strokes, cancer, preventing hair loss during chemotherapy, and the harm of too much makeup.
Portland author proves to have a powerful style

So many books, so little time. But if we turn off screens — those ravenous devourers of time — and pick up a book, the ticking clock slows and we feel suspended in time. Turns out, there is actually plenty of time to read.

Time travel is one of the themes in Carmiel Banasky’s debut novel, “The Suicide of Claire Bishop” ($24.95), and Portland publishing company Dzanc/Hawthorne Books is understandably excited about the book, which recently received a starred review in Publishers Weekly. We hereby give it Tribune stars, too.

Raised in Portland and a graduate of Wilson High School in Southwest Portland, Banasky, 33, lives in Los Angeles. She will be a featured speaker at the Wordstock festival at the Portland Art Museum on Nov. 7.

(It’s such good news that this festival of books — recently acquired by Literary Arts — is returning, and that the new organizers finally realized there needs to be food, beer and wine on the premises, too. The all-day, one-day festival includes authors, writers, and publishers hobnobbing across three ballrooms.)

Banasky appeared at Powell’s City of Books recently to read from “The Suicide of Claire Bishop.”

To place a painting at the center of a book’s action, as Banasky does, is a dubious proposition. But Banasky pulls this tricky thing off, and the initially skeptical reader follows the painting’s travels through 1950s Greenwich Village to post-9/11 New York. The author juggles a cluster of topics — physics, time travel and mental illness — along the way. Was it a “romp” or a “pleasure to read” as reviewers like to say? Hardly.

The novel begins in Greenwich Village in the 1950s. Claire Bishop is a housewife who believes she has inherited a gene for madness. She awaits her fate, policing herself for signs that she is going nuts. While Claire does indeed engage in some borderline dangerous stuff, this could be because she’s unhappy with her life and cheating husband. When her husband commissions an artist to paint her portrait, it’s perhaps not a huge shock to Claire to see that the finished painting depicts her leaping off a bridge.

Banasky is a bratty and wonderful writer; she has a master of fine arts from Hunter College (New York City), and her fellow alum Phil Klay won the 2014 National Book Award for “Redeployment.” So it goes without saying that she writes exceedingly well, especially from the point of view of West, the young man obsessed with the painting when he sees it decades after it was painted. He becomes convinced that the artist is his ex-girlfriend, but she could not have been alive when it was painted. West, who suffers from schizophrenia, nonetheless makes a lot of sense at times:

“Down in the lobby, there’s a camera pivoting toward me like a duck’s head, filming me as I slip out the front doors and cross the street. If I could piece together the footage of my personal surveillance, from all the storefronts and ATMs and museums I’ve ever walked by, I could make a film of my true self.”

The reader teeters uncomfortably between rooting for West and knowing that he can’t survive, looking forward to and dreading him in equal parts throughout the book’s 386 pages. We hope that his lovable sister, Jules, can save him. Claire, the novel’s difficult lead character, lacks West’s lightning charisma.

Dzanc, a nonprofit publisher based in Michigan, joined forces with Portland’s Hawthorne Books earlier this year. Their focus is on literary fiction and memoirs of a highly unfuffy nature. For instance, Janet Sternburg’s memoir “White Matter, A Memoir of Family and Medicine” was released in September. It’s about the use of prefrontal lobotomies to treat mental illness. Just because it’s one that probably won’t make the cut at the neighborhood book club doesn’t mean you can’t find the time to read it.

Meanwhile, some women who rock on stage and page:

n Patti Smith will release her new book “M Train” this fall. Her Friday Nov. 20, appearance at the Newmark Theater is already sold out.

n Chrissie Hynde of The Pretenders has a just published a memoir called “Reckless.”

n Carrie Brownstein’s “Hunger Makes Me A Modern Girl” is coming out Oct. 27. She and comedian Tig Notaro are appearing at the Newmark in a Powell’s Books event on Nov. 5 (tickets at portland5.com).
Tributes to ‘a woman born before her time’

Jonathan Bell

Dorothy Packwood, an artist and educator credited with guiding the Island’s first definitive histories of slavery in Bermuda, has died at the age of 93.

