

Peyk



Persian Cultural Center's Bilingual Magazine
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THE COMPLETE
PERSEPOLIS



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- The Quiet American



By: Shahri Estakhry



Who Benefits?

This editorial was published in Peyk issue #104, in 2006. I strongly believe in what I have written and am going to repeat it after 12 years again. Stop and review how very sadly we have stepped backwards in these past years. Hunger is the number one killer of children globally. Child trafficking is astonishing and millions and millions have become homeless or refugees in other lands.

If I had been a well-known celebrity with possibilities of press/radio or TV at my disposal perhaps by now this thought, which has occupied my mind for such a long time, would have been implemented into action.

As consumers we spend billions annually, without a second thought to who really benefits from our purchases. When gas prices go up, we become upset when we hear about the profit margins of oil companies and the retirement packages of their executives. When we read articles or see specials with celebrities reminding us of today's natural and human disasters, it is a momentary consciousness reminding us "how sad." We have to encounter so many ups and downs in our own lives, and the world tragedies are so many these days that to a certain extent we have become indifferent to humanitarian needs of millions, even those at our own doorsteps.

In reality poverty, hunger, violence, and illness are so widespread that they are the number one enemy of our world. No region is immune to this enemy. Millions sleep hungry even in the wealthiest nations on earth.

Let me say this again: *As consumers we spend billions annually, without a second thought to who really benefits from our purchases.* Shouldn't we at least be curious? What charitable and humanitarian causes are supported by the businesses profiting from our purchases?

What would happen...here comes that thought...if we, the consumers, with every purchase we make – no matter how big or small – begin to ask the cashier, *"Which charitable organization benefits from my purchase?"* Posing this question can lead to one of two scenarios – in the first, the cashier will know the answer right away – charitable giving is a part of what that business is "all about." In the second, you can be sure that you have stunned the cashier behind the machine! How would she/he know what on earth we are talking about!?!?! But the question is out there and if enough of us ask, the cashier will bring this question to the attention of the manager. The manager will begin to realize that consumers are sending a new message to the business (one that will be communicated by the manager to the decision makers of the business) – one that says, *I'm willing to buy from you and help you profit, but in return, I expect you to also do your share and partake in helping with the charitable and humanitarian needs of our world.*

We buy goods at several times the cost to make them. Shouldn't some of this profit help eradicate hunger and poverty and facilitate better education and health for those in need? Wouldn't you feel better knowing that a portion of your purchase made a difference; and it wasn't all for the benefit of a few?

Now, this is not to say that businesses don't already support humanitarian/charitable causes – many do. But, we should send a clear message that as consumers – as the bread and butter of the profit margin – we EXPECT all of them to be supporting humanitarian and charitable causes and that we want to know what they are doing to make this a better world.

If we ask and ask and ask *"Which charitable organization benefits from my purchase?"* you can be sure that eventually, the cashier in scenario number two will be able to tell you a list of organizations and causes the business is helping.

No one said it would be easy to ask this question time and again, but knowing that this simple question can mean a big movement to improve our world, it will be well worth the few seconds it'll take to ask it before paying for our goods and services.

Do you know who benefits from your purchases? You should!

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PCC (Persian Cultural Center):

PCC NEWS

Jong-e Farhangi

For nearly four years, on the second Friday of every month, a program called “Jong-e Farhangi” is held at the Iranian - American Center (IAC), a program that is well-placed in the minds of cultural program enthusiasts. The program’s overall theme hovers around various arts and cultural topics .The program is run by Ali Sadr or Reza Khabazian and consists of inviting experts on different fields of arts, literary and social fields.

San Diego Jong-e Farhangi, May 2018

Jong-e Farhangi for the month of May was cancelled due to the conflict with other events.

San Diego Jong-e Farhangi , June 8, 2018

This program was held at the Iranian-American Center (IAC) and hosted by Ali Sadr. The first guest was Ms. Bita Ashtari, the president of Iranian-American Bar Association (IABA), San Diego chapter who talked about IABA services to Iranian-American community, common issues dealt by this association and how people can contact IABA. The second part of this program was “*Shahnameh Khani*” (reciting Tale of Kings) which was lead by Mr. Mahmoud Behrouzian and performed by his team. This program was accompanied by Kourosh Taghavi playing Setar and Ali Sadr playing “*Zarb-e Zoorkaneh*” (a percussion instrument played in Iran’s traditional gyms). In the second part of the program, Ali Sadr interviewed Ms. Farideh Shanbanfar, an author and translator, about her activities and works. At the end Ms. Shanbanfar along with Nooshin Khorsandian and Saeid Nori Bushehri read one of her short stories.

Exhibition and parade of Linda Vista cultures April 28 2018

Persian Cultural Center booth welcomed visitors in this annual event.

Melodic Rhythms concert, May 5, 2018

A sold out concert by Kourosh Taghavi in setar and Miles Shrewsberi in Tabla. According to Kourosh Taghavi, this concert was a musical conversation between Persian and Hindi music. Both musicians presented audience with explanations about their music and the decision to make this joint performance. The program was warmly received by a packed house.



King Raam solo concert, May 25, 2018

With the invitation of Samuel Jordan Center of UCI and PCC, King Raam, a renowned Iranian pop artist, went on stage of Iranian-American Center and received a standing ovation by the audience.

Persian Culture Center, general assembly and annual election, May 20, 2018

The annual meeting and the election of the Persian Cultural Center with the presence of the Board of Directors, members of the Persian Cultural Center took place at Iranian School of San Diego (Mt. Carmel High School).

A complete report of this meeting is presented in Pages 6 and 7 of this issue.

If you would like to volunteer and work in PCC’s committees, please contact our office (858) 552-9355 or by email: pcc@pccsd.org.

Screening “Midnight Sun” at the presence of Shahab Hosseini, May 13, 2018

Midnight sun movie written and directed by Shobeir Shirazi and produced by the award winning actor, Shahab Hosseini, was shown at the Center. Shahab Hosseini who was present at the screening went on stage and interviewed by Mahmoud Reza Pirouzan of PCC. This event was warmly received by San Diego movie enthusiasts. This film is the product of a young independent Iranian filmmaker that Shahab Hosseini has supported. Midnight sun movie went on screen in cities in the US.



Movie and Discussion

The Movie and Discussion group of PCC aims to screen movies from Iran on the third Friday of each month. The group has started review of the well known movies of the last 40 years. After each movie, most audience stay for a lively discussion about the movie.

Queen “Malakeh” May 18, 2018

Queen “Malakeh” (2011) written and directed by Mohammad Ali Bashe Ahangar was screened in the May program. The Queen was nominated for 14 awards from the *Twenty Seventh Fajr Film Festival* and won three: Ostad Hossein Alizadeh received Simorgh-e Bolurin for best music, Abbas Balvandi for best costume design, and Hassan Izadi, best visual effects. The Queen also received eleven awards of the House of Cinema in 2014 (after three years of forced shut down of the House of Cinema), and won many awards at the 6th Iranian Cinema Contest and the 12th Kerman Resistance Festival, as well as the Religion Today International Film Festival award in Italy. After seeing the movie, the attendants had a discussion on different aspects of the film.

The Painting Pool “ Hoz e Naghashi”, June 11, 2018

In June, PCC Movie and Discussion group screened *The Painting Pool* (2013) directed by Maziar Miri, played by Shahab Hosseini and Negar Javaheri. The film received the best film award and best costume design nomination and several other awards at the Thirty First Fajr Film Festival. In 2013 and 2014, the film also received the best actor special award in Lisbon Film Festival, the International Children’s Film Festival in Sharjah and the UNESCO Award for Asia-Pacific. In the second part of the program, the participants discussed the film.



Docunight

Docunight is the title of a program, which simultaneously screens a film on the first Wednesday of each month in more than 20 cities in the United States and Canada. These documentary films are either made by Iranian filmmakers or are related to Iran and Iranians.

Docunight #45, May 9 2018,

Two documentaries “*A Waltz for Tehran*” (2016 - 53 minutes) directed by Zeinab Tabrizi and “*Night Shift*” (2015 - 43 minutes) directed by Amir Mohammad Kharazmi were shown. *A Waltz for Tehran* is about street musicians in Iran, and *Night Shift* portrays the life night shift workers in Tehran.

Docunight #46, June 6, 2018

Documentary film “*20th Circuit Suspects*” (2017 – 73 minutes) was screened at IAC San Diego. This documentary was about six years in the life of an adolescent crime gang in the streets of Tehran. This film awarded the Simorgh-e Bolurin at the Fajr Film Festival and the Golden Statue award from Roshd International Film Festival.

Football World Cup, June 2018

On June 15, June 20, and June 25, IAC was the host to show the World Cup matches between Iran – Morocco, Iran –Spain and Iran-Portugal. The IAC auditorium was packed with football lovers who came to cheer for “Team Melli”. There was no cover charge for these events and breakfast and lunch were available to purchase.





Report of Persian Cultural Center's 2018 Annual General Meeting and Election

PCC's annual meeting took place at 10 AM on Sunday, May 20, 2018, at Mt. Carmel High School in San Diego, California. The annual report was presented and was followed by the election process for new Board of Director members. The past year's activities were presented by Mrs. Fariba Babakhani-Ghazih, PCC's chair, the *Peyk* report by Mr. Ali Sadr, editor-in-chief of *Peyk*, report of Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD) by Mr. Ali Sadr - ISSD Principal, and the Financial Report by Mr. Hamid Rafizadeh - PCC's Treasurer. A summary of PCC's annual report is presented hereinafter.

Board of Directors and Committee Members for the past year was as follows:

Sara Alagheband, Nikoo Atefi, Fariba Babakhani- Ghazi, Amir Farshad Babakhani, Farideh Fazel, Gity Nematollahi, Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian, Hamid Rafizadeh and Golsa Soraya and the alternate member: Venus Safaei.

Executive Board:

Fariba Babakhani-Ghazi - President
Anahita Babaei - Vice President
Hamid Rafizadeh - Treasurer
Farideh Fazel- Secretary
Ali Sadr- ISSD Principal

Advisory Board:

Shahri Estakhry
Saeed Jalali
Rosita Bagheri
Shahla Salah
Shaghayegh Hanson
Abdy Salimi

The Board had twelve meetings in the past year. Committees held meetings as needed. At its first meeting, the Board elected its Executive Committee and established the following committees:

Arts and Culture: Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian (head), Ali Sadr, Golsa Soraya, Anahita Babaei, Abdy Salimi, Sara Alagheband, Nikoo Atefi, Farshad Babakhani, Fariba BabaKhani, Giti Nematollahi, Venus Safaei

Membership: Farideh Fazel (head), Farshad Babakhani, Fariba Babakhani, Venus Safaei, Sara Alagheband, Shahrzad Julazadeh.

