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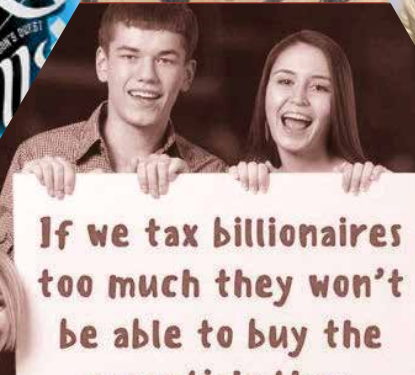
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- A DEFACED MURAL, OLD AND ...
- A PAINFUL DECISION





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Shaghayegh Hanson



The Dubious Honor of Being a Cultural Diplomat

Growing up in England, and then making a home in the U.S., I have been asked countless times “where are you from?” or some variation of the question. There is no simple answer to this for me or those of us who have been shaped by a variety of places and cultures. But often, I know the inquiry is based on my outward appearance, that is, my ethnicity. So, inevitably I start by saying I am Iranian. And then I scan the face of the questioner to see what this loaded word, “Iranian,” is conjuring up in their mind after 40 plus years of negative media attention. Even with the most enlightened and well-meaning audience, one feels the need to be a counterpoint to all the negativity and misperceptions that continue to cloud Americans’ view of us. It is both a burden and an opportunity to make a difference.

As author Cyrus Copeland puts it, “In the absence of diplomatic dialogue, we are all cultural diplomats.” You will find my interview with Cyrus discussing his book, *Off the Radar*, on page 6. His viewpoint is shaped by being a self-described *do-rageh* (two-veined, literally), meaning he has both American and Iranian blood, that is, an American father and an Iranian mother. I love how he sees the hyphen in Iranian-American as “hold[ing] a powerful bit of treasure” where “the interesting work of stitching together two conflicting cultures begins.” I’m sure you’ll be fascinated by what else Cyrus has to say about living in Iran as a child, his father’s arrest and trial for espionage as the Islamic revolution took hold, and the family mystery that compelled him to return to Iran for answers decades after escaping.

With the holiday season approaching, I am reminded of the time my daughter engaged in a bit of cultural diplomacy in first grade, right around this time of year. She did a presentation on *Yalda* for her class. (See p. 20 on *Yalda*.) We created a make-believe *corsi* by pulling a couple of tables together and draping a huge blanket, with a colorful Persian design on it, over the table. The children then sat on the floor around the table under the blanket. We put dried fruits and nuts and pomegranates on the table. The children munched on the snacks as my daughter explained the meaning of *Yalda*. Other parents were watching, too, as they waited for their child’s turn to present on *Hanukkah*, or *Kwanza*, or *Diwali*, or any number of traditions. It was a lovely hour of cross-cultural bonding. I know that other Iranian-American parents did, and do, the same type of presentations with their children, not just for *Yalda*, but also *Nowruz* (New Year) and *Mehregan* (Harvest Festival). First impressions count, as we know, and to have a child’s introduction to “Iranian” be a warm and fuzzy moment in elementary school will definitely make a difference to the adult that child will become.

It has always been a point of pride for me that cross-cultural outreach is a vital part of PCC’s mission and activities. For example, once again, PCC partnered with The San Diego Museum of Art to hold the *Mehregan* Fall Fête to fundraise for the Arts of Iran collection. (See p. 8.) Also, for many years now, we have partnered with the San Diego Public Library to set up *Nowruz* displays in various branches each year and to hold an annual *Hafez* Day poetry evening. And if you’re a KPBS listener, you will have heard PCC’s advertisements every year, throughout March, wishing everyone a Happy *Nowruz*.

I imagine all these methods of cultural outreach are exactly the type of powerful treasure Cyrus envisions can “stitch” cultures together. It takes time and effort to shatter stereotypes, but as long as we keep mining that treasure we will get there.

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PCC NEWS

PCC's Board Meetings

Persian Cultural Center's board of directors holds its meetings every second Wednesday of the month at the Iranian American Center (IAC). The last two meetings took place on September 8 and October 13, 2021.

Caravan Electric Ud Trio Concert – August 25, 2021

Caravan Electric Ud Trio held a concert titled "Angelica's Project," performed by Angelica Pruitt on contrabass, Nathan Hubbard on drums, and Farhad Bahrami on electric ud, with special guest Tamia Dowlatabadi.

Quarantine Night's Poems – September 15, 2021

In this virtual event hosted by Farshad Babakhani and PCC's Poetry & Literature Committee, poems from *Shahriar* were read and attendees also read their own selected poetry.

Jong-e Farhangi – September 24, 2021

Jong is PCC's cultural variety show. The July Jong was an online event about Iranian cinema, hosted by Ali Sadr. The guest of the program was Mohammad Motavassellani, renowned film actor and director. A question and answer period followed the discussion.

Virtual Movie Discussion Series – September 30, 2021

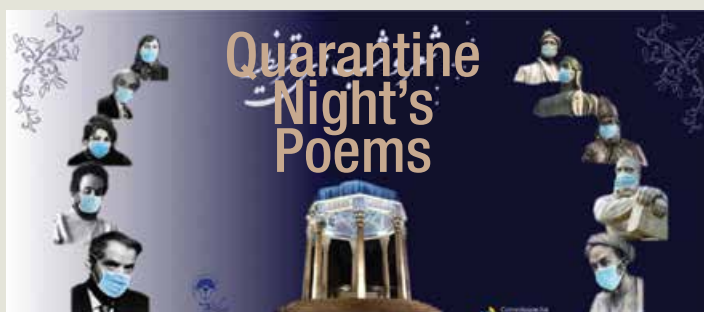
La Haine - Hate (1995), directed by Mathieu Kassovitz, and starring Vincent Cassel, Hubert Koundé, and Saïd Taghmaoui, was the movie selected for the September virtual movie discussion. Mahmoud Pirouzian hosted the discussion, during which Ms. Rana Salami reviewed the movie.



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Persian Fall Festival “Mehregan” – October 2, 2021

The fifth annual joint celebration of Mehregan with San Diego Museum of Art took place at the museum’s Sculpture Garden on Saturday, October 2, 2021. All proceeds from this event were allocated in support of the Iranian Arts section of the museum. Supporters and guests first visited the Iranian Art section with new additions and then assembled at the Sculpture Garden to enjoy a concert by Aida Shahghasemi and her band. A complete report of this event is on page 8 of this issue.

Theater:

Waking Up & Sleep – October 9, 17, 23, and 24, 2021

Two comedy plays—**Waking Up & Sleep**—written by Franka Rama, Mahmoud Behrouzian, and Mahvash Azhir, and directed by Mahmoud Behrouzian, were staged at the Iranian American Center on October 9, 17, 23, and 24. The cast included Tawoos Moshtagh, Dadyar Vakili, and Masih Sal Afzon.

Three Chefs in the Kitchen – October 9, 2021

Three Chefs in the Kitchen, PCC’s online cooking class, was held on October 19, 2021. The three chefs—Sima Kashani, Zhaleh Shayan, and Venus Safaie—taught viewers how to prepare Eggplant, Whey, and Carrot Koofteh (meatball).

Comedy Show by K-Von – October 14, 2021

K-Von, the Iranian American comedian, performed on Thursday, October 14 at the Iranian American Center. He also presented his book and signed copies for his fans.

Quarantine Night’s Poems – September 20, 2021

This virtual event was hosted by Farshad Babakhani and PCC’s Poetry & Literature Committee. From the series “One poet – One poem,” Shahriar and the poem “Heydar baba” were discussed. Attendees also read their own selected poetry.

Virtual Movie Discussion Series – October 28, 2021

The movie selected for October’s discussion series was *Y Tu Mamá También* (And Your Mother Too) (2001), directed by Alfonso Cuarón and starring Maribel Verdú, Gael García Bernal, and Diego Luna. Mahmoud Pirouzian hosted the discussion, while Mr. Alexis Duran (lecturer and filmmaker) reviewed the film.

An Interview with Cyrus Copeland, The author of *Off the Radar: A Father's Secret, a Mother's Heroism, and a Son's Quest**

by Shaghayegh Hanson



For many years now, I have been keeping my eyes open for books written by Iranians living in the diaspora created since the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Somehow, *Off the Radar*, by Cyrus Copeland, slipped by me when it was released in 2015, off my radar until this year. This book is a powerful memoir, both riveting and

beautifully written. Its focus goes beyond the events that forced Cyrus' American father and Iranian mother to escape Iran with Cyrus and his sister in the wake of the revolution; it carries forward to Cyrus' discovery of old, boxed documents after his father's death that presented a mystery: was his father a CIA agent after all, as the new Islamic regime had claimed and put him on trial for? Had his father really lived a double life under all their noses, while maintaining his innocence? Cyrus' quest for the answer is what makes this story so engrossing, imbuing it with all the page-turning urgency of a spy novel while, at the same time, pausing to connect the reader with the historical and cultural backdrop that makes the adventure uniquely Iranian and American. The *Library Journal* fittingly described the book as a "brilliant, touching tale of espionage, discovering family, and balancing cultures."

I reached out to Cyrus recently to tell him how much I enjoyed the book and to thank him. His response was warm and gracious. Before I knew it, we were chatting away like kindred spirits and I was asking him if I could interview him for *Peyk*. I am thrilled that he agreed and that you will get to meet him, too.