The wife of the late historian Cyril Packwood, Mrs Packwood was “a woman born before her time”, recalled her daughter, Cheryl Packwood.

Born in Canada, she took a train to New York in 1946 to become a teacher in the public school system as well as a librarian, putting herself through school.

“What I find amazing about her is that this was a black woman at a time when women like her were not supposed to do that,” her daughter said.

“Everybody saw her as quiet, but this was an incredibly competitive, career-driven woman. Being quiet does not mean that you don’t go for the stars.”

Along with his other books, her husband’s classic Chained on the Rock, which he published in 1976, owed its existence to her careful editing, Ms Packwood said.

“They were a team,” she said, describing her mother as a prolific reader and intensely literary person who preferred to read her Harlem Renaissance poetry instead of stories when she was a child.

She worked to put herself through school, obtaining a Bachelor’s of Fine Arts and a Masters in Library Science from Hunter College in New York.

She met her future husband in the New York public library, where she outranked him as a librarian.

“He fell madly in love with her and asked her to marry him — she said she needed time to think, and he always said that it took her two weeks,” Ms Packwood said. “She finally said yes, and he ended up being her heart and soul.”

Mr Packwood’s death in 1998 at the age of 67 devastated her, she added: “When he died was when she started dying,” she said.

Art, which she had first studied in Toronto, lay at the centre of her life, and she worked in every medium from painting to tapestry.

Mrs Packwood devised her own technique of oil painting and was adept at photography.

The couple moved to the Island in 1985, and she produced many works of art here, taken with the Island’s beauty.
Along with her husband, she was a keen scholar of African history and culture, and the two crisscrossed the continent.

Mr Packwood was a founding member of the African American Studies Programme, and the two lead cultural tours there for 20 years.

"Her favourite country there was Ethiopia — she loved the history, the artwork and people; she looked Ethiopian, so she related to the people there," her daughter said.

Mrs Packwood died on September 30. A graveside memorial service will be held on Friday at 5.30pm at St Peter’s Cemetery on Secretary Road.
LOCAL

Uosteopathic medical school planned to help Minnesota doctor shortage

Group wants to open osteopathic school in central Minnesota, where need for primary care doctors is great.


A central Minnesota banker is teaming up with a New York academic to offer a novel solution to Minnesota’s looming doctor shortage: a for-profit osteopathic medical college housed in a converted public school in Gaylord.

The pair visited Minnesota politicians and hospital and clinic executives last week to see if they would host the school’s students for on-the-job training that would be a requirement for their degrees.

Partnering with a new medical school would be attractive to hospitals and clinics that need to replace retiring doctors and tend to an aging patient population, said Philip Keilhahn, chief executive of ProGrowth Bank in Gaylord and the chief financial officer for the proposed college. “They have a huge vested interest in something like this working,” he said.

Keilhahn and his partner have secured more than half of their start-up funding and won preliminary approval from the Gaylord City Council to convert a soon-to-be-vacated elementary and junior high school complex.

The Minnesota College of Osteopathic Medicine still faces big questions before it opens in fall 2018 — including whether it can recruit sufficient faculty to a town 50 miles southwest of the Twin Cities, where the students would complete their clinical training and how it will overcome what is already a shortage of postgraduate residency openings at local hospitals.

The school nonetheless presents a bold solution to Minnesota’s shortage of primary care physicians, which is expected to worsen even with young doctors emerging from the state’s three medical schools — University of Minnesota campuses in Minneapolis and Duluth and the Mayo Clinic’s school in Rochester. A wave of retirements is expected to leave rural Minnesota 800 doctors short at a time when the aging population will have more medical needs.

“The doctor shortage is a real problem ... and it’s going to be a huge problem in the next 10 years in primary care,” said Dr. Joseph Willett, an osteopathic physician in Marshall who is evaluating the proposal on behalf of the Minnesota Osteopathic Medical Society.

Renovation of Gaylord’s Sibley Public Schools complex would create a high-tech campus for up to 150 students per graduating class, and would include student housing, said Jay Sexter, the chief executive of the new college.