Public Relation: Sara Alagheband (head), Ali Sadr, Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian, Golsa Soraya, Nikoo Atefi, Farshad Babakhani, Fariba Babakhani, Shahrzad Julazadeh

Peyk: Ali Sadr (head), Saeed Jalali, Shahri Estakhry, Shaghayegh Hansen, Anahita Babaei, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Reza Khabazian, Saeid Noori Boshehri, Aria Fani, Rachel Tait

Grant: Fariba Babakhani (head), Rosita Bagheri, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Hamid Rafizadeh, Cheryl Einsele (Grant writer)

Finance: Hamid RafiZadeh (head), Fariba Babakhani, Farideh Fazel, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian

Education: Ali Sadr (head), Fariba Babakhani, Rosita Bagheri, Shahnaz Ahmadian

Fundraising: Farideh Fazel (head), Nikoo Atefi, Farshad BabaKhani, Fariba Babakhani, Shahrzad Julazadeh

PCC Charity: Giti Nematollahi (head), Abdy Salimi, Nikoo Atefi, Farshad Babakhani, Fariba Babakhani, Farideh Fazel, Shari Estakhry, Shahla Salah

Building: Hamid RafiZadeh (head), Ali Sadr, Fariba Babakhani, Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Abdy Salimi

Nowruz: Nikoo Atefi (head), Bahar Bagherpour, Fariba Babakhani, Shahla Salah, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Farideh Fazel, Hamid Rafizadeh, Venous Safaei

Summary of Cultural Activities

PCC sponsored and co-sponsored the following programs:

A-PCC and ISSD Events:

During 2017-2018, PCC was not only active in organizing traditional celebrations and programs for the Iranian-American community, but also collaborated with other organizations to reach out to the community at large. PCC also continued, cross cultural activities.

A-PCC and ISSD Events:

- 1- Screening "Radio Dreams" in collaboration with Digital Gem Cinema and Angelica Movie Theater
- 2- Tasniefkhani with Kourosh Taghavi
- 3- Second Story Writing Workshop with Hossein Mortezaian Abkenar
- 4- Mohsen Namjoo Concert
- 5- Death Enters: A Play by Mansour Taeid with Mohammad Eskandari
- 6- Tritone Ensemble Concert
- 7- Talk and Information about OFAC by Zaher Fallahi Attorney at Law, CPA in collaboration with IABA
- 8- Hafez Day in collaboration with San Diego Central Library
- 9- Screening "Sara and Ida" and "Aba Jan" in collaboration with Sheed Film
- 10- Collaboration with Asian Winter Film Festival- PAC Art
- 11- Comedy Night with K-Von
- 12- Yalda Celebration at Sufi Restaurant with Armin Vigen
- 13- Universal Children's Day Celebration in collaboration with Child Foundation and Dollar a Month at ISSD
- 14- Acting Workshop with Mahmoud Behroozian
- 15- Lily Afshar Concert in collaboration with SDSU School of Music and SDSU Persian Club
- 16- PCC Annual Charity Bazaar
- 17- Play reading "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream" of William Shakespeare, directed by Mahmoud Karimi Hakak
- 18- Sibarg Ensemble Concert
- 19- Book Signing by Professor Abbas Amanat in Collaboration with USD, SDSU, UCSD, IASF and AIAP
- 20- Play Reading (Mina's Revolution) by Mehrnoosh Mazareei
- 21- Nowruz Preparation at the Iranian School of San Diego
- 22- Nowruz Celebration at the Iranian School of San Diego
- 23- Chahârshanbeh Soori with AIAP and HOI at NTC Park
- 24- Nowruz Celebration at Marriott Hotel with Camron and Hooman
- 25- Nowruz Celebration at 4S Ranch Library
- 26- SizdehBedar with AIAP and HOI at NTC Park
- 27- Presentation of Haft-Seen along with literary, cultural, and historical exhibits in seven public libraries throughout San Diego.
- 28- Harmony Festival at Balboa Park
- 29- Multi Cultural Festival in Mira Costa Collage
- 30- Dornab Concert
- 31- Eid Didani at the Iranian American Center
- 32- Arefnameh a play by Shahrokh Moshkinglam in collaboration with UCSD
- 33- Karestan Documentary Film Festival
- 34- Family Game Night at IAC 4 times a year
- 35- Film and Discussion Series on every third Friday of the month at IAC (12 Events)
- 36- Jonge Farhanghi on every second Friday of the month at IAC (10 Events)
- 37- Art Exhibition at the Center
- 38- Collaboration with Docunight to show a documentary movie first Wed. of the Month
- 39- Multi Cultural Festival in Linda Vista
- 40- Multi Cultural Festival in Del Sur
- 41- Melodic Rhythms concert with Kourosh Taghavi
- 42- Presenting the movie "The Midnight Sun" and hosting Shahab Hosseini

B-ISSD:

This year both branches of ISSD were held at Mt. Carmel High School. The academic year 2017-18 was ISSD's 30th year of operation. In the past year 245 students attended both branches of ISSD. The school's Nowruz program was held on March 11, 2018, and was attended by 500 parents, students and family members. A variety of dance presentations, plays, music recitals, and folk songs were presented. Students received awards for their academic achievements. ISSD's end of year event will be held on June 10, 2018.

ISSD's first branch offers 17 classes on Sunday mornings, which are separated into six levels. ISSD also offers two Persian classes for adults and two classes for Kindergarten and Pre School. Extracurricular classes such as Dance, Theatre, Setar have been offered as well. The second branch is held on Thursday evenings and has 6 classes.

ISSD's Persian language program is **accredited by all local School Districts as well as WASC**. This means that high school students can fulfill their second language requirements by taking Persian language courses at ISSD. ISSD also provides Dance classes for adults. PTA of both branches worked very hard and cooperated successfully with the teachers and administrators on issues such as curriculum and extracurricular activities. The PTA was also instrumental in helping to raise funds for the school. Students at ISSD raised approximately 4200 for Dollar a Month Organization "Project 200" allocated to street children of Iran.

In Addition, ISSD is working with a network of Persian Schools in the U.S. and other countries to exchange experiences and education materials. ISSD has a new website issd.pccsd.org and also is present on Facebook.

C- Persian Dance Academy:

More than 65 of the Persian Cultural Dance Academy attended ISSD Branch I on Sundays. The dance students performed in the following programs:

- 1- PCC Nowruz Event
- 2- ISSD's Nowruz Event
- 3- 4S Ranch Library Nowruz Event
- 4- House of Iran Nowruz Event

D- Building: The Iranian American Center (IAC) has been hosting a variety of cultural activities for the Iranian community (such as IASF and DMF, SDSU, UCSD). Center has a library with more than four thousand books. MARKAZ is publicly available for Cultural activities.

E- Public Relations and Community Outreach:

During the 2017-2018 PCC used its bi-monthly publication, *Peyk*, to reach thousands of readers. *Peyk* is a bilingual publication published in Persian and English. Its circulation includes San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles Counties, the Bay area, Chicago, Washington DC, Maryland, Dallas, and many other cities. *Peyk* is also available and read via the Internet on PCC's website (www.pccsd.org/peyk).

Last year PCC has worked with SDG&E's "Energy Solutions Partners" campaign. As a "Energy Solutions Partner" PCC has joined other nonprofits and environmental groups in a collaborative effort to make all of California's consumers aware of how they can save energy and money through energy efficiency. PCC was chosen as a partner because of our ability to target a specific demographic and translate important emergency news alerts into Persian as necessary.

Membership: During 2017-2018, Persian Cultural Center continued placing advertisements our website; the goal was to increase our membership and last year we had an increase of membership. PCC issued membership cards to its members. PCC members continue getting discounts from various Iranian businesses.

Public Outreach: PCC has a new website (pccsd.org) thousands of people throughout the world visit our website. PCC issues a weekly electronic newsletter that is sent to thousands of people. In the past year, a number of PCC events were featured on KPBS radio in San Diego, KIRN Radio Iran in Los Angeles, Chekhabar.com, Kodoom.com and on San Diego Arts and Sol website. These programs not only reached the Iranian-American community, but other communities who attended our featured programs. PCC also used various social media outlets to make sure that our events were well publicized to a larger audience.

Website: Thousands of people all over the world view the Persian Cultural Center's Website, www.pccsd.org, Facebook, twitter, Telegram and mass emails. Our website has been upgraded and as a result our reach and exposure have increased significantly in the last year. The PCC website provides quick access to our bi-monthly, bi-lingual magazine, our ongoing programs, and activities, as well as other cultural information and events. People can refer to our website to read about PCC's many activities and to renew their membership and make tax deductible contributions online.

F-The PCC Foundation-a charitable organization:

The foundation continues to raise funds for two young students who lost their parents and needed help which is a long term project.

Special Thanks: In closing, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the following board members who have served their terms. We are grateful for the time, energy, and talents they generously gave to PCC and our community. We look forward to having them back on the PCC Board again.

The members who are leaving due to term limit are: Sara Alagheband, Farideh Rassoli Fazel, Mahmoud Reza Pirouzian and Venous Safaei. **Board members Farideh Rassoli Fazel and Venous Safaei are up for re-election.**

We are continually looking for Volunteers and Committee members- Please step forward and GET INVOLVED with various groups to HELP OUT.

Election

After the board of director's report, candidates to fill the vacancies in the Board introduced themselves and presented their plans for joining the BOD. The ballot was secret. Mr. Mahmoud Maheronaghsh and Mr. Saeid Noori Boushehri, Ms. Noushin Khorsandian, Mr. Shahriar Dadkhah and Dr. Mohammad Ahrar observed the election. After counting the ballots, including the absentees and electronic votes, the results was announced.

Election Results:

The following were elected as voting members of the board of directors: Ida Khodami, Hossein Hajimolana, Venuse Safaei.

The following members were announced as alternate members of the board of directors:

Farideh Rasouli-Fazel, Shahla Salah, Hamid Beikzadeh, Parnian Badii

These new members will serve along with the current board members : Nikoo Atefi, Fariba Babakhani- Ghazi, Amir Farshad Babakhani, Gity Nematollahi, Hamid Rafizadeh and Golsa Soraya. The general assembly was adjourned at 12 PM.

