

Excellence in Reporting on Women's Issues
Didi Kirsten Tatlow
Dispatches from China
International New York Times

1. China Drafts Its First Domestic Violence Law, but Rights Advocates Say It Falls Short
<http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/11/28/china-drafts-its-first-domestic-violence-law-but-rights-advocates-say-it-falls-short/>

2. More Women on Company Boards Reduces Fraud, Study Finds
<http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/04/04/more-women-on-company-boards-reduces-fraud-study-finds/>

3. Adding Sex to China's Big Dream
(Please refer to the next page.)

4. Why Do Men Dominate Chinese Politics? Because They're 'Just Too Superb'
<http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/03/13/why-do-men-dominate-chinese-politics-because-theyre-just-too-superb/>

5. Pushing for a Law Against Domestic Violence in China
<http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/26/pushing-for-a-law-against-domestic-violence-in-china/>

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IN YOUR WORDS

U.S. and Iran on common ground

Note to president: the enemy of my enemy is NOT my friend. Whenever we jump on this ridiculous bandwagon, we usually end up bankrolling the very people we say are threats. Let the Saudis do their own dirty work in the Middle East. They have been bankrolling terrorists for years.

JUSTICE HOLMES, CHARLESTON, S.C.

Someone has to help the United States with the mess it has created in the Middle East. Why not Iran?

BB, ORLANDO, FLA.

While I'm not a fan of Saddam, he did keep the forces that are now trying to destabilize Iraq in check. With the recent bombings in Baghdad and the rise of Al Qaeda in Falluja, the U.S. should now know to adopt a more noninterventionist attitude in future conflict. . . . The only thing the Iraq war did was give Syria and Iran a new ally in the Shia government of Maliki in Iraq.

EMMANUEL, NEW YORK CITY

As we have seen from our policies toward North Korea and Cuba, economic sanctions lose their effect over time. We should continue economic sanctions against Iran, but look for every opportunity to build a constructive negotiating relationship. We should look for common interests and build from there.

RALPH, NORWICH, N.Y.

Quest for facts on modified crops

Yet again, the G.M.O. issue is mischaracterized as one of human health. As long as G.M.O. opponents focus on short-term human health, agribusiness can empirically rebut most of these claims. Once we reframe the issue into one of biodiversity loss that threatens not only the entire human race but the welfare of the planet as an ecosystem, we'll have taken a step in the right direction.

BRIAN S., ENCINITAS, CALIF.

See what readers are talking about and leave your own comments at inyt.com

IN OUR PAGES

1914 Haiti Revolt Threatens Coffee

Considerable emotion has been caused in business circles in Paris having relations with Haiti by the news that another revolution has broken out in the "Black Republic," particularly in view of the fact that the uprising has taken place when the coffee harvest is at its height, threatening the loss of a large part of the crop. At the present moment the towns of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien have not been affected by the revolution, but, on the other hand, Valières has risen and is in the hands of General Zamor, who possesses considerable local influence.

1964 Greek Cypriots' Barriers Down

NICOSIA Greek Cypriots removed most of their roadblocks in Nicosia's old walled city center and the adjoining districts today, but at midafternoon many barricades remained in the Turkish Cypriot areas. A British patrol reported seeing Greek and Turkish Cypriots shaking hands near the cease-fire line at a point where both sides had removed barricades, but the agreed dismantling of the blockades was not being accomplished without friction. Troops of Britain's Royal Air Force Regiment rushed out to thrust themselves between Greek police and a Turkish group in Trakhonas, a suburb just north of here.

Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 in *The International Herald Tribune* at iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com

Palestinian pleasures



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TANYA HABJOUQA



LIFE GOES ON Tanya Habjouqa, a Jordanian-born photographer, has searched for today's Palestinian experience beyond the violence and suffering. "I am in awe of the Palestinians for

not only surviving but actually enjoying their lives in the face of the difficulties of their daily life and their political situation," said Ms. Habjouqa, who was raised mostly in Texas.