Sexter, who once held administrative posts at Fordham University and the City University of New York, helped found four other osteopathic colleges, in California, Nevada, New York City and in Middletown in upstate New York as part of the Touro College and University System.

Investments in broadband and fiber-optic telecommunications in Gaylord made the concept possible, Keilhahn said, because the school will emphasize high-tech learning. Students will watch online lectures before classes and take quizzes, which will help instructors tailor the actual in-class lessons. Anatomy lessons using cadavers or high-tech models, which can be programmed to exhibit diagnostic symptoms, will be recorded so students can watch and learn from their own performances.
“Students get bored taking notes with laptops in lecture halls,” said Sexter.

Preventive care

Osteopaths represent a little-known subset of the profession, but they are doctors and represent 5 percent of Minnesota’s 22,000 licensed physicians — a share that is growing, according to the Board of Medical Practice.

Osteopathic medicine emerged a century ago as mainstream medicine turned toward more technological treatments. Its most controversial element is a belief in a manipulation technique akin to massage that is thought to improve the body’s receptiveness to treatment.

But the heart of osteopathic medicine is highly personal care that assesses patients’ well-being, Willett said. “It’s not just ‘You sprained your ankle.’ It’s ‘You sprained your ankle because you are depressed and you kicked the dog.’”

The philosophy also aligns with an emerging trend in American medicine toward holistic and preventive care. The number of accredited osteopathic schools — currently 30 — is rising fast, according to the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.

Seeking partners for clinical training, Sexter met last week with leaders from a number of Minnesota health organizations, including Ridgeview Medical Center in Waconia, which is 30 miles from Gaylord, and Mayo Clinic.

“Mayo Clinic is interested in learning more about the Minnesota College of Osteopathic Medicine as we all work together ... to improve primary care services, especially to those who live in rural areas,” a Mayo spokesman said.

Residency bottleneck?

Minnesota health care leaders are hearing out the ambitious plan but also wonder whether the new school can expand the number of residency slots for physician training. Four years of medical school is only the beginning for medical students; they then must commit to years of on-the-job training at teaching hospitals.

Minnesota’s teaching hospitals have already tapped out the federal funding they receive for training residents, but have added another 500 slots with the help of state medical education funding, said Troy Taubenheim, director of the Metro Minnesota Council on Graduate Medical Education.

“The bottleneck ... is not the volume of medical school graduates but rather the limit of residency spots,” Taubenheim said.

Elsewhere, Sexter has worked with smaller hospitals to create new residency training programs, because they qualify for federal funding. The approach appears to have worked nationally: While the number of traditional M.D. residency slots has stagnated, the American Osteopathic Association reported an 18 percent increase this year in osteopathic residencies.

Keithahn said he hopes that attracting private investment to support new medical school might allow the state to conserve some public funding for more residencies at large hospitals, but said he also hopes that small hospitals might partner to support new residency programs.

He also met with a leader at Gustavus Adolphus College last week and wants to befriend other small colleges so that local undergrads can have a path toward medical careers.

“We want this,” he said, “to be a Minnesota school.”
In Public Service: Councilmember pleased his community getting city attention

Espinal's district at forefront of affordable housing plan
By Paula Katinas
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Councilmember Rafael Espinal and the constituents in the East New York section of his district are pioneers.

East New York will be the first neighborhood to undergo a major rezoning as part of Mayor Bill de Blasio's grand vision to build thousands of units of affordable housing throughout the city.

"Our neighborhood is going to be the model. We're kind of leading the way," Espinal told the Brooklyn Eagle during an interview at the Eagle's Court Street offices.

Espinal, a Democrat who was elected to the City Council in 2013, represents the 37th Council District. The district includes East New York, Bushwick, Cypress Hills and parts of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Espinal said he and his constituents are ready for the challenges of rezoning and are determined to see that the city gets it right. He has held at least 15 town hall meetings to date to give residents a chance to learn about the de Blasio administration's rezoning proposal. The most recent one took place on Sept. 16 at Blessed Sacrament Church on Pine Street.