The first meeting of the board of directors was held on June 13, 2018. At that meeting, a proposal to increase the number of board of directors from nine to eleven was put to vote and was passed. Therefore, two runners up from alternate members were moved to full membership. Subsequently, the Board elected the Executive Board. The Executive Committee of PCC serves for one year:

President: Fariba Babakhani – Ghazi

Vice president: Nikoo Atefi

Treasurer: Hamid Rafizadeh

Secretary: Farideh Rasouli – Fazel

Other members of the BOD will be leading various committees such as Art and Cultures, Educations, Charity, Building, Nowruz, Grant, PR, and Membership. Two new committees, I-Ted and I-Power Group were also were added to the list.

Committees and assigned Committee Heads

Education Committee, ISSD: Ali Sadr

Art & Culture Committee: Farshad Babkhani

Peyk Committee: Ali Sadr

Membership Committee: Farideh Fazel

Grant Committee: Fariba Babkhani-Ghazi

PR Committee: Shahla Salah

Fundraising Committee: Parnian Badii and Hossein Hajimolana

Charity Committee: Gity Nematollahi

IAC/ Building Committee: Hamid Rafizadeh

Nowruz Committee: Nikoo Atefi

Finance Committee: Hamid Rafizadeh

I-Ted: Ida Khodami

I-Power Group: Venuse Safaei

PCC Youth: Fariba Babakhani- Ghazi

Chahrshanbeh Soori: Hamid Rafizadeh

If you wish to participate in any of the Committees, please contact PCC and ask for the head of the Committee.



Launching Into Iranian-Female Space Exploration

By Leily Rezvani

1961 marked the first year of space exploration in human history. That year, Soviet astronaut Yuri Gagarin paved the path for other astronauts, including his female counterpart, Valentina Tereshkova. Two years after Gagarin's historic flight, Tereshkova became the first female in space, signifying that space belongs to everyone. Regardless, STEM fields (those comprised of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) continue to be dominated by males, with only eleven percent of the world's astronauts being female. Even wealthier countries are underrepresented, with Russia having only ever sent four female astronauts into space and Germany never having sent a single one. The United States has sent the most female astronauts into space—45 of the total 60 worldwide—but only fourteen percent of NASA astronauts in history have been women. When NASA began preparing to launch its first astronauts in the late 1950s—a crew comprised solely of men—it conducted detailed medical and physiological examinations to ensure the explorers could sustain themselves, physically and emotionally. The doctor who oversaw and conducted the examinations, Randolph Lovelace, believed that—due to their smaller frames requiring less oxygen—women would perform as well, if not, better, than their male counterparts. Therefore, Lovelace began examining female prospects at his clinic with the same tests and criteria as the male prospects. While only eighteen of thirty-two men passed the examinations, thirteen of nineteen women passed. On the surface, Lovelace's reasoning could be considered progressive; however, Margaret Weitekamp, a curator at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum and author of *Right Stuff, Wrong Sex: America's First Women in Space Program*, said in an interview with *The Atlantic*, “[Lovelace] was thinking that if you're going to have dozens of people on space stations, then you're going to need secretaries, you're going to need telephone operators, you're going to need lab assistants—and that means you need women. So he's thinking about the women for very much traditional, pink-collared, gendered jobs.” Similar to many others of his generation, Lovelace was not able to imagine women in male-dominated positions. Despite that, his discoveries charted the path for women in space.

In January 2016, NASA announced that half of its astronauts were female. One year later, Jasmin Moghbeli, 34, launched her astronautic career by becoming the first Middle Easterner on NASA's flight crew. From an early age, it was apparent that Moghbeli wanted to be an astronaut. She was born in Germany, but raised in the suburbs of New York where her Iranian-born parents helped cultivate her passion. After returning from a space camp in Alabama in elementary school, Moghbeli created a replica astronaut suit with her mother, made from windbreakers and a plastic container. “That's when I decided I wanted to be an astronaut,” Moghbeli said in an interview with *Newsday*. “And



everything I've learned since has solidified that for me.” She developed her curiosity into something greater by receiving her bachelor's degree in Aerospace Engineering with Information Technology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and a master's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School. Before flying into space, Moghbeli completed more than 1,600 hours of flight time and has served three military tours in Asia and the Middle East.

Additionally, Moghbeli uses her position to advocate for immigrant rights and dissolve stigmas around the Iranian community. Last July, she told *The New Yorker*, “[Heritage is] part of what's so great about America, right? You have all these people, from different backgrounds, and we share some of the same values as Americans generally, but then there is so much tradition

and culture behind each one of our different backgrounds.” Moghbeli finds comfort in space since Earth's borders are invisible from a spacecraft. In the same interview, she addressed those from a diverse array of backgrounds: “When you are in the States, and you maybe didn't grow up with that perspective, and maybe your family has gone back several generations here, you maybe lost sight of what it was that made America *America* in the first place. Maybe I have a fresher perspective on it because my family did come over here.” She is very grateful for her cultural background and upbringing, and the positive roles they have played in her career.

Moghbeli has not only paved the path for Iranian women in STEM, but also for women worldwide. She said: “The adventurous side of me thinks it is certainly cool to go farther into the solar system than we've ever been before.” In some ways, she was not only speaking of physical boundaries. Through her enthusiasm and passion, Moghbeli has served as an inspiration to so many young girls around the world and has helped them break their own glass ceilings. As space continues to expand, women like Moghbeli continue to close the gender gap.

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Leily Rezvani is a rising freshman at Stanford University where she hopes to pursue a career in journalism and public radio. She is also very passionate about helping refugees and the disabled community through journalism and advocacy.

Events in San Diego

Persian Cultural Center

Tel: (858) 552-9355 Fax & Voice: (619) 374-7335
www.pccsd.org



Family Game Night, Friday, July 27

at July 27, 2018 at the Iranian-American Center (IAC) 7:00- 10:00pm

Art Exhibition Open to Public

From 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (Monday to Friday)
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355



Movie and Discussion

Third Friday of the month at the Center at 7:30 pm
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

DOCUNIGHT

Wednesday July 11th, 2018 at 7:00 PM
at the Iranian-American Center (IAC) at 7 pm
Documentary films about Iran or by Iranians

Jong e Farhangi (Cultural Variety Show)

Every second Friday of the month 7:30 to 10:00 PM at the Center
July 13, 2018 and August 10, 2018

Setar Class by Kourosh Taghavi

Registration and info: (858) 717-6389

Tar & Guitar Class by Farhad Bahrami

Registration and info: (619) 318 1286

Tombak Class by Milad Jahadi

Registration and Info: (858) 735-9634

Iranian School of San Diego

858-552-9355

ISSD Registration 2018-2019

Branch I Sunday August 26, 2018 at 9:30am-12pm

Branch II Thursday, August 30, 2018 at 6 -8pm

Mt. Carmel High School
Mount Carmel High School
9550 Carmel Mountain Road • San Diego, CA 92129



Persian Dance Academy of San Diego

Dance classes for all ages at the location of Iranian School
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
(858) 552-9355 www.pccsd.org

Dollar a Month Fund

Tel: 858-552-9355 • www.dmfund.org
www.facebook.com/DollaraMonthFund



Association of Iranian-American Professionals (AIAP)

Tel: (858) 207 6232 • www.aiap.org

Last Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM
at Sufi Mediterranean Cuisine
5915 Balboa Ave, San Diego, CA 92111



ISTA (Iranian Student Association at UC San Diego)

www.istaucsd.org



House of Iran

House of Iran Balboa Park
www.thehouseofiran.com



Iranian-American Scholarship Fund

Tel: (858) 552-9355 • www.iasfund.org
www.facebook.com/Iranian-AmericanScholarshipFund



Mehrgan Foundation

www.Mehrganfoundation.org Tel (858) 673-7000

PAAIA

Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian-Americans
www.paaia.org



NIAC

National Iranian-American Council
www.niac.org



IABA

Iranian-American Bar Association
www.iaba.us/chapters/san-diego

Book Club Meeting

Last Saturday of each month

Iranian-American Center (IAC)
6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Tel (858) 552-9355

Iranian-American Life Science Network (IALSN)

www.ialsn.org

For latest events in San Diego visit:

www.chekhabar.com

SAN DIEGO BAY WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL 15TH ANNUAL CLASSIC

VARIABLES BY EVENT, Nov 12 - Nov 18, 2018

TIMKEN SPOTLIGHT TALK

"MRS. THOMAS GAGE" BY JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY

Timken Museum of Art Jul 3, 2018
619.239.5548 x105

TASTE OF SAN DIEGO ART + CULINARY FESTIVAL Cali Life Productions

THIS EVENT IS FREE ENTRY WITH FOOD FOR PURCHASE
Jul 7, 2018 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

NAT TALK: THE NEW NATURE MOVEMENT W/ RICHARD LOUV

San Diego Natural History Museum Jul 10, 2018
619.232.3821

2ND SATURDAY SERIES: SAN DIEGO TROLLEYS

San Diego Archaeological Center Jul 14, 2018
760-291-0370

TIMKEN SPOTLIGHT TALK

"RELIGIOUS IMAGERY AND ICONOGRAPHY"

Timken Museum of Art Jul 27, 2018

PILOT TALK: FLYING THE AH-1 "COBRA"

BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL AGUILAR
Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum Jul 14, 2018
858-693-1723

ARTWALK @ LIBERTY STATION

ArtWalk San Diego Aug 11 - Aug 12, 2018
FREE

CHULA VISTA LEMON FESTIVAL

Chula Vista Convention & Visitors Bureau
FREE Aug 5, 2018 619-422-1982

Visit Our web site at www.pccsd.org

The Middle East through Graphic Novels

In planning a course on the Middle East Through Graphic Novels for the fall semester, I was surprised by the number and quality of the different works, as well as how often these books could be used as teaching tools. The Middle East, with its mythic and socio-political significance, has become a great source of inspiration for many important graphic novelists.

A quick thematic survey follows. Naturally many other important features in these works are worthy of consideration, such as stylistic and formal elements. Maybe in a future post I will look more closely at one of the books or discuss the different aspects of the graphic novel.

In 1993, two important but very different comics dealing with the Middle East were published. One was by the revered Neil Gaiman. *The Sandman #50: Ramadan* is a beautifully rendered Orientalist tale set in Baghdad with Caliph Haroun Al Rashid, his carnal harem, Lord of Sleep, and a magic carpet. It remembers the majestic past of the city against the devastation after the Gulf War bombing. The other is by Joe Sacco, a comics journalist who spent two months during 1991-92 in the Occupied Territories. Sacco wrote a series of nine pieces reflecting on the first intifada that were collected into the graphic novel *Palestine* in 1996 and won the American Book Award.

