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IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

The Republican Élite Struggles Over Whether to Resist Trump or Capitulate

In the June 20, 2016, issue of *The New Yorker*, in “Occupied Territory” (p. 26), **Ryan Lizza** speaks with prominent Republican leaders who are struggling over whether to resist the presumptive Republican nominee for President, Donald Trump, or capitulate and support him—all amid the Party’s biggest ideological crisis in fifty years. “Since 1964, when Senator Barry Goldwater was the Republican Presidential candidate, there has been wide agreement about the meaning of conservatism,” Lizza writes. “Insofar as Trump has fixed political positions, he disagrees with a majority of House Republicans . . . on foreign policy, taxes, entitlements, trade policy, immigration, and the minimum wage.” In spite of Trump’s unconventional path, Chris Collins, leader of the pro-Trump wing in the House, tells Lizza, “I have spoken to very few members who have said that they’re not on the Trump train.” Tom Price, chair of the Budget Committee, “seems to have convinced himself that Trump will be malleable, and that Price will have more leverage than Republicans who wait,” telling Lizza, “When I talk to people who work closely with Trump, what they tell me is that behind closed doors he’s one of the best listeners they’ve ever worked for or with in their life.”

But others hesitate to endorse Trump, given his “never-ending statements that offend P.O.W.s, people with disabilities, Mexicans, Muslims, women,” according to Charlie Dent, the leader of a faction of moderate House Republicans called the Tuesday Group. “Before supporting Trump, most Republicans must overcome doubts about his temperament, his ideology, his reckless statements, his questionable respect for the Constitution, and his potential to repel a generation or more of young and nonwhite voters,” writes Lizza. Jeff Flake, the junior senator from Arizona, tells Lizza, “I’m still in the first stage of grief—denial—like a lot of my colleagues. If he were to say, ‘No, I really can’t leave my business. I’m going to let the Convention choose somebody else’—now, that would be a dream.” In response to the widespread sentiment among many Republicans that defeating Hillary Clinton is more important than any long-term effects Trump may have on the Party, Senator Ben Sasse, of Nebraska, says, “I think if it’s merely a lesser of two evils, then the American experiment has already lost. We live in a civic republic, and you have to be recognizing that voting is also an act of signalling about the ideal, about what America should be in twenty-five years. I don’t want more candidates like Donald Trump. So I can’t vote for him just because he’s not Hillary Clinton.” In their first interview, Senator Susan Collins, of Maine, tells Lizza that she hopes Trump “can minimize his weaknesses, change his approach, knock off the gratuitous personal insults, and draw on his strengths.” But when they spoke again last week, she had something new to say: “I worked very well with Hillary when she was my colleague in the Senate and when she was Secretary of State. But I do not anticipate voting for her this fall. I’m not going to say never, because this has been such an unpredictable situation, to say the least.”

How a New York State Prisoner Became a Jailhouse Lawyer, and Changed the System

In “Home Free” (p. 40), **Jennifer Gonnerman** profiles Derrick Hamilton, one of the most skilled jailhouse lawyers in the country, who spent nearly twenty-one years behind bars for a murder he did not commit. Gonnerman explores the network of jailhouse lawyers who, in prison libraries across New York state, have devoted themselves to understanding the law and proving their innocence. In 1983, as a teen-ager locked up on Rikers Island, Hamilton started spending time in the law library. His lawyer urged him to start studying, and “I took it seriously,” he tells Gonnerman. He was released six years later, but in 1991, he was arrested for murder, and sentenced to twenty-five years to life. In 1997, Hamilton was transferred to Wende prison, in Erie County, where he met Jerry Rosenberg, known as Jerry the Jew, who was then the most renowned jailhouse lawyer in the country. “Rosenberg was an eighth-grade dropout, but he became a fixture in the law library at Attica, where he spent many years. During the negotiations in the 1971 riots, he served as the inmates’ legal adviser,” Gonnerman writes. “Over time, he claimed to have assisted inmates in more than three hundred cases, and to have won most of them.” Hamilton, too, had more luck with other prisoners’ cases than he did with his own—he read trial transcripts, wrote motions, and sometimes persuaded a judge to grant an inmate a hearing. Unlike other jailhouse lawyers, Hamilton usually worked for no charge, telling



Gonnerman, “It’s very disgraceful that guys are hustling other people out of commissary or their family’s money and don’t have the knowledge or expertise to do a good job.”