FUN AMID DURESS The photographer found exuberant life in many settings. Clockwise from top: students on a yoga nature walk near Bethlehem; sportsmen practicing in Gaza; a Gaza

amusement park; a girl posing for a portrait at a fun fair in Jericho; a girl playing on the beach in a dress she wore the night before at a Gaza wedding. lens.blogs.nytimes.com

Elizabeth Jane Howard, 90; drew upon ardent life in novels

BY MARGALIT FOX

Elizabeth Jane Howard, a novelist known for her multivolume saga of an English family and her amorous entanglements with some of the 20th century's foremost literary men, died Jan. 2 at her home in Bungay, England. She was 90.

OBITUARY

Her publicist, Jacqui Graham, confirmed her death to The Associated Press.

The author of a dozen novels, Ms. Howard was best known for *The Cazalet Chronicles*, a five-part series that follows the fortunes of an upper-middle-class family before, during and after World War II.

The first book in the series, "The Light Years" (1990), opens in 1937; the narrative continues in "Marking Time" (1991), "Confusion" (1994) and "Casting Off" (1995). The concluding volume, "All Change," appeared last November.

Partly autobiographical, the novels depict a world of governesses and stately homes, but also a world of privation both material and emotional. The

books have sold more than a million copies collectively and were the basis of a BBC television series in 2001.

Though some critics damned the novels as "readable," others praised their mordant social observations and vivid depiction of the minutiae of daily lives — especially women's lives — likening Ms. Howard to Jane Austen and Nancy Mitford.

Ms. Howard also drew wide notice in 2002 with the publication of her memoir, "Slipstream." It told evocatively of her 18-year marriage to the novelist Kingsley Amis, in her account an angry middle-aged man.

Elizabeth Jane Howard was born in London on March 26, 1923. Her father was a prosperous merchant, and she was reared in what she later called "a bourgeois state of punctuality and hygiene."

Her mother, a former Ballets Russes dancer, was, in Ms. Howard's account, a cold, repressed woman. Jane received more attention from her father, but when she reached adolescence, she wrote, that attention turned to sexual molestation.

As a teenager Ms. Howard trained as a stage actress; at 19, to escape her parents, she married the naturalist Peter

Scott, a son of the famed Antarctic explorer Robert Falcon Scott.

Ms. Howard's youth — her husband was in his 30s — seemed to doom the marriage from the start. That she engaged in a series of affairs, one with her husband's half-brother, did not help.



ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1965

Elizabeth Jane Howard wrote *The Cazalet Chronicles*, a five-part English family saga.

She soon left her husband and their young daughter, obtained a divorce and began work on her first novel, "The Beautiful Visit." Published in 1950, it centered, like many of her later books, on a young woman's desire to be loved and understood.

Ms. Howard was a great beauty, with golden hair and chiseled features, and these years, her memoir recounts, were a dizzying amatory whirl — with the likes of the critics Cyril Connolly and Kenneth Tynan, the journalist Arthur Koestler and the poet Cecil Day-Lewis, father of the actor Daniel Day-Lewis.

Many lovers treated her badly. Among them, Ms. Howard wrote, were Koestler, who, after forcing himself on her and impregnating her, insisted she have an abortion, and Day-Lewis, who, she later said, wrote "a lot of rather bitter poems" in the wake of their affair.

Ms. Howard embarked on her short-lived second marriage, to the broadcaster James Douglas-Henry, she said, "because I became exhausted by people wanting to go to bed with me after half an hour."

Her affair with Amis began after she helped organize a symposium, fittingly titled "Sex in Literature," at which he spoke. He left his wife for Ms. Howard and married her in 1965.

Over time, Amis, who died in 1995, descended into alcoholism and unpleasantness.

"I don't think it's easy to live with

someone who drinks too much, but in the end I couldn't live with someone who disliked me so much as well," Ms. Howard told the British newspaper *The Independent* in 2002. "You can go on living with someone who doesn't love you, but what is really killing is someone who dislikes you."