The extremely influential graphic novel by Satrapi followed the success of Sacco's work. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, first published in France in 2000 and then subsequently in United States in 2003, focuses on the Iranian revolution. Next came *The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*, the story of the photojournalist Didier Lefèvre's 1986 trip to Afghanistan during the Soviet war. It first appeared in three volumes, also in French, between 2003 and 2006.

The books started a trend in which major social-historical issues are discussed through the author's personal experience. Travelogue, memoir, and journalism are combined in something akin to a For Beginners graphic non-fiction, allowing personal narratives and character interactions to make sense of social events and conditions. The works are neither essays nor fiction.

These graphic novels appeal to the exotic and tackle difficult subjects, entertaining as they teach. They confer on the consumer what Gillian Whitlock in *Soft Weapon: Autobiography in Transit* calls the status of "an enlightened, sympathetic, and politically correct individual" (15). Through subjective truths, the authors "personalize history and historicize the personal" (20). The works also reinforce the role of the individual as representative, which reinforces the role of democracy and the bourgeoisie that stands for the greater society and the dominant American ideologies.

The narrator frees the story from needing to be purely objective and factual, not that anything can be purely objective. Yet the narrator's experience as evidence also makes the reader feel like they are getting closer to the truth. The autobiographical characteristic increases the empathic identification in the reader.

Examples of the popularity of this type of graphic novel can be found in a number of recent books on Palestine and Israel. In the past six years, at least seven books have tackled this troubling area from different perspectives.

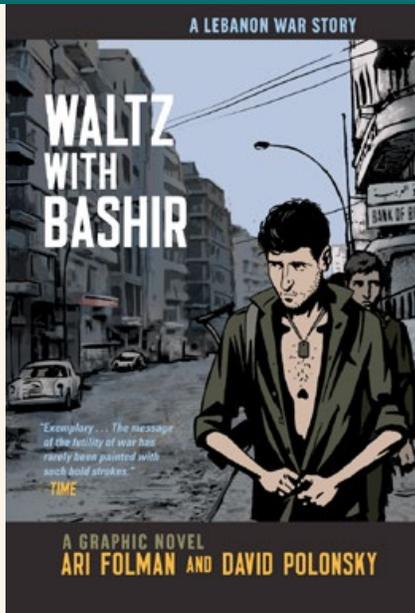


Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009) continues his journalistic reporting on the Palestinian experience. This time his character is less prominent and the graphics more straightforward. He aims to bring to light two historical footnotes, the massacres of 1956 in Khan Younis and Rafah. Yet he is also aware of the challenges of his undertaking. His interviewees and friends

question the purpose of writing about something that happened so long ago. They want him to report on current events—the bulldozing of homes and the expansion of settlement. Sacco also questions the limitations of his finding, wondering how one can determine what happened when all you have are the fallible memories of survivors.

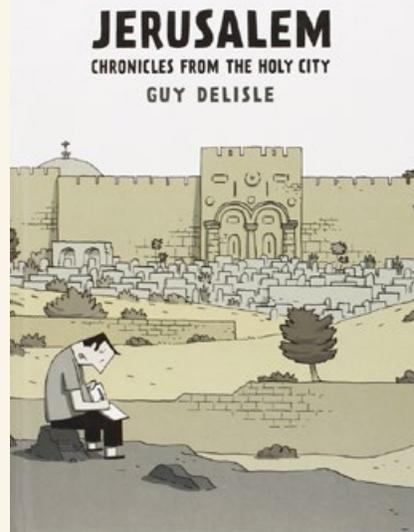
Memory and remembrance are the topics of *Waltz with Bashir* as well. The narrator and Israeli author Ari Folman is trying to recall what happened during the war in Lebanon. The shadow of the 1982 massacre at Sabra and Shatila looms in his psyche. As an Israeli soldier who was in Lebanon, he wonders why he can't remember. While the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) was not directly responsible for the massacre, they aided the Phalangists and were aware of what was going on but didn't do anything to stop it. Can we blame *Waltz with Bashir* for not providing enough historical explanation of the Lebanese civil war as others have done? Was it the indirect culpability that enabled the Israeli government to admit to wrongdoing? Or does this indirect involvement only raise the bar of guilt and responsibility for all of us who find ourselves on the sidelines watching the tragic conditions of the Middle East continue? The strain of needing to remember and the instinct to repress horrific incidents, something with which the Jewish history is burdened, haunts this frightening and powerful film (2008), which was later made into a less effective graphic novel (2009).

Jerusalem is the title of two very different graphic novels. *Jerusalem: A Family Portrait* (2013) by Boaz Yakin & Nick Bertozzi is based loosely on Yakin's family. In a sweeping cinemascopic and with a large family cast, the novel presents different Jewish perspectives during WWII and the formation of the Israeli state. Yakov is not afraid of showing the dark side of the society. One can get a sense of how the social conditions and the vociferous extremes took hold; how the fervor of youth, desperation under oppression, and zealousness became the transformative forces of community. We watch/read how Avraham, a war hero who has become a communist fighting alongside Arab brothers in solidarity with workers and the oppressed and for independence, joins the Jewish army. The argument goes like this: stand with your family and community, for if Jews win,



then you won't be able to look the community in the eyes, and if the Arabs win, then you will be killed (214).

Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City (2012) is another travelogue by Guy Delisle who writes on distant and foreign places. Delisle's aloof, outsider perspective allows other western readers to identify with him. He confronts the situations as a non-



religious visitor having to deal with the stereotypical religious customs. He explores Jerusalem, loosely commenting on the political situation without trying much to empathize or explain the roots and purposes of the customs. So it is not surprising that many critical reviewers on Amazon see his reaction to Sabbath, Passover, and Purim as offensive. They even go so far as to call him an anti-Semite. What these reviewers miss is that he does the same thing to Islam, whether it is his frustrated reaction to the early morning call for prayer or his tactless and provocative presentation of nude drawings of women for his traditionally veiled students. He also complains of the Palestinian neighborhood where he lives without a park, playground, and outdoor café and finds all his desired western amenities in the Jewish quarter. I could easily list a dozen similar examples. The biased readers, Jew or Muslim, may see these perspectives as natural when it comes to cultures to which they have no attachment, but offensive to their own faith.

Not the Israel My Parents Promised Me (2012) is primarily a candid monologue by the influential underground comic writer Harvey Pekar, who was raised by Zionist parents. He questions the actions of the Israeli government and is censured as a self-hating Jew. To make his point, Pekar quickly goes through a great deal of Jewish history from Abraham to the present day. An interesting contrast can also be made with Glidden's birthright experience here. When trying to immigrate to Israel, Pekar was refused because of his lack of prospects. He never visited Israel. The book was finished posthumously. I wonder if it would have been different if Pekar had more time to work on it. As it is, the book is neither a very successful graphic essay nor a moving autobiography.

The next three books are written by Jewish Americans about their relationships with Israel. As a response to Sacco's *Palestine*, Miriam Libicki has been writing *Jobnik!*, a series of autobiographical comics about her experience of enlisting in the Israeli military. Her work is more a coming-of-age story with the fear and danger of terrorism in the background than a study of the political issues. It is meant to humanize the Israeli military by telling the stories of the soldiers.

Of course, not all of the books about the Middle East follow this autobiographical, socio-historical trend. For example, there are two fictional tales of the metropolitan city of Cairo, which became a focus of political interest again after the 2011 Egyptian protests: the not so successful *Cairo* (2007) by G. Willow Wilson and M.K. Perker and *Metro: A Story of Cairo* by Magdy El Shafee. Published in 2008, *Metro*, deemed "the first adult Arabic graphic novel," reflects the corruption and disintegration of the social system under the Mubarak's regime. Reading it gives us an uncanny sense of the coming Arab Spring. Not surprising, the English translation came out in 2012, which may have more to do with interest in the Arab Spring than the quality of the book.

Sarah Glidden's *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (2012) details her experience as a birthright tourist visiting Israel for the first time. Birthright tours are funded by Jewish organizations in partnership with the Israeli government for North American Jews age 18 to 26. From the start, Glidden is very honest and critical of the Israeli government and continues to question various narratives she is told throughout the book. But she is also surprised that the Israelis she meets and the tour guides are more honest and critical. They are not espousing propaganda as she expected. She is repeatedly told that the situation is more complicated than she thinks (76, 118). Slowly, she begins to come around to empathize with Israelis and their concerns. One can say that the birthright tour was a success in its mission to strengthen the connections

Habibi (2011), similar to *The Sandman #50*, is a beautifully rendered work by one of the most important graphic novelists, Craig Thompson. While the works on Israel and Palestine are often criticized for being politically biased, Thompson's graphic novel is controversial because of its Orientalist approach. There is even an online roundtable. Both Gaiman and Thompson are of course aware of what they are doing. Which bring us back to the other common narrative of the Middle East, the one embedded in the retelling of *The Arabian Nights*.

/This review was previously published on the Michigan Quarterly Review. Kaveh Bassiri is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Arkansas, where he also teaches Persian literature and film courses./



By: Mohammad Ahrar, PhD

Introduction

In broad terms, the skin is the surface portion of an organ system referred to as integument. In other words, the integument is composed of the skin and its derivatives such as hair, nails, sweat glands, oil glands, and billions of sensors. The skin surface area is about 1.5 to 2 square meters and interfaces with the environment. It is constantly worn away, attacked by microorganisms, irritated by sunlight, and exposed to environmental chemicals. The skin is, therefore, our first line of defense from external factors.

Skin layers

Skin is made of three layers each containing a variety of cells that have different functions:

Epidermis is the top layer of skin. It forms the waterproof protective wrap over the body's surface, providing a barrier against biological, chemical, and physical assaults. Epidermis is dominated by flattened dead cells stacked on top of each other. These cells are filled with tough protein fibers similar to the proteins found in animal horns. These flattened cells are tightly joined together and are relatively dry, which makes the surface of skin unsuitable for the growth of many microorganisms and protective of the under-layer cells. These top layer cells are washed off during bathing (for example, dandruff is just superficial dead cells that fall off the scalp). The epidermis contains other types of cells including immune cells, sensory cells, and melanin-producing cells (melanocytes).