Hamilton’s first big victory as a jailhouse lawyer came in 1997, on behalf Julio Acevedo, who was serving time for the murder of Kelvin Martin. Hamilton found trial testimony in an unrelated case, from a drug-gang enforcer turned government informant, in which he admitted on the stand to the kidnapping and to forcing Acevedo to shoot Martin. “Hamilton wrote a motion, and prosecutors let Acevedo plead to a lesser crime. He was released, after serving eight years,” Gonnerman writes. Nelson Cruz—also convicted for fatally shooting a man in Brooklyn, although he maintains his innocence—says, “Every time Derrick gets into a facility, everybody knows him. First thing that crosses everybody’s mind is: Freedom! Freedom! Freedom!” In 2009, Hamilton was transferred to the Auburn Correctional Facility, in central New York, where he joined the Actual Innocence Team, a group of jailhouse lawyers who met in the library to work on their cases. “The camaraderie helped lift Hamilton out of his depression,” Gonnerman writes. One member of the team tells Gonnerman, “All day long, you’d hear the typewriter. He’d shut it down about twelve o’clock, twelve-thirty. At seven in the morning, you’d hear it again.” Hamilton says, “The law saved my life. That was the one thing I could become fixated upon every day when I woke up and when I went to sleep.”

Hamilton was released in 2011, and in 2014, he won his most significant legal victory: a landmark case, known as *People v. Hamilton*. For the first time in New York history, the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court had decided that a defendant with a plausible claim of innocence is entitled to an evidentiary hearing—and if a defendant can show “clear and convincing” evidence of his innocence, his conviction will be overturned. In 2015, the Brooklyn D.A. finally vacated Hamilton’s conviction, twenty-four years after his arrest. Scott Brettschneider, who hired Hamilton as a paralegal after he left prison, says, “This is somebody who educated himself in jail to the point where his knowledge is so much more extensive than that of most of the lawyers I deal with on a daily basis.” Today, Hamilton lives in New Jersey and works out of a small office that he shares with another paralegal. Letters from prisoners cover his desk, and his cell phone rings constantly. He tells Gonnerman, “When you know a guy is innocent, if you have any decency or human elements in your being, it’s almost impossible for a good person to just forget.”

On “UnREAL,” a Former Producer of “The Bachelor” Satirizes Her Experience

In “Confessional” (p. 34), **D. T. Max** profiles Sarah Gertrude Shapiro, the creator of Lifetime’s dark comedy “UnREAL,” which chronicles the making of a show called “Everlasting” and is based on Shapiro’s experience working as a producer on “The Bachelor.” “I’ve always been one of those people who people tell things to, a weird superpower,” she tells Max. This trait served her well on “The Bachelor,” where her job was to provoke the contestants until their most intense emotions were captured on camera. Shapiro, who considers herself a “dyed-in-the-wool feminist,” was startled to learn that intelligent, wealthy women—many with annual incomes exceeding a hundred thousand dollars—enjoyed a show that depicts such a demeaning caricature of courtship. While she felt uncomfortable with the show’s concept, she excelled at her job. “It became a sport for her. She wanted those merit badges,” Hayley Goggin Avila, another producer, recalls. A nearly endless open bar insured that contestants were perpetually drunk, and Shapiro’s task was to get them to “open up, and to give them terrible advice, and to deprive them of sleep.” Eventually, the show took an emotional toll on Shapiro, and she quit. But she desperately wanted to recount her experience on “The Bachelor” on film: “I felt that there were stories inside me and I would be killed if they didn’t get out,” she tells Max. She pitched her idea for a scripted show to Lifetime: “A feminist working on ‘The Bachelor’ has a nervous breakdown.” They offered to buy it immediately.

On the set of “UnREAL,” which entered its second season last week, the line between genuine and fake is blurred. It’s never clear if you’re walking past a production assistant or an actor playing a production assistant. One of the main characters, a producer named Rachel, is based on Shapiro. Though the show is subversive, it provides the pleasures of the genre it satirizes: a chiselled bachelor, beautiful women, heightened emotions. But beneath the giddy parody, “UnREAL” “offers a singular meditation on stardom, media mendacity, sexism, and competition among women,” Max writes. The show may be most unsparing in its depiction of the unstable modern workplace. Like almost everything to do with the show, this, too, has a meta component. Lifetime paired Shapiro with the veteran showrunner Marti Noxon. Their relationship soon grew difficult, and Noxon left to focus on another show. “I don’t think I’ve had as contentious and fruitful a collaboration since I worked with Matt Weiner on ‘Mad Men,’” Noxon says. She recalls “UnREAL” as a “hard environment to work in.” With Season 2, Shapiro has preserved the feminist emphasis and added a storyline about racial conflict. This year’s “Everlasting” bachelor is African-American—a dig at the fact that “The Bachelor” has never had one—and one of the contestants is a Black Lives Matter activist. Shapiro is proud to have inserted her seemingly lightweight show into the national debate about race. “It just felt like the most worthwhile thing to do with the platform I have,” she tells Max. While “UnREAL” has met with success—its accolades include a Critics’ Choice Award and a Peabody Award—Lifetime is determined to transform the show into a ratings hit. Shapiro wants to build on her success by aiming the series more directly at the kind of viewer who admires such challenging shows as “Girls” and “Transparent.” She believes she can accomplish both goals, and has transferred this desire to her alter ego, Rachel. In the writers’ room, she described Rachel’s motivation in Season 2: “It’s really about ‘I’m savvy enough and smart enough that I know I have to give the network all the frosting and the frou-frou and all the titties that they need, and in the process I’m going to slip them this super-important thing.’”