SH: *Your father, Max, was a native Oklahoman who deeply loved Iran. How did that happen?*

CC: Marrying a daughter of Iran and visiting the country—how could you not love Iran? As your readers know, it's a wondrously beautiful country with an unmatched ethos for hospitality. My mom and dad met on the first day of their arrival in Washington, DC, to pursue their studies, when my dad—quite the dandy—approached her in the hotel dining room and inquired if she always enjoyed the luxury of a late breakfast? That set the stage for their international love story and it inevitably took them back to Iran.

SH: *Your mother, Shahin, went to England by herself at the age of 17. That was quite daring and progressive for an Iranian girl in the 1950s. Were her parents supportive of the move? How did things go?*

CC: My mom was the youngest woman to leave Iran unchaperoned, but she had an insatiable love of the English language. Her parents recognized this and gave it full reign. And so she decamped for London after high school and worked as both a model and an announcer for the BBC, translating Shakespeare into Farsi for BBC Persia. She often spoke of living in London after the war, the rations, but the thing that shines brightest in memory? Her love of Shakespeare. To this day she still quotes Macbeth soliloquies. And working as a model in the Fifties gave her not only an appreciation



for style and beauty—it also funded her education.

SH: *Your family was still in Tehran at the beginning of the hostage crisis and then your father suddenly disappeared. Later he was tried for being a CIA spy. Talk us through those days.*

CC: My father had been invited to Iran by the Shah—he was an educator and helped spearhead a curriculum for Pahlavi University

in the Sixties. By the time the revolution caught fire, he had been hired by Westinghouse to shut down their operations in Iran. They had done a huge business with the Iranian Air Force and sold them very sensitive radar equipment. Long story short, some of the radar equipment which rightfully belonged to the Iranian Air Force was repatriated back to the States, and my father—being the last man on the ground—was held accountable. Hence the title, *Off the Radar*. He was the first American put on trial for espionage in Iran, but his trial and much else about his life was incognito.

SH: *Your mother came to his rescue, didn't she?*

CC: She did! My mom is what Iranians call a real "sheer zan"—a lioness. She had no training in Quranic law, but when my father was brought up on charges of espionage, she studied the Quran intensively for weeks and ended up representing my father before the tribunals. My mom was the very first female attorney in the Islamic republic. Think about that: A female lawyer in an Islamic country using the Quran to defend her husband who is quite possibly a spy. You can't make this stuff up!

SH: *Eventually your mom brought you and your sister to America, where there was a lot of anti-Iranian sentiment in the air. How did that affect you and your sister as children? Did you feel any blowback at school?*

CC: Blowback—interesting turn of phrase, that. It originated with the CIA's first interference in Iran in 1953. I didn't feel much blowback at school. The kids were mostly gracious and welcoming. I felt it everywhere else though, an undercurrent of hatred and fear that survives to this day. You see it in how Iran is portrayed in the media and movies and on television—as an angry, irrational, and aggressive country. In truth, Iran is the most misunderstood country on the world stage. Despite crippling sanctions, its people are reliably and deeply hospitable. In that regard, movies like *Argo* and *Not Without My Daughter*, TV shows like *Homeland*, and even news coverage have perpetuated a big lie. And so, as every Iranian-American will attest, growing up between two such



contradictory cultures driven by misperception and propaganda has been a challenge—but a welcome one.

SH: *How so?*

CC: I think we hyphenated kids hold a powerful bit of treasure. We live at the vanguard of possibility—it's we who hold the contradictions on either end of our cultural identities. That hyphen between Iranian-Americans? It's where the interesting work of stitching together two conflicting cultures begins. There are no Iranian ambassadors in Washington right now. But we are all ambassadors representing our homeland. And when I go back to Iran, I take my responsibility as an American very seriously—I try to be honest and open-hearted and bring the best part of my American self forward. In the absence of diplomatic dialogue, we are all cultural diplomats.

SH: *Now, at some point your father passes away and you find a box of old documents that sets you off on a mission to discover more about your father's life. What was in that box?*

CC: That box! It followed us Copelands through four suburban homes over several decades to the dusty corner of a library, where I eventually found and opened it. The most interesting thing I found was a file labelled "Max's Radar Affair" which held the frayed documents of a long forgotten "international incident" beginning with my father's arrest and culminating with his trial. There was an article in the *Tehran Times*. A few letters. A packing list. It was the rediscovery of that long-buried file in my family life that led to my quest. Were the charges against my father true? Had he been a spy all this time?

SH: *Against everyone's advice, you went back to Iran. I found this part of your book very moving. Tell us about Beheshte Gom Shode.*

CC: By that point in the narrative, I had come to discover all I would about my father—I returned to Iran because I needed to go back. My father had taken us to a valley outside of Shiraz when I was a kid. He was always showing us gorgeous geographies off the beaten path. I recall that day as the best of my young life, romping through a vast expanse of beauty with my sister, leaping across streams, in a valley populated by young trees that had turned autumn gold. Before he died, I asked my father to draw me a map so I could make my way back to the valley, but I lost that map. And so decades later when a driver tells me about this place outside of Shiraz that sounded like my valley, known as The Lost Paradise, a shiver went down my spine. My father had shown us how to go out into the world in search of beauty and adventure, and more than any place that valley represented his searching heart and spirit. And so forty years later, I set out to find it.

SH: *In Shiraz, you visit the shrine of Shah Cheragh, where you have an intensely spiritual experience. As a young boy, prior to the revolution, you became quite devout at some point, praying five times a day voluntarily. But by the time you visited Shah Cheragh, as a man, your relationship with Islam was, for want of a better word, complicated. What happened there and how do*

you feel about Islam (or religion in general) these days?

CC: It's very difficult to put the numinous into words. I'm a Moslem and very hungry spiritually. I love the spirit of Islam but being a private and often solitary fellow, I struggle with the communal aspects of my religion. But at *Shah Cheragh*, I had an epiphany about how standing apart means being apart—and isn't that the whole point of mystical pursuit, being one with everything? I found myself praying in a pool of light, between a mullah and a boy who was roughly the same age I was when my social fears about religion set in. And I knew this was a God-constructed moment.

SH: *There is one thing that happens during your time in Iran which I found slightly bizarre and yet quite poignant. You attend an "Overeaters Anonymous" meeting where no one talks about food, and no one is actually overweight. Your take from it is: "In America people lie about their addictions to avoid facing their feelings. Here people declare false addictions to broadcast them." Can you expand on this?*

CC: Iran and America aren't nearly as contradictory as they appear. We all wanna know and be known by each other. I'm not an addict but I know this: The Twelve Steps are a very effective way to share intimate truths in a trusted environment. Let me leave it at that.

SH: *After all your travels and investigations, it seems you discovered things you hadn't necessarily set out to find, while what you were looking for remained a tad elusive. Is that fair to say?*

CC: I found out what I set out to find, and yes, there were many surprises along the path. Funny and profound things happen when you chart a course for the truth. When I set out to write *Off The Radar*, I was guided by a single question: had my father been a spy? But the narrative that followed was much richer and more soul-nourishing than anything I could have imagined.

SH: *You describe yourself as being "do-rageh," having two different veins carrying American and Iranian bloodlines. You have written, "I would come to understand that I am the by-product of the two most ethnocentric cultures on the face of the earth." Can you expand on that? My children are also the product of both bloodlines, as I suspect are many children of our readers, so I am particularly interested in hearing how that has influenced your sense of identity.*

CC: Being an Iranian-American is like being a child of divorce. You watch your motherland and fatherland demonize each other. Your mom calls your dad the Great Satan. He calls her the Axis of Evil. The divorce is epic and it's happening on the world stage and it's drawn out over 40 years. And you're a kid caught between two warring parents. You're scarred and you're wise and the rift between your parents has knocked you around for a few decades and it's also deepened you. But here's what all children of divorce know: You never stop hoping your parents will get back together.

SH: *Thank you so much for giving us your time, Cyrus. I hope you'll keep writing because you do it so beautifully, perhaps a gift from your Persian side?!*

CC: *Ghabelli nadareh!*

*Available for purchase at: <https://www.amazon.com/Off-Radar-Fathers-Mothers-Heroism/dp/0399158502>

Another Successful SDMA-PCC Mehregan Fall Fête

Ladan Akbarnia, Ph.D.



Mohammad Barrangi (Iranian, b. 1988), *Migration*, 2018. Reverse transfer printmaking on raw canvas. The San Diego Museum of Art, Purchased with funds provided by Gita Khadiri and Fred Khoroushi, Patrons of the Arts of Iran, and Persian Cultural Center, 2021.50. © Mohammad Barrangi

This year's Mehregan Fall Fête, a collaboration between The San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA) and the Persian Cultural Center (PCC) of San Diego, featured a late afternoon performance by Aida Shahghasemi and her band in the Museum's sculpture garden. Some of the attendees enjoyed an exclusive tour of the Arts of Iran and Americas galleries by Anita Feldman, SDMA's Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Education, and Ladan Akbarnia, Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art. The galleries currently feature four newly installed works of Iranian contemporary art. There was also a special appearance by artist Ala Ebtekar, whose works are among the pieces on display. Our PCC representative, event organizer, and MC—

Anahita Babaei—kicked off

the performance portion of the evening by introducing Roxana Velásquez, the Maruja Baldwin Executive Director of SDMA, Gita Khadiri, Trustee of the San Diego Museum of Art, and Ladan Akbarnia—all of whom spoke about the fundraiser's objectives and thanked the PCC and SDMA organizers, donors, and supporters who bring these important initiatives to fruition. Ms. Velásquez also announced the Museum's first acquisition of a work of Iranian contemporary art, an impressive large-scale collage print on canvas entitled *Migration* (2018) by London-based artist Mohammad Barrangi.

