The Big Profile

QUVENZHANÉ WALLIS

By Dave Itzkoff

Quvenzhané Wallis isn't sure what she'll do when her hectic time as an Oscar nominee comes to an end. "What does 'hectic' mean?" the 9-year-old star of "Beasts of the Southern Wild" asks with a giggle. Wallis says she has schoolwork to make up ("long division and blah blah blah, stuff like that"), and she can't demand special treatment because she's a leading lady. "If I do," she says, "I'm going to get punished, and then I have to stay after school in detention."

Not Hot, Not Not, Just Meh

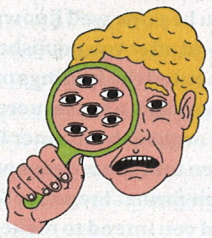
The Meh List

By Samantha Henig

1. Poplin shirts
2. The H.O.V. lane
3. "Teachable moments"
4. Black Forest ham
5. C.P.M.'s
6. Best original score
7. "Moby-Dick"*

Additional reporting by Libby Gery

Submitted by Brian Vachon via samantha.henig@nytimes.com



THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

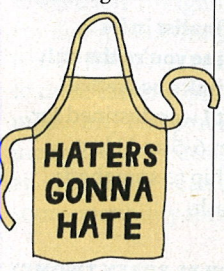
By Peter Andrey Smith

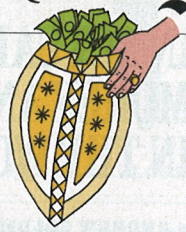
Just as towering ledges appear higher to people afraid of heights, spiders appear bigger to those in the throes of arachnophobia. Similarly, Gary Sherman, a postdoc at Harvard University, found that students who were repulsed by images of cockroaches were more visually attuned to differences among similar shapes. "Disgust," he says, "is actually changing your ability to see it." No word yet on whether this impacts viewers' ability to discern between "Jersey Shore" starlets.

VIRGINIA BREAD?

By Maud Newton

Baking bread, says the blog Paper and Salt, was a rest cure for Virginia Woolf. "It is better than writing these more than idiotic books," she said. The Guardian notes that the novelist Angela Carter scoffed at Woolf's pastime, calling it the sort of "frivolous and dilettantish thing a Bloomsbury would be good at."





Washington Monuments

THE GOD LOBBY?

By Mark Leibovich

News that Pope Benedict was quitting raised immediate questions in Washington. What lobbying firm would he be joining? Where would he be "monetizing" his spiritual service? If the former congressman Billy Tauzin could earn $11.6 million as a pharmaceuticals lobbyist, what could his holiness bring in? O.K., maybe not, but here's hoping Benedict will consider doing business in the capital.

This by That

Westminster Dog Show Best In Show Winners by Breed

By Marnie Hanel

- Fox Terrier
- Scottish Terrier
- English Springer Spaniel
- Pekingese
- German Shorthaired Pointer
- Bulldog
- Affenpinscher

What I'm Drinking Now

By Mario Batali

Gaglioppo is the grape most famous for producing red wines from the Ciró region of Calabria, Italy, the toe of the boot. The grapes are often harvested not fully mature in order to maintain bright acidity that protects the wine from cloying-jam and cooked-berry flavor components. The wines are sweet but tannic enough to stand up to the spicy vermicelli with anchovies, hot pepper and bread crumbs that I will make tonight.

Compare & Contrast

SETH MACFARLANE VS. BIBLICAL SETH

By Eric Spitznagel

THE "FAMILY GUY" CREATOR	CATEGORY	ADAM AND EVE'S SON
Hosting the Oscars	Unlikely accomplishment	Lived 912 years
Matt Groening	The poor man's ...	Cain and Abel
Spray-on tans	Passion	Astronomy
"Oprah ... Uma ..."	Words of warning	"The tree to be desired ..."
Protested by parents' watchdog group	Family values	Married sister

WINNER: Seth!

Winter Fiction Series

99%

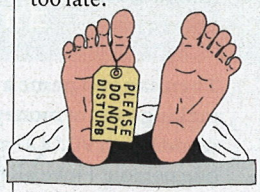
By Nell Freudenberger

Re: Kindergarten applications. I do think the whole separation thing could work in our favor. Because they seriously do not have enough marital diversity! Have you noticed how many parents of 4-year-olds are happily married in this neighborhood? Not that she needs us — she's brilliant — but I worry the examiner might not GET how brilliant she is. I know we're not doing test prep, but I asked her the sample question for verbal, "What is the moon?" and she was like, "It sometimes comes out in the day." Perfectly true. But I checked, and that answer gets you zero points.

CHECK YOURSELF IN!

By Hope Reeves

If you've been dying for a vacation, consider a trip to Southern Tasmania, Australia. There (pending county approval), you can check into a first-of-its-kind mental-hospital mortuary turned boutique hotel, featuring stone slabs, pullout freezer beds and 1950s surgical instruments scattered about. The Willow Court Motel's Autopsy Suite promises true luxury with a double-wide terrazzo dissection table and stainless-steel soaking tub. "The idea," the hotel's developer, Haydn Pearce, says, "is to give an experience in a morgue before it's too late."



A One-Sentence Book Review

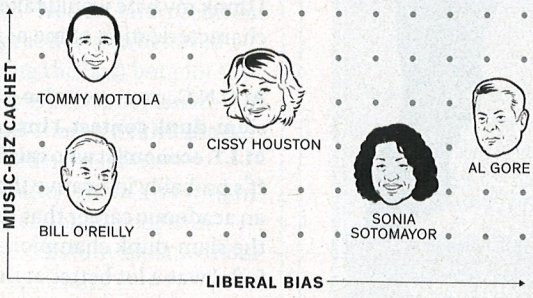
By Tyler Cowen

Depression: A Public Feeling, by Ann Cvetkovich: Aesthetics, anecdotes and evidence against the medical model.

Big, Important Chart

Nonfiction Authors of the Moment

By Eliot Glazer



That Should Be a Word

By Lizzie Skurnick

(SHOW-virr-DOSE), v.

1. To binge-watch a TV series. "A half-finished can of Pringles and an open 'Game of Thrones' Wikipedia page was all Milton needed to see that his wife had spent his business trip shoverdosing again." See also: *Nexcavate* (download a season that hasn't aired).

How to Move Past Your Childhood

By Sachi Parker

Honestly, having my own children is what helped me. Whenever they feel any kind of pain, what I yearned to hear as a kid, I say that very thing to them. It seems to help them, and it helps me at the same time.

As told to Spencer Bailey