Skin color: Melanin is the pigment that is responsible for the color of the skin. Production of these pigments is genetically controlled, and the color and the amount of the pigments vary in people. Melanin pigments work like sunscreen, surrounding the nuclei of the cells in the skin and helping to absorb the UV radiation before it can damage the nuclear DNA. Long-term UV exposure, however, can damage the DNA of sensitive skin cells such as germinative cells and the melanocytes in the epidermis and can lead to skin cancer. For this reason, white-skinned people are more prone to skin damage than dark-skinned individuals who have more melanin in the skin; therefore, they have greater protection against the effects of UV radiation. Sun exposure stimulates melanin production and the skin gets darker.

Dermis underlies epidermis and is composed of fibrous connective tissue and the cells that produce collagen. Blood vessels, sweat glands, oil glands, hair bulbs, nerve fibers, and many sensory cells that provide the sense of touch and heat are also found in this layer. Collagen fibers, together with other protein fibers, extend into a

deeper layer and are responsible for the strength, toughness, and elasticity of skin. Tattoo ink is held in the dermis. Stretch marks, often from pregnancy and obesity, are also located in the dermis.

Finger prints: The region between epidermis and dermis in the palms, fingers, soles of the feet, and toes contains contours in the skin's surface referred to as epidermal ridges. The ridges occur in patterns that are genetically determined and are therefore unique to the individual, making it possible to use fingerprints or footprints as a means of identification.

Hypodermis, also known as the subcutaneous layer, is under the dermis (not technically part of the skin) and serves as a protective layer. Its purpose is to attach the skin to underlying bone and muscle as well as supply blood vessels and nerves to the skin. This layer consists of adipose tissues (fat cells) that provide insulation for the underlying tissues. The subcutaneous tissue contains 50 percent of the body's fat, which serves as padding and insulation for the body. The major accumulation of fat in the bodies of obese people is in this layer.

General functions of the skin

Although the skin is known for its role in protection of the body from environmental hazards, it has many more functions that are essential for the wellbeing of the body.

(1) As a protection, the skin provides a low pH (slightly acidic environment) that retards bacterial growth. Reports indicate that there are hundreds of different species of bacteria that live on normal skin, but most bacterial species cannot grow in the materials secreted by the sweat glands. The skin also prevents water loss from the body. Injury to the skin, such as a burn, contributes to massive fluid loss.

(2) The skin contains a large amount of blood supply which allows precise control of body temperature. Dilated blood vessels increase the activity of sweat glands; as sweat evaporates, heat is removed from the body. Constricted vessels in cold temperatures greatly reduce cutaneous blood flow and conserve heat.

(3) There are millions of sensors in the skin that detect temperature, touch, and pain.

(4) The skin synthesizes vitamin D by the action of UV radiation on certain parts of the skin.

(5) Sweat glands in the skin excrete ammonia, urea, uric acid, and salt. For this reason, sweating during exercise helps the removal of some toxins and salts from the body and indirectly lowers blood pressure.

Why skin wrinkles

As skin naturally ages, it becomes thinner, more easily damaged, less elastic, and is less able to heal itself. There are many internal and external causes to skin aging. For example, aging skin receives less blood flow and lower glandular activity. Skin aging can also result in sagging, wrinkles, and the various facets of photoaging, including redness, brown discoloration, yellowing, abnormal growths, and poor texture. Deficiency of some vitamins, such as Vitamin A and Vitamin C, may also result in sagging and wrinkling of the skin.

Importance of vitamin c- Vitamin C is essential for production of collagen, which is the main protein in the dermis of the skin that gives strength to the skin. Research shows that creams containing cortisol cause degradation of collagen, which may accelerate skin aging. Photoaging or sun damage is more severe in the elderly; in older populations, the skin becomes thinner and the epidermis turnover rate for cell repair is lower, which may result in the skin wrinkling.

Premature wrinkling can be caused by repeated sun exposure, which can damage the cells in the skin that produce collagen fiber.

Nutrition for healthy skin

Skin is a dynamic organ and the cells of the skin continuously grow, die, and regenerate. For this reason, proper nutrition—such as an adequate amount of proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals—is essential for healthy skin.

Proteins are essential for the structure of cells and tissues.

When proteins are consumed, they are broken down into amino acids and absorbed by the small intestine. Amino acids are the structural units of the proteins in the skin, such as collagen and keratin. Therefore, proper amounts of good quality proteins in the diet (discussed in *Peyk* 162) are necessary for healthy skin.

Fats are an integral part of all cells in the body. They also provide protection, insulation, and reserve energy in the body. (More information about fats is discussed in *Peyk* 159.)

Vitamin A benefits the skin by producing a protein called keratin, which is essential for healthy skin, hair, and nails. Reports indicate that vitamin A also helps reduce the production of excess oil by skin glands, hence reducing the severity of acne, as well as reversing skin damage, stretch marks, and cellulite. (See *Peyk* 169 for more information about Vitamin A.)

Vitamin C, as mentioned earlier, is necessary for the synthesis of collagen, the most abundant protein in the body. The connective tissues in the dermis are mainly made of collagen. Collagen fibers, together with other protein fibers, provide strength, toughness, and resiliency to the skin. Vitamin C deficiency can cause premature skin wrinkles. (See *Peyk* 173 for more information about Vitamin C.)

Vitamin D plays a role in reducing the risk of some autoimmune disorders. It is therefore possible that Vitamin D may also reduce or prevent vitiligo (patches of white skin) and some kinds of hair loss which are considered autoimmune disorders of the skin. However,

no scientific data was found to substantiate this fact. Vitamin D can be produced in the body through the action of sunlight on the skin. Darker-skinned people have less ability to absorb ultraviolet radiation B (UVB) rays required to produce Vitamin D, while lighter-skinned people are more prone to skin damage from UV light. (See *Peyk* 170 for more information about Vitamin D.)

Vitamin E is an antioxidant that protects cells from the damaging effects of harmful substances. Reports indicate that Vitamin E protects the skin against cell damage and provides protection against harmful UV rays. (See *Peyk* 171 for more information about Vitamin E).



Exercise and skin health

Physical activity and exercise dramatically increase blood flow to the skin and nourish the skin cells, activating the cells in the dermis to produce collagen and elastin fibers which are responsible for the strength and elasticity of the skin, which in turn reduce wrinkling of the skin.

Disorders of the skin

Acne is caused when oil glands (sebaceous glands) become active at puberty, stimulated by androgens. Some skin bacteria grow on skin pores and infect the oil glands, causing acne. Essentially, acne is a bacterial infection of the sebaceous glands.

Albinism is a congenital disorder characterized by the complete or partial absence of pigment in the skin, hair, and eyes due to a defect of an enzyme involved in the production of melanin. This is the reason albino people have white hair and have no color in their skin.

Vitiligo is a chronic disorder that causes depigmentation patches in the skin, and white patches appear on different parts of the body. The precise cause is not known but is most likely a combination of genetic factors coupled with a disorder of the immune system.

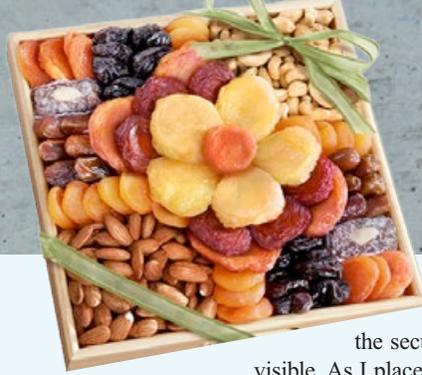
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Ajil Shirin

By Marriam Zarabi



My family + traveling = complicated. Everything about it is complicated: sharing travel information, coordinating departure times, traveling to the airport (on time) and packing. Every step involves some level of strained collaboration and negotiation wrapped in *ta'rof*. My family has an unspoken tradition of driving family members to the airport, no matter the time of day or night, and regardless of the age of the traveler. My parents still insist on driving me to the airport although I am well into adulthood. When I fly out of Kansas City, they insist on waiting as close to the gate as possible, preferably within sight. We usually stand face-to-face, separated by a thick glass wall, while they call me and speak to me as if I am traveling across the world to an area with no internet connection or cell phone tower. Although I love our unspoken tradition, it can get complicated.

I usually allot additional travel time when I leave for school in the fall. My mom usually insists on packing *ajil shirin* and dried fruits, what she calls “snacks,” and we usually engage in a *ta'rof* tournament until I agree to pack the suggested “snacks.” (Mom, I know you are reading this, and I am very grateful for your continued persistence. The snacks have been very helpful this year!)

Over spring break, my parents were visiting family members in Southern California. I agreed to meet them, and planned a very short weekend trip. Comforted knowing that I would not be flying, there would also be no need to schedule additional travel time to accommodate our usual *ta'rof* tournament around *ajil shirin* and other “snacks.” I packed a small backpack, excited and eager for my short trip. You would think by now, well into adulthood, I would know better.

As our weekend neared the end, I took a few minutes to pack my belongings before driving back to school. I put my backpack near the entryway, and my mom walked out of the kitchen with a large bag in her hand.

Madaram, this is for you!

Wow *Maman*, *mersi*, what is it?

(Internal dialogue: Why is it so big?)

Some *khoraki* so you can have some snacks while you study.

(Internal dialogue: I knew I should have made time for this.)

I looked through the bag and assessed the items: *ajil shirin* and various nut mixes.

Thanks Mom, but you know *ajil shirin* and nuts are very common here—I can easily get some on my way to school. I also don't have a lot of room in my backpack.

I know, that is why I put them in this bag! This is your second item. *Chizi nist madaraam*, it is nothing! *Alaan havaset nist*—you don't realize it now—but you will find these snacks so helpful over the next few weeks.

(Internal dialogue: I know she is right, but I can get them over the next few weeks. This was supposed to be an easy trip—in and out.)

Maman, please, I don't have room in my bag. I will buy almonds later in the week!

You won't have time *madaraam*, and this is *ajil shirin*. You can eat it while you study and write your papers.

Ajil has seeds *Maman* and I am not checking a bag. *Hayfe*—it will be a shame—if security throws them away.

These are snacks, they aren't food. The security laws restrict food items. *Hala bebinim chi mishe*—let's just see what happens.

But you and Dad like it so much and I don't want to make you go out and get more. You should enjoy them! I will make time to get a mix when I am at school.