Barrangi combines contemporary printmaking with Persian and Arabic illustrated manuscript traditions to explore narratives about personal experience and identity as well as more universal themes through a cross-cultural, mixed media approach. His artistic practice involves handmade traditional calligraphy tools to produce small works, many of which are expanded into large-scale murals via laser photocopying, collagraph, and collage. Barrangi's work has been featured in international publications, festivals, and prizes, such as the Muestra del IV Premi Internacional, Tragaluz; The 6th International Tokyo Mini-Print Triennial; Bologna Illustrators Exhibition 2018; Story Museum, Oxford; and the Hafez Gallery in Saudi Arabia. The artist's works can be found in renowned collections such as the British Museum, The

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and now, SDMA.

Migration was recently featured in a solo show organized by Advocartsy in LA. The newly-acquired work is inspired by the *Mantiq al-tayr* (Conference of the Birds), an allegorical poem attributed to Persian Sufi poet Farid al-Din 'Attar (d. ca. 1221) about a group of birds seeking the mythical bird king, *Simurgh*. A metaphor for the mystical path of the Sufi, or Muslim mystic, toward enlightenment, the work also touches upon the artist's own history as an Iranian immigrant to the United Kingdom and his personal journey of assimilation.

Attendees at the Mehregan fête were also impressed by a pair of moving prints and a powerful quadriptych panel by Ala Ebtekar, all three of which are currently on loan and open to consideration for acquisition. Ebtekar is an Iranian-American artist with an MFA from Stanford University working between San Francisco, the Gulf Region, and Tehran. His multimedia practice reflects in-depth intellectual, material, and technological research into the last 1,000 years of image making and visual traditions in Iran, the Islamic world, Europe, and North America, including their relationship to the present. Ebtekar's work explores scientific traditions associated with Islamic visual culture, among them optics, astrology, and cosmology. Discourses of Muslim scientists, mystics, poets, and polymaths become woven into the artist's exploration of light as both concept and medium, or of Islamic narrative and bookmaking traditions, and how such ideas and traditions relate to the current local and global moment.

The two prints on view in the Arts of Iran gallery share the title *Under Every Deep a Lower Deep Opens*, but belong to two distinct but related series inspired by the Persian Sufi poet Hafiz (d. 1390) and American Transcendentalist poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (d. 1882). Each series was produced from an entire printed book containing collections of poetry from Hafez and Emerson. Pages were disassembled from each book and overlaid with an illuminated "lattice" inspired by vegetal and geometric ornament in Persian visual traditions. The title for both works references Emerson's 1841 essay, "Circles," in which the poet reflects on the circular, continuous, and universal nature of creativity. Writing over 400 years after Hafiz, Emerson admired his Persian counterpart as a "poet for poets." A further century later, Ebtekar pays respect to both literary figures, creating a visual dialogue uniting them—and perhaps himself and viewers, too—in a creative, transcendent continuum. In *Zenith*, on view in the Arts of Americas galleries, Ebtekar employs the cyanotype technique invented by Sir John Herschel, treating the surface with potassium ferricyanide and ferric ammonium citrate, where the red iron changes into blue by being exposed to the sun. The artist then paints Chinese-inspired clouds recalling 14th-century Persian manuscript illustrations. Exploring light as both medium and technique, the artist illustrates a "journey to/through light," referencing the Sufi philosopher Suhrawardi (d. 1191) and his *ishraqi* philosophy ("wisdom of light").

While in past years the annual fundraiser supported the opening of a gallery dedicated to the Arts of Iran as well as important conservation projects enabling the display of historic works in the collection, a new initiative was launched in 2020 to raise funds specifically for the acquisition of art made in Iran and the Persianate world or by Iranian contemporary artists. We are delighted to report that the acquisition of *Migration* was made possible entirely by the support of our community's generous patrons of the arts of Iran. We hope this is the start of a growing trend to build our local collection of Iranian art and material culture.



Ala Ebtekar (Iranian-American, b. 1978), *Under Every Deep a Lower Deep Opens (Hafez)*, 2015, Edition 4/10. Archival pigment print on book pages mounted on Arches. Courtesy of Gallery 16.



Ala Ebtekar (Iranian-American, b. 1978), *Under Every Deep a Lower Deep Opens (Emerson)*, 2015, Edition 9/11. Archival pigment print on book pages mounted on Arches. On loan from Gallery 16.



Ala Ebtekar (Iranian-American, b. 1978), *Zenith VIII*, 2021. Acrylic over cyanotype exposed to sunlight on canvas. Collection of the artist.



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Ladan Akbarnia, Ph.D., Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art, The San Diego Museum of Art

Patriotic Millionaires: Can Taxing the Rich Save America?

Recently, members of *Peyk's* editorial board were invited, along with other members of the Iranian American community, to a presentation by the Patriotic Millionaires entitled: *Tax the Rich! Save America*. Patriotic Millionaires is a self-described non-partisan advocacy group made up of high net worth individuals in the U.S. who promote public policy solutions to encourage political equality and seek to restructure the American tax system so that the wealthy (including themselves) will pay a greater share of the tax burden. The group was founded in 2010 and first came to prominence when they called for the end of the Bush-era tax cuts.

Morris Pearl, chairman of the board of Patriotic Millionaires, took questions and answers after the presentation, which covered topics found in his 2021 book co-authored with Erica Payne (founder and president of Patriotic Millionaires), entitled *Tax the Rich: How Lies, Loopholes, and Lobbyists Make the Rich Even Richer*.

The presentation was timely as Congress has been considering President Biden's "Build Back Better" agenda, a plan to create jobs, cut taxes, and lower costs for working families—all paid for by making the tax code fairer and making the wealthiest Americans and large corporations pay their fair share.

After the meeting, *Peyk* caught up with Mr. Pearl to ask a few questions for the benefit of *Peyk's* readers. *Peyk* does not specifically endorse Mr. Pearl's comments; these questions and answers are for informational purposes for our readers. The interview has been edited for space and clarity.

-*Peyk* Editorial Board

Peyk: Thank you for taking the time to join us, Mr. Pearl. It was a pleasure hearing you speak at a recent presentation. Will you tell us about what prompted you to write your book, *Tax the Rich*?

Morris Pearl (MP): Our nation is experiencing inequality and it is becoming increasingly destabilized. We are seeing many of our neighbors succumbing to deaths of despair, becoming addicted to opioids, and just giving up—because they are becoming more and more aware that the economy is rigged and that they cannot make it. The American Dream is no longer alive for them. They have given up hope of living like their parents lived, much less doing better.

I want to do something about that. I want my granddaughter to grow up in a nation filled with people who can work for a living and make enough money to support their families and pay their bills and have some money left over for a few luxuries like premium ice cream. Because that is the nation where I grew up and was able to

invest and do well. Gross inequality does not work well over the long term. They tried that in South Africa when I was a teenager. It did not end well for the rich people.

Peyk: Let's back up to where you say that the American economy is rigged. What do you mean by that?

MP: I mean that the rules are set so that those people who are rich tend to get richer, and those people who are not tend not to get richer. Our political and economic system favors the rich. The obvious example (and a main point of our book) is that income derived from capital is taxed at substantially lower rates than income derived from labor.



| Income From | Up To | Ordinary Income Tax Rate | Capital Gains Tax Rate |
|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| \$0 | \$19,750 | 10% | 0% |
| \$19,750 | \$80,250 | 12% | 0% |
| \$80,250 | \$171,050 | 22% | 15% |
| \$171,050 | \$326,600 | 24% | 15% |
| \$326,600 | \$414,700 | 32% | 15% |
| \$414,700 | \$622,050 | 35% | 20% |
| \$622,050 | ∞ | 37% | 20% |

Another example is that our nation has strict regulations on labor unions, restraining the ability of workers to organize with each other in order to bargain as a unit with an employer who employs many workers, but the capitalists are not constrained by regulation.

Peyk: You mentioned that investment income is taxed at a lower rate than the income tax associated with labor, which is part of your explanation about why the rich are not being taxed enough. Was it always this way and what led to the laws being changed to favor investment income?