Though Ms. Howard and Mr. Amis divorced in 1983, she had a lasting, salubrious effect on one member of the family: his son Martin, who has credited her with securing his own future as a novelist by replacing his comic books with "Pride and Prejudice" when he was a teenager.

In her 70s, Ms. Howard began a romance with a fan who had written to her after hearing her speak of loneliness on the radio. They were happy together, she wrote — happy enough for her to lend him money.

Then she discovered he was a confidence man. He decamped, but Ms. Howard got a novel out of the experience, "Falling," which appeared in 1999.

Her other novels include "The Long View" (1956), "After Julius" (1966) and "Odd Girl Out" (1972).

Adding sex to China's big dream



Didi Kirsten Tatlow

LETTER FROM CHINA

BEIJING "Experts interpret the Chinese Dream," ran a clinical-sounding headline in *China Daily* last month.

Virtually everyone in China knows about the Chinese Dream, presented by President Xi Jinping to the nation a year ago. Essentially, Mr. Xi said, it is about national rejuvenation and building a prosperous society.

But dreams are notoriously open to interpretation. On the creative fringes of society, where artists and innovators dwell and ideas grow that may one day move center-stage, unofficial interpretations of the Chinese Dream are rife. Some center on what Sigmund Freud,

who wrote "The Interpretation of Dreams" over a century ago, would have understood well: Sexuality.

He Chengyao is an artist whose work deals with the naked female body as sub-

ject, not object; with liberation from social and personal bonds; and with mental illness, all largely neglected topics in public discourse.

For Ms. He, who is participating in an exhibition at the Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum in Bremen, Germany, until Feb. 2 — "Sie. Selbst. Nackt." ("She. Herself. Naked."), the very idea of a dream in a one-party state is bizarre.

"A centralized state wants everyone to have the same dream. Don't you think it's absurd?" she asked, laughing.

"Buddhism teaches us we should wake up from illusory dreams," she said. Her dream, then, is not to dream. At least not like that.

Ma Jiajia's Chinese Dream is about people having better, more fun and safer sex.

For that to happen in a place where sex is still substantially mired in shame, a fundamental change has to occur in people's hearts, said Ms. Ma, 23, who wants to become a feminist leader of the "feminine" kind. (She thinks women should become "consumers" of sex and "enjoy" men.)

"My Chinese Dream is for everyone to have a normal heart," said Ms. Ma in an interview in *Powerful*, the new sex shop she runs in Beijing's Sanlitun district, her third.

There, multitudinous sex toys are on offer on pink or black tables and turquoise and green walls. A yellow banana-shaped chair and a giant pink pouf occupy the center. There is a small collection of books for browsing, including "Confucius: Sex Culture" by Liu Dalin. It all speaks to a certain image — both fun and serious, never furtive. The store logo is a stylized yellow sperm with a big head and little tail. She finds it "cute" and "Disney-like."

Ms. Ma has wide-spaced eyes and a soft manner. But she's sharp and admired by quite a few young people. She has 70,000 followers on Sina Weibo and has started speaking at public events about women and desire.

She says China is not in a normal or healthy place, sex-wise. Centuries of repression are now boomeranging, as the economy surges and attitudes shift, into a kind of sexual obsession that is exploitative and poses health problems, she said.

"Chinese people are pretty conservative; they don't talk about sex. The result is that the abortion rate among girls is very high," she said. Official figures put the number of abortions in China at 13 million a year, about double the estimated number in India with a comparable population.

She drew a diagram — a steeply rising line connecting two dots, one far below and one far above a median line.

"This one," pointing to the lower dot, "is where things were with the sexual repression that people have always experienced," she said. "And this one," pointing to the higher dot, "is where things are now. In every sphere today that's how things are, feelings, bodies," she said, meaning: Unhealthy.

A "normal heart," less extreme, based on honesty about desires, could replace it, she said. Women, especially, need to express their desires.

"For 5,000 years of Chinese history women have been the object of consumption, of commerce. Today, women should be the consumers," she said. "So we encourage women to enjoy the men they find attractive."

Is that Chinese Dream possible today? "Yes," she said. "It is!"

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