My mom started at me blankly and took her time blinking, as if to say *khejalaat bekesh*. My *ta'rof* was no match for her, and I knew it, but I tried anyway. She put them in my backpack. In usual fashion (at least my family is consistent), my parents drove me to the airport and waited outside

the security gate until I was no longer visible. As I placed my items on the security belt and stepped through the scanner, I was asked to step aside.

Ma'am, if you could step aside. We need to check your bag. Sure, I will follow you.

The security agent unpacked my items and put each to the side.

(Internal dialogue: Why does seeing my items on a silver table feel so intrusive? Everyone has a hairbrush. And a toothbrush. And socks. And pajamas. Oh, but not *ajil shirin*. Perhaps not everyone has *ajil shirin*.)

I looked up and toward the direction of my parents. Both were still standing on the other side, waving eagerly as our eyes met. My father gave me a “thumbs up.” I waved back. The *ajil shirin* was in a clear bag from the bulk section of the Iranian grocery store. The mix was the dream of every security agent: dried figs, mulberries, raisins, and nuts. I started ruminating about the various questions she might ask me: questions about my ethnic identity, my culture, where I have traveled and why. Surprisingly, she did not ask me any of these questions.

Where did you get these? She pointed to the *ajil shirin* bag.

From a local grocery store, it is a “snack” mix.

(Internal dialogue: I am turning into my mother.)

I know what they are. Do you mind if I ask where you got them?

(Internal dialogue: Here we go...here comes *the* million dollar, the *where are you from?* question.)

External dialogue: A grocery store called Mission Ranch Market.

Is that like Wholesome Choice?

I'm sorry? I was shocked.

I usually get my *ajil shirin* from Wholesome Choice but it is a little expensive. I notice yours is less expensive.

Umm...Wholesome Choice is a bit more expensive, and sometimes Mission Ranch Market has sales.

I really love *ajil shirin*. Just so you know, we usually check food items, so it is best to pack them at the top of your bag so we don't have to go through your entire suitcase.

(Internal dialogue: ...Is this really happening? Do I dare ask her *where are you from?*)

External dialogue: Thank you, will do.

Have a safe flight, and enjoy your snacks!

(Internal dialogue: Did she just say snacks?)

External dialogue: ...Thank you.

I quickly stuffed my backpack and looked for my phone. I looked back at my parents, waved, and walked toward my gate.

This time, I called my parents. *Chi shod* my mom asked as she picked up my call. I retold the story, describing my panic and flashbacks of other events at the airport. Unlike the retelling of other stories, we all laughed.

Can you believe it? I still can't believe the agent knew about *ajil shirin* and that she called them snacks!

My mom, in true form, replied: *didi goftam*—see—I told you they are snacks.

Marriam is a graduate student studying psychology. She explores her dual identity through narrative and written prose, often writing about her personal experiences as a second-generation Iranian growing up in Kansas City.

Questions? Comments? Story ideas? I would love to hear from you: marriamzarabi@gmail.com



Kabab-e Jan

Persian Cuisine

Iranians are experts at making kababs. In the next several issues we will have recipes for chicken, kubideh, barg and lamb kababs. With spring and summer seasons ahead these are wonderful meals to entertain with.

From: *New Food of Life* Najmieh Batmanglij



Ground Meat or Ground Chicken Kabab (Kabab-e-kubideh):

Makes 6 servings; preparation time is 40 minutes and cooking time is 10 minutes

Ingredients:

Ground Meat Kabab Ingredients:

- 1 lb twice-ground lamb (shoulder)
- 1 lb twice-ground beef or veal
- 2 medium onion, peeled and grated
- 1 tbl spoon yogurt or ½ tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp salt
- ½ tsp freshly ground pepper (Optional)
- 2 tbl spoon olive oil
- ½ tsp turmeric or ¼ tsp ground saffron dissolved in 1 tbl spoon hot water

Ground Chicken Kabab

- 2 lbs ground boneless chicken breast
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and grated
- 1 tsp salt
- 5 cloves garlic peeled and grated

Grilling – Kabab

Since the discovery of fire, chefs have found that meats are imbued with a wonderful flavor when cooked over an open flame. The Persian word for grilled meat is kabab (kebob, kabob) has entered the West's culinary vocabulary.

Kababs, convenient and virtually fool proof, are very popular. The meat is marinated in herbs, onion, garlic and vinegar or lime juice or yogurt. Then, when it is nearly time to eat, the meat is threaded onto skewers and cooked over glowing charcoals for a flame-rich flavor. Persians like to use the very tender meat from the loin, but leg of lamb can also be used, best when it is marinated for at least 24 hours before grilling.

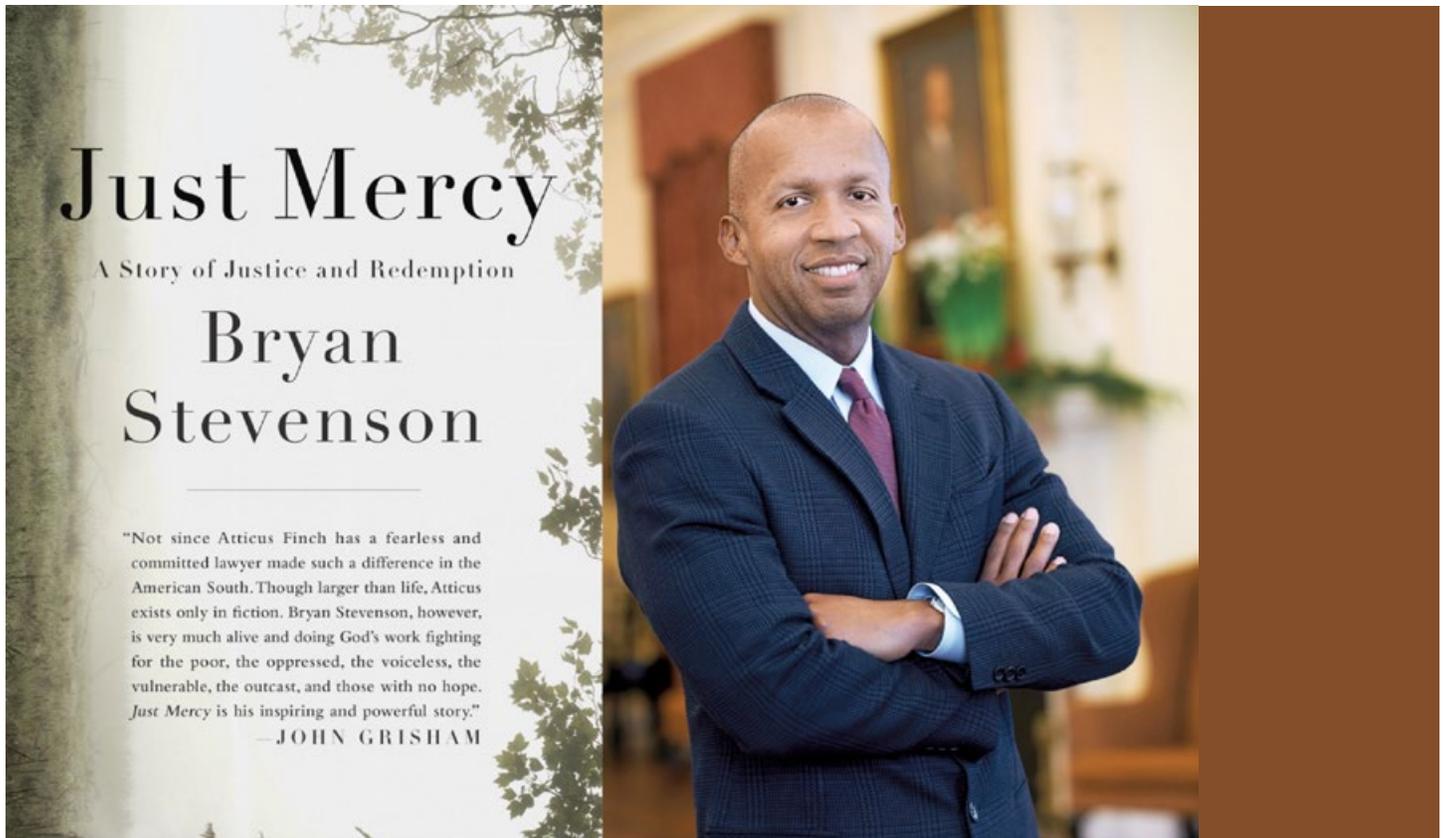
The method for preparing and cooking kababs varies from traditional American barbecuing. Instead of wooden skewers, long, flat metal (preferably stainless steel) skewers are used. Different widths are used for different types of kababs. Thin, 1/8 inch-wide skewers are used when the meat is in cubes. Medium width, 3/8 inch-wide skewers are used for strips of meat and chicken. Large, 1 inch-wide skewers are used for ground meat kababs. For best results, ground meat kababs should not be cooked on a grill surface; rather they should straddle the coals and be supported at either end by the grill edges or bricks. The meat is brushed with the baste mixture occasionally and turned frequently. The kabab is cooked just long enough to be seared on the outside, juicy within. The following is listing of the most popular kabab dishes that can be served with rice (chelov) or salad:

- Filet Kabab – *Kabab-e barg*
- Chicken Kabab- *Jujeh kabab*
- Lamb-pieces Kabab – *Chenjeh kabab*
- Shish Kabab – *Shish kabab*
- Ground Meat Kabab – *Kabab-e koubideh*

Baste:

- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ tsp ground saffron dissolved in 1 tbl spoon hot water
- 2 tsp powdered sumac or juice of 1 lime
- One 12 ounce package of lavash bread
- 12 flat 1 inch-wide sword like skewers

1. In a large bowl, combine meat or chicken and the rest of the ingredients for each, except the base ingredients. Knead this mixture with your hands (15 minutes) or with the aid of a mixer for several minutes to form a paste that will adhere to cooking skewers. Cover and let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes.
2. Using damp hands, divide the meat paste into 12 equal lumps about the size of oranges. Roll each into a 5-inch sausage shape and mold it firmly around the skewer.
3. Start charcoal 30 minutes before you want to cook and let it burn until the coals are glowing evenly. Make sure you remove the grill so that the skewers are suspended above the flame and do not lie on the grill.
4. Melt the butter in a small saucepan and if desired add the saffron water and a pinch of salt.
5. Arrange the skewered meat about 3 inches away from the coals; after a few seconds, turn the meat gently to prevent it from falling off.
6. Grill the meat for 3-5 minutes while turning frequently, brushing occasionally with the baste. Avoid overcooking, the meat should be seared on the outside, juicy and tender on the inside. When the meat is done, baste it.
7. Spread lavash bread on a serving platter. Slide the meat off the skewer with another piece of bread. Arrange the meat on the bread, sprinkle with sumac or lime juice, and cover meat with more lavash bread to keep it warm. Serve immediately with chelov (white rice) or bread, fresh herbs, scallions, salad, yogurt and cucumbers (mast-o-khiar), and Persian pickles (torshi).