Residents have expressed concern over the height of proposed buildings, according to Espinal.

"The city is looking to increase the height to 12 stories. There could be 12-story buildings all along Atlantic Avenue," he said.

Espinal is confident that at the end of the process, the rezoning will fit East New York's needs.

If it doesn't, he won't vote for it when it comes before the City Council, he said. "The rezoning can't happen without my vote," he added.

Still, Espinal said he believes that the mayor is on the right track in terms of wanting to increase the number of affordable housing units in the city. "The city is growing," he said.

It's fitting that the massive rezoning effort, which will eventually take place in 15 neighborhoods across the city, is starting in his neck of the woods, Espinal said.

He proudly described his
district as "a diamond in the rough." Most of the residents are low-income people who take pride in their community.

"It's very special," he said, referring to his district. You can raise your family there. The rents are affordable. Transportation is there," he said.

"But I think a lot of the attention is on the needs of a few families. You need housing for the people," he added.

removing will pave the way for the construction of new housing, but that isn't the only change Espinal would like to see.

The councilmember is pushing for the establishment of an Industrial Business Zone. "I pushed for the Mayor's Office to do an independent study on Industrial Business Zones," he said.

The Mayor's Office agreed, and the study is currently underway.

"I would like to see 12,000 to 15,000 jobs created. My vision is to create thousands of jobs and for people to be able to walk to work," Espinal told the Eagle.

Another proposal he is supporting is one that would create a Business Improvement District (BID) on Fulton Street. "BIDs are helpful. You get to know who your neighbors are,"

The BID would be approximately 2 miles long.

It's about time the city pays attention to the gem that is the 37th Council District, Espinal said. "I felt we were kind of ignored," said Espinal, who was born and raised in Cypress Hills. "As a kid, I used to have to go to Queens to use their ball fields. We didn't have any ball fields in our neighborhood."

His parents were immigrants from the Dominican Republic. "They came here and raised six kids," Espinal said.

Espinal attended P.S. 108, Intermediate School 392, and Franklin K. Lane High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from Queens College. In college, he started thinking about how he could make a contribution to his community and sought ways to improve the lives of hard-working residents. "I was an adult literacy teacher for a year," he said.

He got a job working for then-Councilmember Erik Martin Dilan, working the front desk in the councilmember's office and wrote letters on the lawmaker's behalf. But Espinal said that at that time, he was "not thinking this was going to be a career."

Dilan had other ideas, however.

Dilan talked to Espinal on many occasions and encouraged his political ambitions.

Through that encouragement, Espinal realized that he could make a life in politics. He aspired to be Dilan's chief of staff. When he got the job, "It was the happiest day of my life," he recalled.

He loved running the office, helping constituents with their quality of life issues, and representing Dilan at public meetings.

Working as the chief of staff job also made him think about his future. "I knew how the political system worked. I thought about running for public office," he said.

Opportunity knocked on his door. Darrell Towns, who was the assemblyman representing the 54th Assembly District, resigned in 2011. Espinal decided to run for that seat. He won a special election. He wasn't a stranger to voters. "My parents had roots in the neighborhood. They were really well known," he said.

In addition, Espinal had established himself by representing Dilan at community board meetings. "People had a sense of who I was," he said.

He enjoyed the Assembly, but two short years later, he opted to run for the City Council seat.

"The Council is a more active body," he explained, adding that he could have a more direct, hands-on relationship with the community as a councilmember. "It's a grass-roots kind of thing. You're solving people's pothole problems and providing immediate relief," he said.

On the Council, there is "more access in directing funds to the local community," Espinal said. "You have more control."

As one of the few people to have served in both the Assembly and the City Council, Espinal reflected on the differences. In
the Assembly, "things move a lot slower."

That's partly because the Assembly is in session only from January to June. "Time is compressed. In the Council, everything is spread out," he said, referring to the fact that the Council meets throughout the year.

But he did note that in the Assembly, "there is more camaraderie among the members."

By contrast, "Councilmembers are at City Hall and then they go right back to their districts," he said. "There's not as much hanging out together."