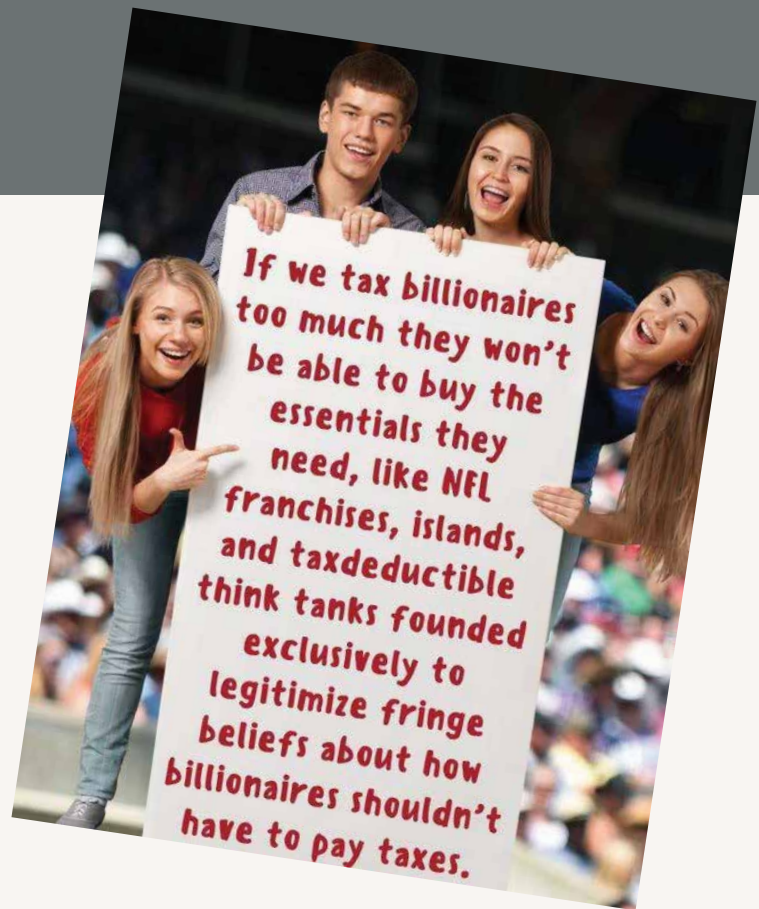
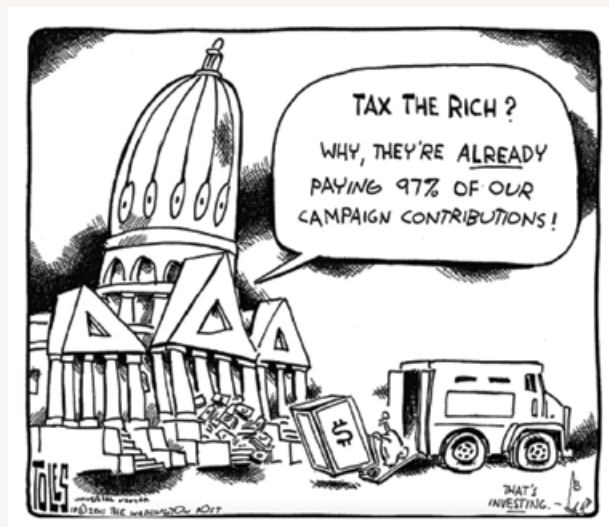
MP: Tax rates have gone up and down over time, and I do not read people's minds so I cannot tell you what was going through the minds of the policy makers in the past. For the record, the rates for labor and investments had been equal as recently as the late 1980s. I ascribe the policies to a few possible causes:

- Elected officials spend huge amounts of time raising money, and therefore spend a lot of time hanging out with and talking to the major donors. That means that they become very familiar with whatever it is that frustrates

Continued on page 11

and annoys their donors. And taxes on capital investments are very visible—instead of money being deducted from a paycheck, the investor actually has to take out a check and a pen and write out the check and sign it and mail it in. A lot of people don't like that, so their elected officials have come up with special benefits for being an investor. And those special benefits have an enormous compounding effect. By not paying taxes on my investment gains every year, I am—every single year—wealthier than I would otherwise have been, and that means that I actually have more investment gains each year than would have otherwise been the case. Lower taxes lead to higher balances, higher balances lead to more income, and more income leads to higher balances the following year—a cycle that works very well for those people who have the good fortune to be wealthy.

- The other issue is a fiction that a few people have been propagating that the government has to encourage people to invest, because rich people will go on strike unless the government comes up with policies to appease them. That does not make any sense. Think about it for a moment from the point of view of someone who has millions of dollars of savings. The person could take all their money in cash and stick in a safe in their house. That would result in no taxes (because they would have no income). Or, the person could invest in very conservative investments (government bonds or something similar) or the person could invest in stocks. We live in a capitalistic society with a more-or-less free market, so the market rates of different investments go up and down as supply and demand for investments shift. However, it makes sense to invest money, whatever the tax rate. If the tax rate is 20%, I would rather have some income and pay 20% in taxes and keep the other 80%. If the tax rate is 80%, I would rather have some income and pay 80% in taxes and keep the other 20%. As long as the tax rate is not 100%, paying the tax is always better than not having any income.



Peyk: What can average Americans do to reverse the decades-long trend of increasing wealth and income inequality?

MP: Americans can and should call their senators and representatives, and insist that they do something about it. If their elected representatives do not agree with them, they should elect different representatives.

Peyk: Thank you for your time.



Prior to his work with Patriotic Millionaires, Morris Pearl was a managing director at BlackRock, one of the largest investment firms in the world. His work included the Maiden Lane transactions and assessing governments' potential losses from bank bailouts in the United States and in Europe. Prior to BlackRock, Mr. Pearl had a long tenure on Wall Street where he invented some of the securitization technology

connecting America's capital markets to consumers in need of credit. He is a CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) Charter Holder, a member of the CFA Institute, the New York Society of Securities Analysts, and on the board of Verified Voting and The Center for Political Accountability.

More information can be found at the Patriotic Millionaires website: <https://patrioticmillionaires.org/>



A Defaced Mural, Old and New Beginnings, and A Record-Breaking Summer

By Danial Golforoush

It almost feels like the distant past when, across the globe, football on all levels was halted in the spring of 2020 as COVID-19 cases were increasing by the day. The future of the game was just in limbo—no fans in stadiums, no ticket sales, no entertainment, no badge to play and bleed for. But that's old news! Everyone, from fans to the clubs, from the players to the media worked extra hard to make up for a difficult and depressing year of football and life. 2021 yielded a summer unlike any other! We not only witnessed two of the all-time greats of the game change teams during the same transfer window, but Italy also took home the Euros in a dramatic penalty shootout over England, and Cristiano Ronaldo broke Ali Daei's men's international goalscorer record.

A Defaced Mural: England's Bad Luck in Penalty Shootouts Continues, So Does the Racism

A free-flowing, fresh-yet-calculated Italian team—best described by Joshua Robinson's *Wall Street Journal* article title: "This Isn't Your Nonna's Italian Soccer Team"—came head to head with Gareth Southgate's Three Lines in Wembley Stadium. In a match with so many new and old talents on the field, goals, assists, and dramas, it is unfortunate yet important that the racism that some players faced overtook the headlines. It almost felt inevitable that it would happen. As the Italians were celebrating their team's triumphs, England came to a rude awakening that the loss of the European Championship was not their biggest defeat of the night. What started as a moment of national courage and ambitions for future endeavors turned into an unstoppable tsunami of thousands of targeted, racially abusive insults on social media towards three of the Black players of the team—Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho, and Bukayo Saka. This trio had earlier missed their penalties in the shootout and thousands of so-called fans took it upon themselves to hurl racial invective at these individuals.

Some went as far as defacing Rashford's mural, which was put there to celebrate him as the individual who single-handedly raised millions of pounds to help provide less fortunate children free meals during the summer. The message was sent: a local hero is loved and celebrated until he misses a penalty kick. It is important to note that many fans gathered and placed thoughtful and heartwarming notes in place of the vandalized sections of the mural. Many others gave their support and thoughts to players over social media or in person near training grounds and stadiums. However, the damage has been done and the questions remain. Why are players the only people who are being relied upon for positive change? Why is the football hierarchy around the world so unwilling to take any actions?



Old and New Beginnings: The GOATs Move in the Same Transfer Window

No one in their right mind would suggest that Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, two of the icons of the game, would be changing teams in the same transfer window or actually any window. Messi has been perceived as a one-club man, that club being FC Barcelona, and it seemed as though Ronaldo would be retiring at Juventus after a rumored 2-year extension on his contract. Well, we were all wrong. Within weeks of one another, Lionel Messi moved to Paris Saint-Germain F.C. and Cristiano Ronaldo returned home to Manchester United after 12 years. These deals seemed financially inconceivable—not only because of the negative effect of COVID-19 on the teams' finances, but because the teams that could afford such multi-million dollar deals were not interested. Rest assured that these transfers were fruitful for both the players and their teams. Manchester United has gained more than 7 million new followers since the transfer was completed on August 27. This transfer not only broke the Premier League's jersey sales within 12 hours, but the post announcing his return to Manchester United became the most liked sports-related post on Instagram. Messi's move to PSG was not only fruitful to Paris but also to Jordan and Nike, sponsors of the team, who have sold more than \$140 million worth of jerseys (fun fact: this earned Michael Jordan more than \$7 million in a week).



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A Record-Breaking Summer: Goodbye Ali Daei, Hello Cristiano Ronaldo

It was inevitable that Cristiano Ronaldo would break Ali Daei's all-time men's international goalscorer record, and it came during a dramatic win against Ireland, with the Portuguese player now leading the board with 111 goals and the retired Iranian trailing with 109 goals. Cristiano expressed his pride and gratitude for conquering such a prestigious record, posting on Instagram: "I can't even start to express myself in words! I'm thrilled with an overwhelming sensation! From all the records that I have broken during my career -- and fortunately, there have been a few -- this one is very special for me and it's certainly on the shelf of the achievements that make me truly proud. Another reason for me to appreciate this achievement as much as I do right now is because Ali Daei has set the standards at such a high level, that at some point even I started thinking that I might never catch him." While Ronaldo has broken the men's record, he has only just broken into the top 10 international goalscorers of all time, as all other record-holders are ex-professionals in the women's game.