“Proximity has taught me some basic and humbling truths, including this vital lesson: Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done. My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice. Finally, I’ve come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness, and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and the respected among us. The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.” -Bryan Stevenson

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson is as gripping as any thriller and exemplifies, in a way that is hard to accept, the saying “truth is stranger than fiction.” Stevenson, the grandson of slaves and now a Harvard-educated attorney, has written a book that should be mandatory reading in schools, at least law schools.

Stevenson did not attend law school to blaze any trails or zealously pursue a cause, but he unexpectedly stumbled onto his calling while interning as a student at the Southern Center for Human Rights, which represents death-row inmates throughout the South. What he experienced there would ignite a passion for the pursuit of justice by challenging institutionalized bias against the poor and minorities in the criminal justice system. He went on to found the Equal Justice Initiative, through which he and his team have literally “rescued” countless inmates from death row or excessive punishment.

One story in this book—that of Walter McMillian, whom Stevenson began representing in the late 1980s when McMillian was on death row for killing a young white woman—will hook you from the beginning, making you turn pages late into the night, hoping for, rooting for justice. Ironically, McMillian’s case took place in Monroeville, Alabama, the hometown of Harper Lee and “*To Kill a Mockingbird*,” which is about a black man falsely accused of the rape of a white woman. Step by step, Stevenson takes us through the unbelievable truth that the criminal justice system—from community members, police officers, lawyers, judges, and an all-white jury—conspired, through a long-perfected and deeply ingrained process of blind racism and bias, to destroy an innocent man’s life. No matter what your politics or background, you will be rooting for this man and for Stevenson’s work throughout the book. McMillian’s story is the backbone of the book, but there are many others, and together they not only inform on the history of the criminal justice system but also provide perspective on the incidents that have inspired the Black Lives Matter movement.

If you do one thing today to improve our world, read this book and then pass it on to your friends and children.

See Bryan Stevenson on TED Talks:
https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice?language=en



Guard Your Heart

Pari Meftah

The root of a plant is what makes the plant flourish and produce leaves and nice flowers. We cannot see the root, but it is the source of life for the plant. Just like the root of a plant, in our lives, it is our heart that empowers us and promotes our well being. Therefore, we should guard our heart with utmost diligence. The most important responsibility—and our mission in life—is to keep our heart pure. We should not allow the sorrow and bitterness from past happenings to hurt our heart. It takes discipline to prevent these unfortunate happenings to deeply hurt us inside.

We all have unfair things happen to us: disappointment, loss of loved ones, and sorrow, causing self-pity and anger. These can drain the strength, passion, and joy out of life. We only have so much emotional energy each day of our life—it is not an unlimited supply. If we hold on to all the hurtful thoughts and memories, a lot of our mental energy will be wasted. Perhaps we are still upset and hurt about things that happened in the past; maybe we cannot forget an injustice; maybe we are still grieving about the loss of a loved one; maybe we are still upset about what someone did; maybe we are sad for precious property that was stolen. Holding on to these hurts will destroy VALUABLE emotional energy that we need for our children, and for coping with the difficulties in life. Furthermore, we need that mental energy to pursue meaningful and worthwhile goals, and for having a purposeful life.

Life is a journey... it has a beginning, middle, and an end. Everyone has the opportunity to create their own good or miserable journey. We should not let the unfortunate things that happen to fill our lives with despair and sadness. Everybody has the opportunity to create better pathways; in order to achieve this, we should keep in mind that we have to go through the closed doors before we reach and go through open doors. Life is too short to live with sorrow about the past that will hurt the well being of our heart now.

We should be determined not to dwell on the wounds of the past—besides, we all have to face serious challenges in the future. It is best to get rid of the hurtful thoughts and resentments because, if we keep feeding the roots with these contaminants, our lives no longer flourish. That is when we wonder why we don't have energy, why we don't laugh anymore, and why we don't enjoy things as we once did.

The first step to guarding our heart is to get rid of past wounds, and move forward. By doing this, not only do we feel relieved, but we get the joy of life back.

Pari Meftah is a graduate of San Diego State University with a degree in Psychology. She followed post graduate studies in Sorbonne University in Paris. She worked for the Consortium of International Oil Company in Tehran, as a Personnel Planning Analyst, and came back to San Diego after the Islamic Revolution. Her career in San Diego includes Advertising and Marketing. Presently, she is engaged in community and volunteer activities, and follows numerous interests.

Public Announcement



June 2018 Residential Messaging from SDG&E®

Save energy at home this summer

We understand that no one likes higher-than-expected energy bills. Here are some tips to reduce your energy use during the warmer months – without sacrificing your family's comfort.

- Tilt blinds up and close drapes on windows that receive direct sunlight.
- Open windows in the evening to let cooler air in when safe.
- Run your ceiling fan while your A/C is on; this will allow you to raise your thermostat about 4 degrees while maintaining the same level of comfort.
- Enable "power management" on all computers and turn off when not in use.
- Wash clothes in cold water. About 90 percent of the energy used in a clothes washer goes to water heating.
- Postpone using heat-producing appliances like the oven, dishwasher and clothes dryer after 9 p.m.
- On hot afternoons, consider leaving home, and going someplace cool like the shopping mall, movie theater or library.

Check out SDG&E's [one-minute video tips](#) for more energy-saving ideas on cooling, weatherization, refrigerators, home electronics, indoor/outdoor lighting and pools.

Receive free energy alerts to keep your budget on track

Watch your energy use and costs with email or text alerts from SDG&E. Energy alerts can help you set monthly spending goals, track your progress and get automated alerts to stay in control and on budget. Alerts you can sign up for include:

- Your pre-set spending goal was exceeded
- Your pre-set electric or gas use level was exceeded
- You've moved into a higher-priced electric tier
- A weekly energy use summary with all this information plus energy saving tips

How to subscribe to alerts:

Log into My Account

Look for Alerts & Subscriptions at the top

Click on Alerts

Click on Subscribe next to the type of alert

Select the email addresses and phone numbers to receive alerts

To learn more, visit sdge.com/alerts.



By Sanaz Majd, MD



Heart Palpitations

Heart palpitations are one of the most common complaints that drive patients to the doctor's office. As common as they are, however, most of the time they are benign.

It's an uncomfortable sort of feeling. People describe it as a sensation of the "heart beating fast" or the "heart skipping a beat." Most are short-lived, lasting seconds, and often occur at rest. But they can be annoying and sometimes alarming enough to stop you in your tracks when they do occur.

8 Top Causes of Heart Palpitations

Here are some of the main causes of heart palpitations:

Anxiety: Anxiety is definitely one of the top causes, especially amongst younger, healthier people and in those with an underlying anxiety disorder (quite common).

Caffeine: Caffeine is a stimulant, and one of the most commonly used substances in the world. Although there are numerous studies showing the benefits of caffeine in moderation, there is a subset of people who are quite sensitive to its effects. In these patients, even consuming one cup of "chaiee" is sufficient to induce palpitations. Note that caffeine is also found in chocolate, many sodas, and even some herbal teas.

Thyroid Disorder: Hyperthyroidism, a condition where the thyroid gland produces excess thyroid hormone, can also rev up the heart.

Anemia: Our red blood cells carry oxygen in our bloodstream via a protein called "hemoglobin." When this process is compromised, we refer to it as "anemia." Because our organs and tissues require oxygen to sustain themselves, the heart will need to work harder to pump blood out to those areas if it's carrying less oxygen. This can cause the heart to produce a sensation of palpitations.

Electrolyte Disorders: Significant changes in potassium and sodium levels can also induce heart palpitations. Diuretic medications (such as hydrochlorothiazide or furosemide) used to treat high blood pressure or congestive heart failure are some of the top causes of electrolyte imbalances. Diet can also influence these numbers, as can problems with other organs such as the kidney or lungs. A simple blood test can rule this one out.

Medications: Certain medications like decongestants or anticholinergics induce heart palpitations as a side effect. Make sure to review your entire medication list (prescription and over-the-counter) with your doctor if you experience heart palpitations.

Drugs: Illicit drugs such as cocaine and amphetamines can also stimulate the heart and induce palpitations.

Arrhythmias: As one of the least desirable yet less common causes, heart arrhythmias induce heart palpitations. An example is atrial fibrillation, which is one of the most common heart arrhythmias and is most common in the elderly (but can occur in younger people).

5 Tests for Palpitations

When a patient presents with heart palpitations, the following tests are often considered as part of the evaluation:

A blood test: Testing your thyroid, checking for anemia, and measuring your electrolyte levels are a few of the tests we measure when evaluating heart palpitations.

Electrocardiogram (EKG): A simple EKG is easy to administer, and most doctors' offices have the capability to do so. Heart arrhythmias can be diagnosed on an EKG (if they show up at the time of the test).

Holter monitor: If a simple EKG is unrevealing, the next step may be a Holter monitor. A Holter is a 24 hour monitor with leads that attach to your chest and record your heart activity as you go about your day. It's a test of choice for those who experience palpitations at least once a day, because the purpose is to be able to view the heart activity during the moment of symptoms.

Event monitor: For those who don't experience at least one palpitation a day, however, a Holter is often not as useful. As an alternative, an event monitor will help "catch" the episodes when they occur less frequently. The monitor doesn't record continuously like a Holter, but does record as soon as you press a "button" on the device. However, you will be carrying this device with you for up to a month's time.

Echocardiogram: An "echo" is an ultrasound of the heart, and is typically unnecessary in the evaluation of palpitations. It may be considered if a structural abnormality is suspected (like a valve disorder), if a heart murmur is heard on exam, or if there are certain abnormalities on the EKG.

In summary, heart palpitations are infrequently serious, but fairly simple to evaluate. Therefore, it's definitely worth a visit to your doctor to rule out more concerning causes, and is not a symptom that should be left ignored.

Sanaz Majd, MD is a board-certified family medicine physician who vlogs at: www.youtube.com/c/MajdMD. You can also follow Dr. Majd on Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook: @SMajdMD.

