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IN YOUR WORDS

Pope's popularity bridges divides

For me, he is the exemplar of a moral leader who focuses on the commonality of the values and practical expressions of different religious traditions. Were he a more traditional pope, he'd be steeped in theology and likely less engaged with the yearnings of the common man. But this pope really seems to be in the right place at the right time to capture the anxieties of today's modern world — poverty, war, displacement, climate change.

CHRISTINE MCMORROW, WALTHAM, MASS.

For all the adulation heaped on Pope Francis, he has not yet made any significant changes in church doctrine. He has great crowd appeal, but he has not shown any sign of changing the church's doctrines on marriage, homosexuality, priestly celibacy, female clergy, contraception or divorce. For the moment, at least, it seems unlikely that he will have any lasting impact. The next pope will very likely be a staunch conservative who will erase even the modest gains made so far.

TAW, OREGON

E-books slip; print far from dead

I own treasured books given to me by long-deceased relatives, and I have inherited historically meaningful books over a century old. Once you buy a physical book, it is yours to keep or give away. When you "buy" (really rent) an e-book, you will have access only as long as the arrangement fits Amazon's business model.

JOHN, SALT LAKE CITY

I've started doing the reverse of looking at books in a store to decide which ones I want to buy online: I'll skim through Amazon's storefront, download some free samples to read, and if I like the book well enough, I'll go buy it or get it from the library. Reading doesn't have to be an either/or situation.

EAL, FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.

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IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1940 Sipping Aperitif From a Teacup

PARIS (VIA BERLIN) A bootleg and speakeasy industry that flourished in the United States during the dry era has made its appearance in France with the enforcement of partial prohibition. The new law throws a dry blanket on one of the gayest French customs — the aperitif hour. It fixes the alcoholic content of all drinks classed as aperitifs at not more than 16 per cent. The favorite dodge to get a drink of barred liquor is to enter a bar or cafe where you are known and order an "infusion," which is the French word for herb tea. The bootleg drink is then served in a teacup.

1965 Russia Proposes Treaty to U.N.

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko proposed to the UN General Assembly a draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. If accepted, the treaty would block plans for a NATO multilateral nuclear force. The Russians rejected a similar treaty put forward by the United States and its allies at the recent unsuccessful session of the 17-nation Geneva disarmament talks. The Western proposal allowed for the formation of an allied multinuclear force that would have included West Germany and other nations that do not have nuclear weapons.

Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 at iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com.

A less-traveled Ukraine



BEARING WITNESS Thomas de Wouters, a Belgian photographer, traveled through many checkpoints on damaged roads in eastern Ukraine in April to reach Luhansk, a city where many buildings were destroyed and which is less covered by photo-journalists. He has been shooting seriously for only two years, after working as an engineer and a financial counselor. lens.blogs.nytimes.com

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS DE WOUTERS



GETTING PERSONAL Clockwise from top, a woman waiting to get her food in a soup kitchen in a damaged building in Perevalsk,



Ukraine; a center for displaced people in Luhansk; and a damaged building in the city. "Luhansk is less than 3,000 kilome-

ters from where I live, yet those people are living like we did 70 years ago, after World War II," Mr. de Wouters said.

Phil Patton, writer and scrutinizer of the mundane, dies at 63

BY WILLIAM GRIMES

Phil Patton, a prolific writer on design and technology who saw the deeper cultural messages in subjects as varied as the interstate highway system, Air Jordan sneakers, tire treads and Mountain Dew's Mega Mouth Slam Can, died

OBITUARY

on Tuesday in Wayne, N.J. He was 63.

The cause was complications of emphysema, his wife, Kathleen Hamilton, said.

Mr. Patton's keen eye for objects and their hidden significance made him a highly sought-after contributor for a host of magazines, including *Art in America*, *Esquire*, *Smithsonian*, *Architectural Digest* and *Wired*.

For years he wrote on design for the Home section of *The New York Times*, where he originated the Public Eye column in the late 1990s, and *The New York Times Magazine*. In recent years he contributed to the paper's *Automobile* section and wrote for its *Wheels* blog.

Although best known for his writing on product design, especially the design of

cars, Mr. Patton could turn almost anything to account. His first book, "Razzle-Dazzle: The Curious Marriage of Television and Professional Football" (1984), described the way television affected the style of play and the business of the N.F.L. An abiding fascination with cars and highways led to "Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway" (1986). In "Made in U.S.A.: The Secret Histories of the Things That Made America" (1992), he examined common objects with the eye of a connoisseur and the mind of a cultural critic.

"He was an old-fashioned intellectual, curious about everything," the architecture and design historian Christopher W. Mount said in a telephone interview. "He wrote a famous article about the tops of takeout coffee cups, how the indentations work. It sounds small, but he would expand these things and make them pertinent to the wider world."

He did it with great flair. The *Oakley Time Bomb* watch, he wrote, "is a combination of Rube Goldberg and H.R. Giger, designer of sets for films like 'Alien,' with a dose of Groucho Marx's Professor Flywheel thrown in."

He made short work of a toothbrush

holder described by its makers as "pearlescent," which, he wrote, was "not to be confused with pearl or even mother-of-pearl; think of it, maybe, as mother-in-law of pearl."

Lewis Foster Patton was born on March 23, 1952, in Durham, N.C. His father, Lewis, was an Air Force gunner left blind and badly wounded in a bombing raid over Japan during World War II. A few months after Lewis Sr.'s son was born, the crew member who had saved the father's life died. In his honor, Lewis Sr. passed the man's name, Phil, on to his son.