Unfortunately, not many knew about the Iranian goal scorer, Ali Daei, before he was dethroned by Ronaldo; however, many Iranians take special pride in his record and the tally that he achieved for the national team. Daei congratulated and paid his respects to Ronaldo, posting on Instagram: "Congratulations to Cristiano Ronaldo, I am honoured that this remarkable achievement will belong to Ronaldo - great champion of football and caring humanist who inspires and impacts lives throughout the world." While it would be more poetic if the two had played one another closer to the time of the record-breaking, they did face off against each other in a 2006 World Cup group match, Iran vs. Portugal. That day, Ronaldo scored his 12th international goal as Daei watched the match from the bench as a substitute. I wonder if he thought that one day the young Portuguese would break his record 15 years down the line?

Events in San Diego



Jong-e Farhanghi

Friday, November 12, 2021, at 6 PM

Three Chefs In the Kitchen—Virtual Cooking Program

Saturday, November 13, 2021, at 11 AM

Poetry Night

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 7 PM

San Diego Asian Film Festival

Movie: *Hit The Road*

Saturday, October 30, 2021, at 3 PM

Tuesday, November 2, 2021, at 7:55 PM

Ultrastar Cinemas Mission Valley

7510 Hazard Center Drive, San Diego, CA 92108

Movie: *Playing with Stars* (world premiere)

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 7 PM

Directed by Hatef Alimardani

Ultrastar Cinemas Mission Valley

7510 Hazard Center Drive, San Diego, CA 92108

PCC Youth Committee's Hosts Third Food Drive

Sunday, November 14, 2021, from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Location: Mt. Carmel High School

9550 Carmel Mt. Rd., San Diego, CA 92129

The Sublime Sound of the Setar with Kourosh Tahgavi

Friday, November 19, 2021, 7:30 PM

Iranian-American Center

6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121

Info: 858-552-9355

Movie and Discussion

Thursday, December 16, 2021, at 7:30 PM

Yalda Celebration

Friday, December 17, 2021, at 7 PM

LA JOLLA CHRISTMAS PARADE & HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Dec 5, 2021, 11:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Parade at 1:30 PM

Girard Avenue & Prospect Street

La Jolla, CA 92037

FLEET WEEK SAN DIEGO 2021

Honoring the Men and Women of our Military

Open to the Public Nov 4 - Nov 11, 2021

SAN DIEGO BAY PARADE OF LIGHTS

Dec 12 - Dec 19, 2021

VIRTUAL TOURS

San Diego Museum of Art

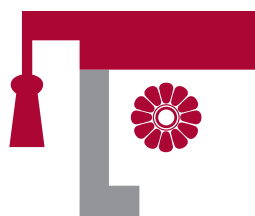
Dec 17, 2020 - ongoing

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD

San Diego Junior Theatre

Oct 29 - Nov 14, 2021





Iranian-American Scholarship Fund

Supporting Excellence

The Board of Directors of the Iranian-American Scholarship Fund (IASF) would like to extend sincere thanks to all who have supported this Scholarship Fund for the past 22 years. Scholarships for the 2021-2022 academic year will be awarded to 15 outstanding applicants. This brings our total to 369 scholarships awarded to date. Congratulations to this year's outstanding recipients.

2021 Graduate Recipients

Nakisa Barzani Sadeghi
Harvard U – Public Health

The Massih and Haleh Tayebi Annual Scholarship
The Belghys Tayebi Annual Memorial Scholarship (1)
The Habib Tayebi Annual Memorial Scholarship (2)

Jonathan Eyshi
Florida Int. U – Medicine

The Behrooz and Nasrin (Owsia) Akbarnia Annual Scholarship
The Mahmood and Fereshteh Mahdavi Annual Scholarship

Delana Sobhani
Harvard Law

The Fred and Gita (Khadiri) Khoroushi Annual Scholarship
The Mojdehi Family Scholarship
The Bahram and Manijeh Manoocheri Annual Scholarship (3)

Noah Javan Rofagha
Georgetown U – Public Policy

The Galen A. and Jaleh A. Etemad Family Fund Annual Scholarship

Emon Alavi
Philadelphia College –
Osteopathic Medicine

The Khosrow Nasr Memorial Scholarship (4)
The Rointun Bunshah Annual Memorial Scholarship (5)

Armaghan Mardashti
Noorda College –
Osteopathic Medicine

The Jafar Farnam Annual Scholarship
The Hormoz Azar Scholarship

Saba Daneshpooy
Rowan U – Medicine

The Shamsedeen Zayanderoudi Annual Memorial Scholarship (6)

2021 Undergraduate Recipients

Mona Amirseyedian
UC Irvine –
Political Science

The Farhang Mehr Memorial and Parichehr Mehr Honorary Annual Scholarship (7)
The Zarrinkelk Family Scholarship

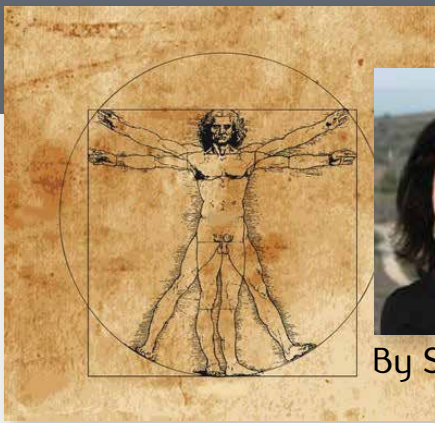
Deana Moghaddas
UC Los Angeles –
Data Theory

The Persian Cultural Center and ISSD Annual Scholarship
The AIAP (Association of Iranian-American Professionals) Annual Scholarship
The Habib and Sharareh Hariri Annual Scholarship

| | |
|---|---|
| Tarah Anasseri Florida Int. U – Psychology | The Hossein Samadi Memorial Scholarship (8) The Hassan Julazadeh Memorial Scholarship (9) The Fereydoon Mehrayin Annual Memorial Scholarship (10) |
| Madelyne Yasameen Etami George Washington U – Public Health | The Zari Loghmani Honorary Scholarship (11) The Payam Scholarship (12) The Peyman and Maryam (Famourzadeh) Farhat Annual Scholarship |
| Sepanta Sarraf UC Berkeley – History | The Galen A. and Jaleh A. Etemad Family Fund Annual Scholarship The Jamshidi-Zadeh Annual Scholarship |
| Rojan Javaheri USC – Neuroscience & Piano | The Soheil Nasiri Annual Memorial Scholarship (13) The Golamreza and Mozzaian Bagherzadeh Memorial Scholarship (14) |
| Cyrus Parsa Hatam Princeton U – Public & International Affairs | The M. Ali Aghassi Annual Memorial Scholarship (15) The Susie and Kazem Niamir Annual Memorial Scholarship (16) |
| Kylie Rae Martin Boise State U – Science Health | The Morteza Ansari Memorial Scholarship (17) |

The scholarships listed by numbers have been established by: (1 & 2) The Tayebi Family; (3) Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kassebaum and Mr. and Mrs. Michael Manoocheri; (4) The Nasr Family and Friends; (5) Mrs. Zohreh Firoozabadi Bunshah; (6) Mr. and Mrs. Shahyar Zayanderoudi; (7) The Mehr Family and Friends; (8) The Samadi Family and Friends; (9) The Julazadeh Family; (10) Mr. and Mrs. Kourosh Mehrayin; (11) The Bagheri and Estakhry/Aghassi Families; (12) Ms. Parisa Khosravi and Payam; (13) Ms. Roya Parviz and Mr. James Henderson; (14) Ms. Lili Forouraghi; (15) Ms. Sarah Aghassi, Esq; (16) Mr. and Mrs. Fuller; and (17) Friends of the Ansari Family.

Our sincere thanks to the following (and those who wish to remain anonymous) for making the 2021-2022 Scholarships Possible: Behrooz and Nasrin (Owsia) Akbarnia, AIAP, Sarah Aghassi, Siavash Akhgarnia, Poursan Amin, Sanam Ansari, Omid Asbaghi, Kazem Attai, Hormoz Azar, Ghazal Badiozamani, Kaveh and Soraya Bagheri, Kourosh and Mahsheed Bagheri, Baharak (last name withheld), Zohreh F. Bunshah, Capital Group (Michael Triessi), Arsalan and Sholeh Dadkhah, Simin Darian, Ramin Elahi, M. S. Emami, Nicole Entezari, Shahri Estakhry, The Galen A. and Jaleh A. Etemad Family Fund, Aria Fani, Nadia Farjood, Laura Farjood, Jafar Farnam, Roya Fathiamini, Safa Farnam, Lili Forouraghi, Sheryl Frakes, Maryam Niamir and Richard W. Fuller, Mohammad Hassan Ghaed, Ali and Anna Gheissari, Kasaan Hammon, Habib and Sharareh Hariri, Pari Hashemi, James Henderson, Ali Hosseini, ISSD, Mohammad and Jila Jamshidi-Zadeh, Laleh Javanbakht, Sussan Johnsen, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Julazadeh Family, Anahita Kalantar, Thomas and Marjan Kassebaum, Rassoul Ketabian, Yasmin Keyvan, Fred and Gita (Khadiri) Khoroushi, Samira Khazai, Hamid Kheradmandnia, Fereshteh and Mahmood Mahdavi, Paasha Mahdavi, Maheronaghsh Family, Bahram and Manijeh Manoocheri, Michael and Katie Manoocheri, Mehran Mehr, Kourosh and Farnaz Mehrayin, Ali and Haida Mojdehi, Azita Mokhtari, Kamyar Monsef, Reyhane Mostofi, Nahid Nader-Hashemi, Hafez Nasr, Ziba Nasr, Cheryl Navidi, Mehregan Nejat, Network for Good, Vahid and Adeleh Niki, Farnaz Noohi, Roya Parviz, PCC, Pledgeling Foundation, Morteza Rahimi, Isabel Rohani, Negin Sabbaghian, Ali and Ludi Sadr, Manouchehr Salehi, Samadi Family, Mahmood and Fereshteh Sarraf, Ali Sasani, SDG&E, Majid and Negar Shahbaz, Behnaz Shahidi, Leila Sharghi, SHINE Coaching & Consulting, Homa Smith, Golsa Soraya, Sara and Kourosh Taghavi, Haleh and Massih Tayebi, Mahsa Vahidi, Virasb Vahidi, Baharak Zali, Mehdi and Mardjan Zarabi, Majid Zarrinkelk, Shahyar and Laleh Zayanderoudi, and Sholeh and Bijan Zayer.