In Albany, members are far away from home and far away from their families, so they tend to gravitate to each other. As a councilmember, "I feel blessed," he said.

The 37th Council District "has the most Dominicans in the city," he said, adding that it's a demographic that is leading to tremendous growth in local churches. The Spanish-language Masses in the neighborhoods are packed, he said.

Espinal's district office is located at 786 Knickerbocker Ave. His office staff deals with a lot of constituent questions on immigration issues and affordable housing. "We also get a lot of job inquiries," he said.

On the Council, he serves as chairman of the Committee on Consumer Affairs. "We deal with small business and protection of consumers," he said. As chairman, he works to maintain a balance between the needs of business owners and the rights of consumers.

While Espinal agrees with de Blasio on many issues, he opposes the mayor's proposed ban on horse carriages. The horse carriage industry is an important part of New York City, he said. "It's part of the historical fabric of the city. And it's already heavily regulated by the city."

He has gotten push-back from the Mayor's Office on the horse carriage issue, he admitted. But he stood firm.

His devotion to his job and the hours it entails has left little time for a personal life. Espinal is unmarried. "I got teased a lot," he said. He has been dubbed the Most Eligible Bachelor in Bushwick.

October 5, 2015 - 2:05pm
NYT Op-Ed: Trump, Sanders’ High Poll Numbers Due to New York Accents

by Andrew Husband | 5:00 pm, October 5th, 2015 F*CK THE YANKEES 33

An op-ed in Monday’s New York Times suggests that two of the top presidential candidates at the moment have achieved their status due to their New York accents. Popular and contemporary notions from sociolinguistics — the study of language and society — are invoked to back up the claim. However, it sounds more like yet another prudeful boast about New York from yet another New Yorker with a loudspeaker.

Michael Newman, a professor of linguistics at Queens College and the Graduate Center of the City of New York, argues that having a New York accent “can help you get ahead” in “Voters May Just Want to ‘Tawk.”’ His evidence? Well aside from his being the author of New York City English, a monstrous academic text priced at $42 new on Amazon, Newman points to the high poll numbers maintained by Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, born in Queens and Brooklyn respectively.

“Other politicians with no hint of New York in their speech, such as Hillary Clinton and Jeb Bush, would likely love to have ‘telling it like it is’ as part of their brand,” says Newman. “Only Chris Christie seems to even come close. See a pattern?”

Wait, so Trump and Sanders are leading the Republican and Democratic parties at the polls because they sound like they’re from New York? Sure, Newman points out that both candidates share an “upstart, outsider image” and “a posture of forthrightness and candor,” but these are mere window dressings. Language is what the game is all about, especially the English language as used (and abused) by native New Yorkers.

According to Newman’s reading of Georgetown University linguist Deborah Tannen’s observations, “New Yorkers tend to have a different conversational style than other Americans.” Specifically, they “favor being more direct.”

“We speak over one another, particularly to show our engagement with what our interlocutor is saying. We like to tell long stories,” he Newman, adding: “And we don’t mind arguing as long as it is not too personal.”

Ignoring the fact that Trump actually prefers arguments that are very personal (when directed by him at someone else), what is Newman’s actual evidence? Is the coincidence that the two top-polling presidential candidates are both from New York? Their shared love of argument? Their outside-the-system branding? None of the above, for what Newman points to is what sociolinguists call “indexicality.” That is, “the way that forms of speech entail social meanings.”

Trump and Sanders aren’t necessarily popular because they’re from New York, but because they sound like they’re from New York. And all of the assumptions that polled voters have about people from New York — be they good, bad or somewhere in between — come to the fore whenever these two candidates speak, something they’ve been doing fairly regularly.
On the one hand, Newman’s logical connections make complete sense. He is, after all, a well-educated and studied linguist and college professor. On the other hand, his suggestion that Trump and Sanders’ successes are due to their New York accents totally ignores a plethora of non-linguistic factors. This makes sense because he is a linguist, and therefore provides linguistic analysis of the 2016 election season. He’s likely way better at it than, say, analyzing current political trends as a political pundit, an economist or an underwater basket-weaver.