Mr. Patton attended Harvard, where he was the arts editor of *The Crimson* and earned a bachelor's degree in English and history in 1974. He graduated from Columbia University in 1975 with a master's degree in comparative literature.

He worked briefly as a fact-checker for *Esquire* and as the editor of *Delta's* in-flight magazine. But he had already begun contributing articles on art and design to a variety of publications while still in college, and he soon gave up steady employment for freelance work.

In the mid-1980s, Mr. Patton underwent a kind of conversion, becoming



Mr. Patton was a sought-after magazine contributor who wrote about product design.

more skeptical about European design and more appreciative of homegrown products.

Mr. Patton, who taught in the design criticism program at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, helped develop many museum shows, as either a curator or a consultant, notably "Different Roads: Automobiles for the Next Century" at the Museum of Modern Art in 1999; "On the Job: Design and the American Office" at the National Building Museum

in Washington in 2001; and "Curves of Steel: Streamlined Automobile Design" at the Phoenix Art Museum in 2007. With Donald Albrecht, he was the curator of "Cars, Culture and the City" at the Museum of the City of New York in 2010.

His other books include "Dreamland: Travels Inside the Secret World of Roswell and Area 51" (1998), about the subculture of U.F.O. watchers; "Bug: The Strange Mutations of the World's Most Famous Automobile" (2002); and "Michael Graves Designs: The Art of the Everyday Object" (2004).

Serendipity often ruled Mr. Patton's choice of subjects. He became interested in coffee-cup lids, for example, because they piled up around him in his car.

"Gathering them up one day in an unaccustomed fit of neatness," he wrote in his design blog in 2011, "I noticed how many varieties there were, and how complex the combination of instructions and indications on them, how various and intricate the devices for opening and locking back flaps — in short, how intensely designed they were."

Trivial? Not at all. "Coffee lids," he continued, "show the whole vast machinery of modern culture."

Timing gives Sanders a lift in his quest



John Harwood

LETTER FROM AMERICA

Think of Bernie Sanders's rising primary challenge to Hillary Rodham Clinton as part ideology, part technology. But don't forget a shift in Democratic psychology, either.

The ideology part is his call for a "political revolution" that redistributes wealth from the "billionaire class" to average Americans, thrilling many Democrats in an era of widening income inequality. The technology part is the damage Mrs. Clinton has suffered from questions about her email, while Mr. Sanders's campaign excels in its use of social media.

With less notice, the competitive psychology of presidential elections has also changed in ways that make it easier for an aging, tousle-haired socialist to attract Democratic votes and donations. Once beset by anxiety over their electoral prospects, Democrats increasingly feel they have the upper hand in White House races.

"It's night and day," said Mr. Sanders's campaign strategist, Tad Devine, who began his career tracking delegates for President Jimmy Carter's doomed 1980 re-election bid. "The Democratic advantage is substantial."

"What's the best way to win? It's not to have a moderate as our nominee."

For a party more concerned with mobilizing existing supporters than courting new ones, he said: "What's the best way to win? It's not to have a moderate as our nominee."

For much of the past half-century, Republicans approached campaigns for the White House with confidence in their natural advantage. Five victories in six races from 1968 through 1988 spurred talk of a Republican presidential lock.

Now that Democrats have won the popular vote in five of six elections — with demographic projections auguring future gains — the roles have reversed. Republican strategists don't hide fears that Donald J. Trump's immigration rhetoric will further alienate the fast-growing Hispanic constituency.

At this early stage of the 2016 race, that frees Democratic primary voters to entertain supporting Mr. Sanders. "Right now, there's no cost to saying you like Bernie Sanders," said Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster. She warned that the sense of risk would rise — to Mrs. Clinton's benefit — this winter, when "having a Republican in the White House as a possibility will be very motivating."

Like Mr. Devine, Ms. Greenberg has seen the evolution in partisan fortunes up close. In 1985, amid Democratic despair over Walter Mondale's landslide loss to Ronald Reagan, her father, Stan Greenberg, studied "Reagan Democrats" for clues to regaining a national majority. That led an ambitious Arkansas governor named Bill Clinton to make Mr. Greenberg his pollster.

Mr. Clinton won the White House in 1992 by campaigning as "a different kind of Democrat." By supporting the death penalty and an overhaul of welfare, he showed an electorate then still 87 percent white his willingness to challenge liberal orthodoxy.

By 2012, when President Obama won re-election, white voters had shrunk to 72 percent. Democratic domination of the other 28 percent, a group that demographers project will keep growing, fuels the party's confidence.

"We have a bigger pool to draw from," Ms. Greenberg said. But she noted the threat from Latino Republican candidates such as Senator Marco Rubio. "It is not a fully realized majority. I don't think we can take Hispanic voters for granted."

Mr. Devine acknowledges that concerns over Mr. Sanders's electability are a barrier for the Vermont senator that may grow as the campaign wears on.

"For Bernie to succeed, there's going to have to be a huge amount of reassurance for the institutional Democratic Party," he said. Democratic officeholders, he explained, must be convinced Mr. Sanders can inspire turnout among Obama-friendly constituencies such as young people, single women and non-whites in ways that not only help him, but help them, too.

Surprisingly solid fund-raising makes that possible, Mr. Devine said. So do decades of frustration among middle-class and blue-collar families over the failure of conventional Democrats and Republicans alike to deliver income gains.

"They're just fed up with it, and they really want someone to do something about it," he said. "The pieces are there."