By Sanaz Majd, MD



Chronic Diarrhea

About 3-5% of the population reportedly suffers from chronic diarrhea, which is defined as a persistent change in stool consistency ranging from loose to watery stools. For some, it is pervasive and daily, while for others it is intermittent but still frequent enough to impair quality of life.

Let's review some of the most common causes.

Medication Side Effects:

Antibiotics:

Antibiotics kill bacteria and this sometimes includes the “good” bacteria in our gut that is maintaining that equilibrium that keeps our stomach and intestines in check. Therefore, antibiotics can interfere with this harmonious balance and result in uncomfortable diarrhea.

Of course, diarrhea is only one of the numerous risks of unnecessary antibiotic overuse, which is currently of epidemic proportions, having led to the immense antibiotic resistance that the U.S. is facing. Hence, its use should be limited to true bacterial infections, such as for urinary tract infections, cellulitis (skin infections), bacterial pneumonias, etc.

Antibiotics do not kill viruses and, hence, are not indicated for upper respiratory infections or the flu. Unfortunately, they are often erroneously prescribed for “sinusitis,” which is much more often caused by viruses and less commonly by bacteria.

Metformin:

This is a very commonly used, first-line generic medication used to treat diabetes and sometimes prediabetes and polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). Its gastrointestinal (GI) side effects sometimes limits its use in some people, as it can cause diarrhea and abdominal discomfort, most especially in those who take it without food. However, the side effects do tend to dissipate in most people within a few weeks after initiation as the body adapts.

NSAIDs:

Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Aleve, Naproxen, and Meloxicam are all examples of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs). They can irritate the stomach lining and diarrhea is also a reported side effect as a result. For those who are sensitive to its effects, acetaminophen may be an option, as it is not an NSAID but a pain reliever and fever reducer.

Magnesium Products:

Numerous over-the-counter medications contain magnesium, including Milk of Magnesia and Mylanta used to treat indigestion, certain laxatives, and supplements, including some that contain calcium. However, diarrhea is one of its most commonly reported side effects of magnesium.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS):

By far one of the top causes of chronic intermittent diarrhea is IBS. I've covered this topic in much greater detail in a recent *Peyk* article, but these patients tend to experience constipation, diarrhea, or both, associated with some type of abdominal discomfort on and off throughout their lives. There is often a mental health component (but not always), as stress, anxiety, and depression are common triggers of the symptoms, as are certain foods.

Infections:

Most cases of infectious diarrhea are actually viral, and tend to resolve on their own without treatment. But here are the top causes of non-viral infectious diarrhea, which tend to cause more severe diarrhea than its viral counterparts and they also tend to be more acute and less chronic:

Clostridium Difficile:

“C. diff” is a bacteria that can overgrow in our GI system when given the opportunity. Antibiotic use is the most common culprit—another reason to curtail unnecessary antibiotic use. It achieves this by destroying the good bacteria and allowing C. diff to overgrow and set up shop in your GI system.

People who are immunocompromised can more easily contract it, such as the elderly, hospitalized patients, those on chemo, or those on medications used to treat autoimmune disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, and lupus. In addition, there are reports that certain medications that suppress stomach acid secretion can also predispose to C. diff—and there are many people who routinely take this group of drugs, as they are readily available over the counter. These medications include omeprazole, pantoprazole, famotidine, and ranitidine.

Other Bacteria:

Campylobacter, *Salmonella*, and *Shigella* are examples of other bacterial infections of the gut that can cause diarrhea, albeit more acute. These infections are less common in the United States and more prevalent in those who have had recent international travel. However, occasional reported outbreaks have occurred with contaminated vegetables, meat, poultry, eggs, and unpasteurized milk in the U.S.; these outbreaks can also spread more quickly in daycare centers and nursing homes.

Parasites:

Protozoa, including *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*, are parasitic GI infections that are typically either food- or water-borne. They are less common in the U.S. and more prevalent in those who travel internationally, including to nearby Mexico. But there have been reported outbreaks in those who consume water sources while hiking and camping in the U.S., in addition to daycare centers and public swimming pools.

Medical Conditions:

Celiac Disease:

Celiac disease is a hereditary autoimmune condition, which means that the body erroneously regards certain parts of itself as “foreign” and mounts an immune attack. This is often in response to the consumption of gluten, which inflames the small intestine and results in diarrhea. Celiac disease is more common in those of European descent, but also increasingly found in those from India, Northern China, and the Middle East, as well.

Note that gluten “intolerance” is not the same thing as true celiac disease. Those with intolerance do not mount an immune-mediated response, but simply fare better without gluten in their diet. The theory is that it is due to the concomitant absence of “fructans” which often accompany foods higher in gluten.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):

Crohn’s disease and Ulcerative Colitis are the two IBD subsets—they often have a genetic component and tend to run in families. People who have these conditions begin to experience symptoms rather early on in life, during their teens, twenties, and thirties. And they may also have other accompanying symptoms, such as fever, joint pain, mouth ulcers, and unexplained eye redness. They also tend to report more bloody diarrhea, although not always.

Hyperthyroidism:

Although uncommon, a hyperactive thyroid can also trigger diarrhea in some people. The condition can also cause elevated heart rate and blood pressure, heart palpitations, and increased anxiety. There tends to be a genetic component as it is often hereditary. A simple blood test can screen for hyperthyroidism.

Dietary:

Food intolerance can also cause chronic diarrhea. Not everyone is the same, however, and may also differ in the limit of tolerance of a specific food item consumed. For instance, you may tolerate a little bit of milk in your cereal, but an entire cup of milk may drive you to the nearest toilet.

Here are some common culprits:

- sugar substitutes—these include diet sodas, sugar-free sweets, and sugar substitutes that are added to your coffee or *chaiee*
- lactase—this includes anything derived from dairy cows, including milk, ice cream, cheese, and yogurt
- caffeine—besides the obvious coffee, do not forget *chaiee*, chocolate, and sodas
- alcohol

When Should You Worry About Chronic Diarrhea?

Most chronic diarrhea is benign and self-resolving. However, the following red flag features make it more concerning:

- severe diarrhea
- unintentional weight loss
- family history of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (like Crohn’s and Ulcerative Colitis), celiac disease, or colon cancer
- bloody stools or black stools
- severe abdominal pain

Diagnostic Tests

If diarrhea is persistent, recurrent, or bothersome in any way, your doctor may initiate a workup to discover the cause. Here are some of the tests that may help shed light on your symptoms:

- CBC—this would help determine if there is accompanying anemia, which may be present in those with celiac disease or those with bleeding in the stool, even if microscopic
- TSH—this is to rule out hyperthyroidism
- Electrolytes—if diarrhea is significant, it can sometimes cause electrolyte imbalances
- Celiac panel—this would help rule out celiac disease, as long as there has not been any gluten restriction in the diet, which can mask results and yield a false negative
- Stool studies—they can screen for bacterial causes, including *C. diff*, and also ova and parasites; if there is a concern for possible blood in the stool, a stool test for blood may also be useful
- Colonoscopy—depending on the symptoms and other work up results, your doctor may consider a referral to a gastroenterologist for a possible colonoscopy, which is a camera scope that is placed through the rectum to view the lining of the colon.

Sanaz Majd, MD, is a board-certified Family Medicine physician and host of the Majd MD YouTube channel, reviewing the latest medical topics and headlines: www.youtube.com/MajdMD. You can also follow her on Facebook or Instagram: @SMajdMD.



Importance of Fat in the Diet

By Mohammad Ahrar, PhD

Introduction

Fats, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water are substances the body needs for health and normal growth. These nutrients have previously been discussed in several issues of *Peyk* (*Peyk* ##159-175). This article highlights the importance of fat in the diet and the pros and cons of consumption of different types of fats.

Why do you need fat in your diet?

The reasons that humans need fat are summarized below:

- Fats and lipids provide twice as much energy as carbohydrates and proteins.
- The brain is mainly made of fat. The myelin sheath that covers the axon of most nerve cells is made of lipids.
- The membranes of all cells in the body are made up of lipids (mainly phospholipids). Without these molecules, cells cannot function and organisms cannot survive.
- Fats are necessary for absorption of fat-soluble vitamins, such as vitamins A, D, E, and K. Without fat in the diet, the absorption of these vitamins would be in jeopardy.
- Females with abnormally low body fat may have problems with fertility.
- Fats insulate the body and support and cushion all organs of the body.