GRAHAM GREENE (1904-1991)

Ahmad Fattahipour

Graham Greene, a graduate of Oxford University, is a great twentieth century British novelist who gained universal recognition as an excellent writer with the publication of his fourth novel, *The Orient Express*, in 1932. His first trip to northern Liberia as a journalist led to writing *Journey Without Maps*, followed by three other travel books. He wrote a number of short stories, two plays, and two autobiographies: *A Sort of Life*, and *Ways of Escape*.

Greene converted from Protestantism to Catholicism and, in his book, *The Quiet American*, he writes extensively about Catholicism and his religious beliefs. His reflections on religion are also demonstrated in his other novels: *The Comedians*, *Travels With My Aunt*, *The Honorary Consul*, *The Human Factor*, *Monsignor Quixote*, and *The Captain and the Enemy*.

He was a regular contributor to *The Spectator* and other journals, many of which later appear in the collection *Reflections*.

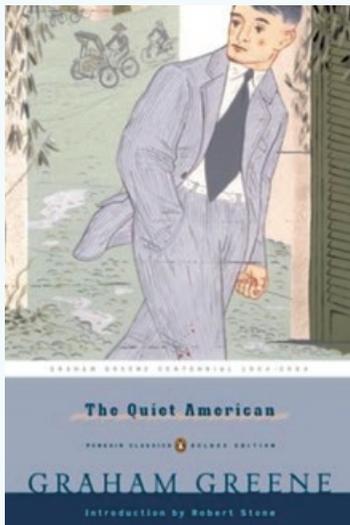
Most of Greene's novels have been turned into films, and he has received many awards, including The Order of Merit, which is awarded by the monarch of the Commonwealth realms.

THE QUIET AMERICAN

The Quiet American was first published in 1956, and is considered by many as the best novel written about the Korean War in the early 1950s and the subsequent build-up to the Vietnam War in the 1960s. The introduction to *The Quiet American* is by Robert Stone, a prominent American novelist who was at Yale University for nine years as the Rosenkranz Writer in Residence.

In the novel, narrator Mr. Fowler is a journalist who represents Mr. Greene, the author. Pyle, the quiet American working for the CIA, is an idealist who believes in democracy and liberalism, and considers the U.S. as a savior of the world against communism. Stone describes Pyle as a "prattling fool" where the "'The Quiet American' represents the foolishness of Americans ... their over-confiding chatter and Hollywood sensibility, [and] is offered as an insight into the origins of American policy in Asia."

As a member of the British elite after the end of World War II, Greene was witness to the fall of the British Empire and the rise of the U.S. as a superpower, which had an influence on his portrayal of Pyle. Greene clearly states that all the characters in the novel are fictitious, but the vivid descriptions suggest Greene built on people he knew.



PAAIA Premieres New Ads Highlighting the Value of Iranian American Innovation

May 22, 2018

Washington, D.C. –The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA) launched a new social media campaign focused on the innovative power of the Iranian American community. The goal of the campaign is to foster greater understanding of who Iranian Americans are and highlight some of their extensive contributions to American life.

“Recent political events between the United States and Iran as well as charged rhetoric against immigrants, has created a negative stigma towards Iranian Americans leading to increased discrimination and hate crimes,” said Leila Austin, Executive Director of PAAIA. “Our campaign aims to show the integral role Iranian Americans play in economies across the country through their entrepreneurial spirit, hard work, and appreciation for all the United States has to offer.”

From eBay to Uber, Iranian Americans constantly invent or are involved in the creation of products and services that make life more livable. PAAIA's new campaign shines the spotlight on specific Iranian American innovations including Tinder, the Hot Pocket, and NASA missions to Mars. Iranian Americans turned idle thumbs into romance, put fast food in a pocket and helped turn space travel into planetary exploration. These are just some of the numerous contributions Iranian Americans have made to our country.

The Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI) conducted a study that found Iranian Americans are among the top 5 immigrant groups with the highest rate of small business ownership, contributing substantially to the U.S. economy. Iranian Americans also play a big role in some of America's largest companies. The Iranian American Contributions Project has found that Iranian Americans have helped to found public companies that are collectively worth over \$100 billion. According to a report by the Iranian Studies Group at MIT, Iranian Americans have participated in senior leadership positions of many major U.S. companies, including many Fortune 500 companies such as GE, Intel, Citigroup, Verizon, Motorola, Google, and AT&T.

There are an estimated 1 million Iranian Americans that are part of and add value to the fabric of America. Iranian Americans believe in the tenets of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and they are proud to contribute their skills and talents to the wonderful country they call home.

For more information on Iranian American Innovation visit: <http://paaia.org/innovation> or contact our Executive Director, Leila Austin at Leila@paaia.org.



Financial Planning – How Does Modern Planning Work?

In this article, the first of a new financial literacy series in *Peypk Magazine*, we examine a brief overview of the importance of sound household and business financial planning. Establishing a financial plan helps Individuals and business owners determine their short and long-term financial goals and create a balanced plan to meet those goals.

For business owners, running a business has many responsibilities. Over time, a successful business can suffer due to inattention to personal retirement planning, mortgage selection, cash flow, protection, and exit planning decisions that the business owner makes. It's challenging to envision the impact your decisions have on the four important financial domains of Protection, Assets, Liabilities and Cash Flow – across your business and your personal finances.

No One Has a Crystal Ball

In traditional financial planning, advisers routinely ask consumers to try to predict the future... their future. How much will you need for retirement? How much will college cost? How much will your family need if you die? What will the market do? What will things cost? Will taxes go up? What new inventions will you want that don't exist today? Will you become disabled or die prematurely? How long will you live into retirement?

Making guesses about the future is not the way to build your financial confidence. There is a better way.

Flaws in Traditional Financial Planning

Here's how traditional financial planning plays itself out around kitchen tables and in conference rooms across the country:

An advisor asks you to identify your future financial needs and provides various strategies to meet those goals. Your to-do list may include retirement, paying for your children's education, and perhaps putting a bit aside.

Next, you'll be asked to make some assumptions about average life expectancy, medical expenses, future education costs, expected investment returns and more.

With "answers" to these questions and probably a few more, your advisor thinks he has the numbers needed to fuel his calculator and voila — your financial plan is ready!

Stated financial objectives can be a detriment to the financial future that you so richly deserve. It's a number isn't it? There is no way to really know the exact amount you will need in the future. When you really think about what you might be doing next month, it's a little blurry. Targets beyond next week are hard to determine, so 25 or 30 years down the road they're almost impossible to get right. Unfortunately, there are more than a few flaws in this approach:

The financial goal or target you guessed will rarely be correct.

There is absolutely no way to know how much money you will need for a financial event that is going to happen decades from now.

Needs-based planning is a minimalistic approach. You need shelter, bread, and water to live, and yet, you want much more out of life.

Traditional planning may cause people to take too much risk with their money. To hit a stated financial goal, high risk products are often introduced.

There are no financial shock absorbers. Traditional financial plans allow little room for life's surprises.

Focusing on needs often grossly underestimates the true cost of living. Traditional financial plans assume an unrealistic world where market rates of return are level and inflation rates remain constant.

A Better, Sounder Approach: No Crystal Ball Required – Coordination is Key

Every financial decision you make not only impacts one area or financial domain, but it affects every other area of your finances as well. In addition, each decision you make now, will affect your future decisions. Often the impact of these decisions will not produce optimal results without a coordinated financial plan in place.

The use of a holistic coordinated financial planning model based on individuals' and businesses' values, to treat the whole, from tax relief to saving for retirement planning, as opposed to buying single tasked financial products or traditional planning.

To understand the effects of your financial decisions, streamline costs and plan for your future, you need an organized and integrated view of your financial decisions across your household, business (if you're an owner) and personal life. This view will help you maximize protection, minimize cost, and provide an impenetrable barrier to protect your business and your personal assets.

A better and sounder approach to preparing for the future is one that relies on sound economic theory.

Protect first. The most important step in planning your financial future is to secure what you have with proper insurance protections.

Increase savings. Perhaps as much as 15-20% a year so you don't have to rely upon unsafe market returns that may not materialize.

Minimize taxes. Seek tax-advantaged financial strategies to reduce your tax burden and make your money work more efficiently.

Reduce risk. Don't chase a high rate of return on your investments. Instead, seek lower risk financial strategies to help assure that your financial future will be realized.

Adequate liquidity. Investments are important, but you need enough liquidity to respond to life and seize opportunities.

Trim back or eliminate debt. Don't drag your wealth through time with a log of debt attached to it. Restructure your debt so that it is in healthy balance with your earning potential.

Budgeting skills. Develop a budget that gives you freedom to enjoy life but instills the discipline necessary to keep you on track.

We've questioned the traditional thinking that has led so many Americans astray. The holistic financial approach makes it easy to recognize the long-term potential of every dollar you earn so that you can make educated decisions toward achieving improved financial balance.

Amir Naghshineh-Pour, MBA

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The truth about the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" immigration policy

In May, 2018, the United States Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, announced that the U.S. would take a stricter stance on illegal crossings at the Mexican border which would result in parents and children being separated. At a law enforcement event in Scottsdale, Arizona, Sessions declared, "If you are smuggling a child then we will prosecute you, and that child will be separated from you as required by law. . . . If you don't like that, then don't smuggle children over our border."

From April 19 to May 31, some 1,995 children were separated from roughly as many adults at the U.S. border. Following the outrage expressed by the public at media images of the policy in practice, Donald Trump attempted to shift blame for the policy onto the existing laws and the Democrats, stating, "If the Democrats would sit down instead of obstructing, we could have something done very quickly — good of the children, good for the country, good for the world."

However, the laws and court precedent governing how children are treated at the border do NOT mandate separation of parents and children. For example, the Obama Administration primarily detained families together in administrative facilities or released them, while their cases were processed through the immigration courts. The Trump Administration, on the other hand, has chosen to *criminally prosecute* all who cross the border "illegally," seeking asylum and incarcerate them. Under the current law, children cannot be incarcerated in prison/jail facilities for longer than 20 days, thus creating a justification for the Trump Administration to separate them from their parents.

In the past several weeks there have been mass demonstrations against this "zero tolerance" policy against asylum seekers around the country. On July 2nd there were demonstrations over 750 cities, including in San Diego, Carlsbad, National City, Ramona and El Cajon. Although President Trump, under the pressure of public opinion, ended the separations, there are still approximately 2,000 children that have not yet been reunited with their parents.

Meanwhile, a federal judge in San Diego has ordered the government to reunite these children within 30 days.



Mother and Child by Mokhtar Paaki