As for the inherent everything-is-about-New-York mentality, this is an op-ed about two presidential candidates from New York, with New York accents, in New York City’s paper of record. All it needs is an official comment from the white guy who railed against “white privilege” in Brooklyn in order to achieve its true potential.

[ht the New York Times]
[Image via Shutterstock.com]
Lineup Release Raises Questions About Daily Fantasy Contests

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  OCT. 5, 2015, 6:04 P.M. E.D.T.

An early release of lineup information in a DraftKings contest is raising questions about the transparency of the burgeoning daily fantasy industry.

Users in online forums are asking whether a DraftKings employee might have used information about lineups to win $350,000 in a competing contest on the FanDuel site. The information detailed the percentages of entrants who selected certain fantasy players.

The release, which the employee said was inadvertent, comes at a time when the daily fantasy industry is booming and DraftKings and FanDuel are spending tens of millions of dollars on advertising which touts the ability of contest winners to get rich playing daily fantasy sports.

It also comes at a time when there are still gray areas surrounding the legality of the contests, and no independent oversight over how the contests are run and whether everyone who enters is on a level playing field.

"One really has to ask questions over at DraftKings what regulations they have in place and why an employee has access to so much information," said Marc Edelman, a law professor and sports business scholar at Baruch College, City University of New
York. "One thing I find grossly troubling about DraftKings is they spend so much time and money advertising and a lot less time in internal controls and operating in a risk averse manner."

There are no allegations — or evidence — that the DraftKings employee used information about the percentage of players who drafted certain players in last week's contest to finish in second place in the NFL Sunday Million contest run by FanDuel. The contest, which cost $25 to enter, featured $5 million in cash winnings, including $1 million to the winner.

But it is no secret in the daily fantasy industry that the kind of information the employee tweeted out could be used to draft fantasy teams that include players that aren't in widespread use in any given contest. If those players perform well, the odds of the person holding them winning goes up dramatically.

DraftKings and FanDuel posted on their sites an unusual joint statement saying they have no evidence anyone misused information for profit. The statement said nothing is more important than the integrity of the games they offer to customers, and that employees with access to data are "rigorously monitored by internal fraud control teams."

DraftKings did not respond to questions about what policies and controls it has in place, but a spokeswoman for FanDuel said her company does not believe there was any attempt to manipulate its contest.

"We operate based on the trust of our players," Justine Sacco said. "This is not a new issue for us as a company or an industry and maintaining the integrity of our contests and games is paramount to sustaining and growing our business."

Questions about the release of the percentages of drafted players were first raised in a posting on the Rotogrinders site, and reported more in depth by DFS Report and the Legal Sports Report websites.

Chris Grove, who operates the Legal Sports Report site, said even the outside possibility of a rigged contest raises critical questions about the integrity of the daily fantasy industry.
"There are questions the industry cannot provide a satisfactory answer to," Grove said. "They can't tell you who has access to what data and what controls they have in place to ensure data isn't abused. Even if they did tell you, consumers wouldn't find the answers totally satisfactory. That's a recipe for regulatory intervention."

The broader issue is whether players who put up entry fees to try and win money in the contests can be sure that insiders — or anyone else — is getting an unfair advantage. There is no regulation of online daily fantasy, which has exploded the past two years into an industry where billions of dollars are at stake.

Joe Asher, who heads U.S. operations for the William Hill sports betting chain, said daily fantasy is gambling and should be regulated by the government, just as sports books are regulated in Nevada to ensure everything is on the up-and-up.

"I'm all for daily fantasy betting," Asher said. "I think it should be legal, I think it should be regulated, and I think it should be taxed. But nobody is in favor of unregulated internet gambling and that is exactly what daily fantasy sports is."

Edelman said the risk for the sites and their investors — Major League Baseball is among those with a deal with DraftKings — is whether insider information could be used to win contests.

"There's a big difference between fixing a game in sports betting and trading on insider information in daily fantasy," Edelman said. "It might be difficult to convince a team or a member of a team to lose on purpose. It's a lot easier to have material information about a player's mentality or physical condition no one else does and pass that along."