Millions of Microbes Are Yet to Be Discovered. Will One hold the Ultimate Cure?

In “The Unseen” (p. 50), **Raffi Khatchadourian** reports from Boston, where he speaks extensively with Slava Epstein and Kim Lewis, the microbiologists racing to solve a looming public-health crisis: well-known pathogens—such as staph, tuberculosis, and enterococcus—are demonstrating increased resistance to available drugs, just as the search for new antibiotics has come to a halt. Although there’s an apocalyptic sense about antibiotic resistance, Epstein tells Khatchadourian, “Optimism implies belief in a happy outcome. I do not *believe*—I know it’s possible.” For decades, microbes have been a source of essential pharmaceuticals. But today, “there are strains of tuberculosis and gonorrhea, among other pathogens, that are resistant to virtually every drug in the medical arsenal. By conservative estimates, there are now seven hundred thousand fatalities from antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the world each year,” Khatchadourian writes. A few weeks ago, colistin-resistant *E. coli* was found in a patient in Pennsylvania, prompting the head of the Centers for Disease Control to declare that “the end of the road isn’t very far away for antibiotics.”

Early in his career, Epstein learned that nearly all of microbiology was built on the study of a tiny fraction of microbial life because most bacteria could not be grown in a laboratory culture, the primary means of analyzing them. From the one per cent of bacterial life that scientists had been able to cultivate, researchers had derived virtually every antibiotic used in modern medicine—and the rest was largely written off as “dark matter.” Epstein approached his research differently, telling Khatchadourian, “The problem is not cultivation. It is how to separate one growth from another growth.” In 2003, he and Lewis founded NovoBiotic Pharmaceuticals, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A new device they designed, the iChip, made it possible to grow colonies in the soil from only a single cell. Using the iChip, researchers discovered a new drug—given the code Novo-25—that was resistant to resistance itself. Khatchadourian writes, “By exploring just a fraction of the microbial dark matter, a small team had discovered a potentially revolutionary drug—quickly accomplishing what large pharmaceutical companies had been unable to do for years.” Khatchadourian visits NovoBiotic, where Amy Spoering, the director of biological research, shows him another candidate drug, Novo-28, that focusses on multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis, while leaving beneficial bacteria in the human body unscathed. “Because of TB’s extreme resistance, patients must now take a cocktail of harsh, broad-spectrum drugs for months. Novo-28 promised a quicker, less taxing cure,” Khatchadourian writes. There’s a long road ahead for discoveries such as Novo-25 and Novo-28: researchers must bring a new compound to clinical trials, recruit patients to test the new drug, and prove that it works better than anything else on the market. Spoering says, “It’s like the Wild West of microbiology.”

Plus: In Comment, **David Remnick** considers that while Hillary Clinton seems like the rational choice to become President this fall, there is little room for complacency—any number of circumstances could derail her candidacy, and then “not only could the prospect of a female President remain a matter of fantasy but power will be in the hands of a malevolent fraud” (p. 21); in the Financial Page, **James Surowiecki** examines how a universal basic income would affect the American economy (p. 25); in Shouts & Murmurs, **Henry Alford** imagines a very suspicious police blotter from the bathrooms of North Carolina (p. 33); **Carrie Battan** listens to the singer-songwriter Mitski Miyawaki’s new album, “Puberty 2” (p. 70); **Louis Menand** considers the mysteries of taste in the Internet age (p. 73); **Dan Chiasson** reads a new collection of poetry by Adrienne Rich (p. 78); **Peter Schjeldahl** visits a Stuart Davis retrospective at the Whitney Museum (p. 82); **Emily Nussbaum** watches the PBS series “Call the Midwife” (p. 84); a Showcase features a photograph by **Lori Grinker** of Muhammad Ali at his 1980 fight against Larry Holmes, with accompanying text by **David Remnick** (p. 46); a Sketchbook by **Barry Blitt** depicts Bernie Sanders as Icarus (p. 67); and new fiction by **Karen Russell** (p. 60).

Podcasts: **Dorothy Wickenden** and **Benjamin Wallace-Wells** discuss the two leading Presidential candidates and their differing visions for the country; **Nicholas Thompson** speaks with **Baratunde Thurston** about his departure from “The Daily Show with Trevor Noah” and race in America; **Karen Russell** reads her short story, “The Bog Girl”; and **Jana Prikryl** reads **Anne Carson’s** poem “Stanzas, Sexes, Seductions” and her own poem “Thirty Thousand Islands,” and discusses them with **Paul Muldoon**.

Digital Extras: Images of paintings from the Stuart Davis retrospective at the Whitney Museum; and **Marie Howe** reads her poem “Fourteen.”

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