What are fats and oils made of?

Fats are usually of animal origin and normally are solid at room temperature. Oils are of plant origin, mostly liquid. Fats and oils are made of two components—fatty acids (made of a chain of carbon atoms) and glycerol (a three-carbon alcohol). When 3 fatty acids are attached to a glycerol, the compound is called a triglyceride or neutral fat. Most fats in animals and human bodies are in the form of triglycerides.

Types of fats in foods

Fats can vary based on the composition of their fatty acids and the presence of minerals and other molecules. Saturated fatty acids contain chains of carbon that are completely bound with hydrogen ions (saturated with hydrogen). When most of the fatty acids in a fat are saturated, the fat is known as saturated fat. Most fats from animal sources such as fatty meat, milk fat, and eggs are mainly saturated fat. If one or more of the carbons in a fatty acid chain is (are) not fully bound with hydrogen atoms, the compound is

considered unsaturated fat. Most plant-based oils, such as olive oil, corn oil, and sunflower seed oil, contain large proportions of unsaturated fatty acids.

Absorption of fats in the digestive system

When you eat fat, it is broken down into smaller globules by your bile and then digested by pancreatic and intestinal enzymes into simple compounds, namely glycerol and fatty acids. The absorbed fatty acids and glycerol will be used to produce energy, will be converted to other compounds, or will be stored as fat in some tissues. Metabolism of lipids occurs in the liver, as well as in other organs of the body. The liver produces more than 70% of cholesterol and a variety of fats that the body needs for different purposes, such as the formation of steroid hormones and conversion to other compounds.

Are saturated fats harmful to the body?

Consumption of saturated fats and their effects on human health is very controversial. Some medical studies indicate that moderate consumption of saturated fats do not raise the risk of heart disease. (3) Other reports indicate that saturated fats increase Low Density Lipoproteins (LDL, so called bad cholesterol), but unsaturated fats increase High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL, so called good cholesterol). Therefore, they can increase the risk of Coronary Heart Disease (CHD).

Note: Most fats and oils contain both saturated as well as unsaturated fatty acids. For example, olive oil contains 14% saturated fatty acids and 86% unsaturated fatty acids. Butter contains 64% saturated fatty acid and 36% unsaturated fatty acids. Coconut oils contain 86.5% saturated fatty acids. More information about fats is explained in *Peyk* #159.

Safe storage of fats and oils

Fats and oils that contain a large percentage of unsaturated fatty acids are more vulnerable to oxidation and rancidity. For example, oils such as corn oil, canola oil, olive oil, and some other types of oils should be kept in dark containers, away from direct light and in cool temperatures. Containers made of copper and iron oxidize fats and oils and should not be used to keep oils and fats.

Do saturated fats have any advantages?

Saturated fats have good use in industry. They are more tolerant of oxidation and have a longer shelf life compared with unsaturated fats. Most commercially-prepared foods, such as cookies and cakes on grocery store shelves (not refrigerated), use saturated fats.

Health benefits of unsaturated fats in the diet

Unsaturated fats are considered beneficial fats because most studies have shown that they can improve blood cholesterol levels, ease inflammation, stabilize heart rhythms, and play a number of other beneficial roles. Unsaturated fats are predominantly found in foods from plants such as vegetable oils, nuts, and seeds. Some fatty acids, such as Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, are considered essential because the body can't make them, so they must come from food. Studies have shown that lipids that contain both Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids are essential for healthy brain function, normal eyesight, healthy nerve cells in growing embryos, and are required for maintenance of normal brain function and learning ability in adults.

Sources of unsaturated fats

Monounsaturated fatty acids are found in high concentrations in olives, avocados, peanuts, nuts such as almonds, hazelnuts, and pecans, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, and canola oils. Polyunsaturated fatty acids include Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids. They are found in high concentrations in plant sources as well as in some animal sources.

Animal products high in Omega-3 fatty acids include cold-water fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel, tuna, anchovies, and sardines. Egg yolk from hens fed alfalfa is also a good source of Omega-3 fatty acids.

Plant sources of Omega-3 fatty acids include chia seeds, flax seeds (linseed), walnuts, hemp seed, rapeseed oil (canola oil), sunflower seeds, corn, soybeans, and some other plant seeds. (For more information about Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, please visit *Peyk* #160.)

Is burning fats and oils harmful?

Carbohydrates are a quick source of energy. One gram of carbohydrate provides about 4 kilocalories, whereas one gram of fat produces about 9 kilocalories. Fats take longer to metabolize and release energy. Excess fat in the diet produces extra calories and if you are not burning the extra calories during physical activity, the extra calories can be stored as fat.

Energy from fats vs energy from carbohydrates

The carbohydrate situation may be more serious. When sugary foods are consumed, they will be converted into simple sugars such as glucose and fructose. (See discussion in *Peyk* #165.) Glucose activates the pancreas to secrete insulin, and insulin is known as a fat-making hormone. It activates millions of adipocytes (fat cells) in the body to convert glucose to fat, rather than burning it as calories. Fructose also plays its part in fat formation. The intermediates of fructose metabolism in the cells are primarily directed toward triglyceride synthesis, which is the major cause of weight gain.

Are trans fats healthy?

Trans fats are made by heating liquid vegetable oils in the presence of hydrogen gas and some catalysts to make saturated fats such as margarine and shortenings. These partially hydrogenated oils stay solid at room temperature and are less likely to become rancid. They can withstand heating without breaking down, making them ideal for frying in fast food restaurants and the food industry. However, medical studies have shown that trans fats are not the best choice of fat for daily consumption because they raise bad LDL and lower good HDL, contribute to insulin resistance, and they create inflammation which has been implicated in heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other chronic conditions.

Dietary guidelines for fat consumption

A - Saturated fat consumption: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), recommends consuming less than 10% of daily calories as saturated fats. As an example, if your total calories needed for 24 hours is 2000 Cal, about 200 calories (10%) can be from saturated fats. If you divide 200 by 9 (Calories produced by 1 gram fat = 9), then the amount of total saturated fat consumption allowed in 24 hours would be about 22 grams.

B - Total fat consumption: The recommendation for total fat consumption in a day is between 20 to 35% of calorie intake, mostly from unsaturated fat. That is about 44 to 77 grams of total fat per day from a variety of foods. The average fat intake in the U.S. is between 100 to 150 grams per day.

Summary

Fats are an essential part of the diet and must be included in the daily food intake for its role in a healthy brain and other organs of the body. While saturated fats may not be as harmful as once thought, evidence clearly shows that unsaturated fat remains the healthiest type of fat. Polyunsaturated fatty acids, such as Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, are essential for health and should be included in the diet. They are found in high concentrations in plant sources as well as in some animal sources. Trans fats are not the best choice of fat for daily consumption.

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The Festival of “Yalda”: Winter Solstice Celebration

By Mojgan Amini



In Iran, **Yalda** is celebrated on the eve of the Winter Solstice, usually around December 21st. It's the longest **night** of the year, and from that day forward, the nights get shorter and the **days** longer. **Yalda** means the birthday or rebirth of the sun.

Yalda is based on the ancient Iranian belief of light vs. dark, good vs. evil. Since the days start getting longer and the nights shorter, this day marks the victory of light over dark, and good over evil.

It is thought that on the longest night, the sun needs help to overcome darkness. On the eve of **Yalda**, bonfires are lit outside to encourage the sun to rise. Inside, family and friends gather together all night long around the *korse*. A *korse* is a very short square table with a source of heat underneath, covered with a super-sized comforter covering the whole table and most of the room. Everyone sits around it, under the cover, and enjoys the cozy, warm experience while listening to poetry, playing music, telling jokes, or telling stories.

The most typical foods served on **Yalda** are a hearty noodle-bean soup (*ashe reshteh*), pomegranates, and fresh and dried fruit and nuts. Summer fruit are preserved throughout the year where they are served with winter foods to symbolize the balance of seasons. These include grapes, honeydew melons, watermelons, pears, oranges, tangerines, apples, and cucumbers.

This festive gathering of storytelling, music, and food lasts all night until the sun triumphantly appears in the morning.



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Noush-e Jan Persian Cuisine

Recipes for Fall and Winter Days . . .

From: *Persian Cuisine Recipes That My Mother Taught Me*
Recipe Author: Maryam Khatamee Cornejo

The gracious and elegant Maryam Khatamee Cornejo passed away on September 23, 2021. Her *Persian Cuisine* cookbook is one of the best that I have ever used, filled with her tried and true recipes. To be a good cook is one thing and to be a great presenter is another. She was both. In her memory, I will be presenting some of her recipes in the upcoming issues of *Peyk*, my way of thanking her for the difference she made for our community. She and her late husband, Dr. Cornejo, worked three years to produce this wonderful cookbook. May they rest in peace and know how grateful we are to them.

-Noush-e Jan Editor

Ash e Anar

(Pomegranate Ash with Meatballs):

Makes 10 servings

Start to finish: 2 ½ hrs

Ingredients:

Ash:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 cup rice | ½ cup chopped fresh basil |
| 2 cups chopped fresh parsley | 2 cups chopped fresh cilantro |
| ½ cup chopped fresh tarragon | 2½ tsp. sea salt |
| 1 tsp. ground black pepper | 1¾ cups pomegranate paste |
| ¾ cup red kidney beans, washed and drained | |

Meatballs:

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| ½ lb. ground lean beef | 1 egg |
| ¼ cup finely grated onions | ½ cup chopped fresh parsley |
| ½ cup chopped fresh coriander | ¼ cup chopped fresh tarragon |
| 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh basil | 1 tsp. sea salt |
| ½ tsp. turmeric | ½ tsp. ground black pepper |
| ½ cup rice soaked in 1 cup water & 2 tsp. salt for 1 hour (then drain and set aside) | |

Mint & turmeric mixture:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| ½ cup extra virgin olive oil | 1 ½ Tbsp. turmeric |
| 4 Tbsp. dried mint flakes | |

Directions:

1. In a large pot (10 quarts), place rice, kidney beans, 2 ½ tsp. salt, 1 tsp. pepper, and add 12 cups of water. Cover, bring to a boil over medium heat for 1 ½ hours until beans are cooked, stirring occasionally.
2. In a small nonstick frying pan, heat ½ cup oil, add turmeric, stir for 30 seconds, remove from the heat, and add dried mint flakes. Stir well and set aside.



3. Add to the pot the ash ingredients of chopped parsley, basil, tarragon, cilantro, and the mint turmeric mixture. Continue cooking for 20 more minutes. Stir occasionally.
4. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients for meatballs. Mix thoroughly and shape into meatballs the size of a medium tangerine, and add one by one to the pot. Cover and cook over low heat for 35 minutes.
5. Pour pomegranate paste into the pot, simmer over low heat for another 30 minutes, and stir occasionally.
6. Check the seasoning, ladle the ash into a tureen or individual bowls, and serve warm.



Public Announcement

SDG&E RESIDENTIAL CONTENT PACKAGE | OCTOBER 2021

Driving an electric vehicle in san diego has just been made easier

SDG&E is installing 336 electric vehicle (EV) chargers at 52 sites to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and air pollution. These locations include popular community facilities in the region such as parks, beaches and schools to accommodate existing EV drivers and encourage EV adoption. The two types of chargers that will be installed include: Level 2 (208-240 volt) chargers that can provide up to 10-20 miles of range per hour of charging and DC fast chargers (480 volt) that can provide about 50-60 miles per hour of charging. For more information, visit sdge.com/EV-Charging.

To support local, regional and state climate and air quality goals, SDG&E has been working aggressively to expand the regional EV charging infrastructure to support zero-emission cars, trucks, buses and more. In the coming years, SDG&E plans to build thousands more chargers regionwide.

Transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in California. It accounts for 41% of all GHG in the state. Transportation is also a significant source of air pollution. Under the Power Your Drive for Schools, Parks and Beaches, SDG&E's goal is to install 50% of the chargers in underserved communities.

Learn more about SDG&E's EV program at sdge.com/lovelectric.

An Immigration Story: A Painful Decision

Reza Khabazian

Leaving your homeland and residing in another - with a totally new culture, language and set of laws and regulations - is very challenging and requires a lot of adaptation that, in most cases, is also very frustrating.

But, looking back at those challenges many years later makes some of them look funny, some amazing, and some, of course, sad. The truth is, no matter how we feel about them, the challenges are, for sure, part of the history of immigration that needs to be documented for use by our grandchildren or simply by historians to picture the hardship that first generation Iranians had to go through to meet those challenges.

The main purpose of this column is to encourage our readers to start telling their stories so we can present a diverse documentary. The first of this series—"How I Met A Dime"—was published in the May-June 2021 issue of *Peyk*. This is the fourth part of Mr. Khabazian's story.



in a very religious family—in which even playing chess or listening to the radio were considered huge sins—the news came with a big question mark: how could a religious regime handle the needs of the people in the twentieth century?

I spent most of my free time at home glued to a short-wave radio listening to the news coming directly from my homeland. It was not encouraging. From the first week of their victory, the revolutionaries lined up almost all the old regime's influential persons in front of their firing squad, which was located not in a military base or any prison yard, but on the rooftop of a high school where the leader of the revolution, a holy man, was residing. Almost all military generals and ministers were executed after appearing for a few minutes in front of the revolutionary tribunal. Then the leaders of other religious minorities, including an 89-year-old uncle of my wife, influential business people, and members of the political opposition groups got a taste of the revolution, followed by homosexuals and any person whom the new government considered any kind of threat to its existence. The sounds of their rifles—starting from the first week of their success—have never been silenced in my mind, even after the passing of more than forty years.

Hearing the news from my homeland that almost all my wife's family got out of the country via illegal border crossings put me in a very sad position. On the one hand, the love of my country, its rich culture, and my friends and relatives were all pulling me in one direction; but the political condition that the country was rapidly going toward pulled me in another direction. A painful decision had to be made that kept me awake night after night.

"How can I leave my own family behind? How can I not travel through the land that I love and get mesmerized by its virgin sceneries? How can I not visit the streets that I grew up in, the classmates and friends that I have such loud and memorable memories with? How can I sacrifice the future of my marriage, the future of my only child, if I return? How can I support my family if I stay?"

After long talks with my wife over and over, finally the time came to make that painful decision.

It was not too long after the news of the revolution that the Kingsville campus was the scene of fighting between students—those

Working part time as a maintenance person in a local motel was fun but, at the same time, \$2.10/hour was not nearly enough to support a family of three.

The fun part was meeting people—some happy campers enjoying their weekend getaway, some dry and serious business people whose faces revealed how bored they were while spending their time in a motel, sleeping in a bed that could tell a number of sad, ugly, or fun stories if only it could talk. Even though meeting various guests with a variety of attitudes was, and still is, very interesting to me, financial obligations made me look for another job with higher pay.

Benefitting from my friend Saeed's advice to look at the classified section, I found employment as a night janitor in a movie theater which paid \$4/hour, but it was located in Corpus Christi, almost 40 miles away from Kingsville where I went to school to get my master's degree. The obstacle was that this job had to be done by two people and that's when my wife became my coworker. The union automatically brought \$8/hour to my family's pocket; we worked 35 hours a week from 11 p.m. to sometimes 5 a.m., seven days a week!

Aamrika!, you got yourself two new janitors. We love you!

Working at the movie theater for almost one year was, as one can imagine, full of some scary and some funny happenings that I won't get into now—I need to conclude my immigration story soon to give you, our readers, a chance to start writing your own experiences for all of us.

My scholastic achievements at college made me very happy but, unfortunately, the happiness was soon overshadowed by news from my homeland in the form of two huge bombshells. The first: the revolution succeeded in its goal and the Shah's regime collapsed suddenly. Immediately, the environment at the college changed; the Iranian students were full of joy and their exuberant sounds filled every corner of the campus. But for me, being raised



totally in favor of the new regime and those totally against it. Some of the students who belonged to the Moslem student organizations quit their studies and rushed home to help the new regime, while almost all students against the actions of the new regime scratched their heads in awe!!

A few months later, the second bombshell exploded.

The American embassy was invaded by the religious mobs and all U.S. embassy personnel were taken hostage.

This event not only changed the life of all Iranians inside the country, but profoundly affected the environment in America and American attitudes toward all Iranians living in the U.S. Harsh treatment toward Iranian students became daily news, especially in southern states like Texas where we were living at the time. We endured the heartbreak of people throwing eggs at our cars, looking at us in anger, cussing at us when we walked on campus or in public, and preventing their kids from playing with ours. Suddenly we were in a situation in which we had nowhere to go—not back to the country in which we were born and not to the country that we were planning to make our next home!

"What am I supposed to do? I am responsible for the wellbeing of my only child. I am the one who forced my wife and son to join me to pursue my dream. Now, they are not welcome at home or here. As hard as it can be, the time to make a painful decision is approaching fast."

The Hostage Crisis changed Americans' perceptions of all Iranians inside and outside Iran. Not too long before, we represented a rich and glamorous culture and then suddenly we were all referred to as terrorists!

A huge demonstration against Iranian students was organized by American students to take place on campus. On that day, we were sitting in class with Dr. Bailey, who was also my advisor. As his lecture ended, without specifically mentioning the words "Iranian students," he looked directly in our eyes and asked, while pointing at us: "You, you, you, and you... come to see me in my office."

"What does he want to talk with us about," I thought, "ask us to drop his course and terminate our studies? Hope not."

When all of us got to his office, Dr. Bailey asked one of us to close the door. My heart was pounding vigorously. I could see the feeling of anxiety on the faces of all others in the room. When the door was shut, Dr. Bailey started to talk in a very low and comforting voice:

"Fellows! I know what kind of situation you all are in. I sympathize with you all. But I want to ask you all to minimize your appearance on campus for a few days or weeks. Just come to your classes and go back to your dorms or houses. We Americans have a very short memory. Culturally, we are trained to forget and move forward. That is perhaps the reason for our social advancement. In a few days or—at maximum—weeks, everything is going to go back to normal. All you guys need to do is to be patient and keep a low profile. By the way, my wife and I would like to invite you and your families to come to our house for dinner this Friday. We are going to eat, laugh, and dance. We all need that."

I could easily feel the happy energy that overtook all of us after what he said.

Friday night at Dr. Bailey's home was nothing but great food, memorable hospitality, laughter, and dancing. We even tried to teach him how to dance to the music of "Baba Karam."

On our way home, I looked at my wife and said:

"We must not forget that this is America, not what we see these days at the campus or in public."

Then came the moment to make the painful decision—changing our status as an Iranian Student Family to an Iranian American Immigrant Family. My wife and I both cried all the way to our house. The sad feeling has never left me alone!