• Common Sense
• A Mashhadi Londoner Returns to Beautiful Iowa
• Coping with Insomnia
• Visiting Iran for the First Time
• Should You Consider Knee Surgery?
• The Science of Nutrition
AN OBITUARY: PRINTED IN THE LONDON TIMES..........

By: Shahri Estakhry

Once in a while I find an email or an article that expresses my feelings so well and far better than I could. We are living in what the Persians call “ashofteh bazaar” or “haphazard bazaar,” where Common Sense has lost its respected place.

“Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

• Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
• Why the early bird gets the worm;
• Life isn’t always fair;
• And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don’t spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn’t defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,
• by his parents, Truth and Trust,
• by his wife, Discretion,
• by his daughter, Responsibility,
• and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;
• I Know My Rights
• I Want It Now
• Someone Else Is To Blame
• I’m A Victim
• Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.
If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.”

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” Gandhi
July and August Events:

**Jong e Farhangi** (Cultural Variety Show), takes place on the second Friday of the month at the Iranian-American Center.

- The July 10, 2015 show was hosted by Reza Khabazian. The program consisted of an interview with Dr. Badiei about the renowned contemporary poet Fereydoon Moshiri. Dr. Badiei spoke about the life and achievements of the late Moshiri and shared several memories of when he visited San Diego, several years ago. He then recited some of Moshiri’s poems. The second guest of the program was Sareh Sokoot who spoke about her poems. She then performed two of her recent poems. The last part of the program featured ----------who has recently moved to Southern California. He is an accomplished musician and singer and performed two songs while playing the Tar.

- The August 14, 2015 show was hosted by Ali Sadr. The theme of the program was “Arts and Literature during the Constitutional Revolution of 1906.” The program started by Mr. Sadr presenting a brief history of the Qajar era and the events building up to the Constitutional Revolution, a benchmark turning point in the contemporary history of Iran, separating the dark ages from modern era. This was the first revolution of its kind in the region, whereby absolute monarchy changed to a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament. The movement survived several elements such as the ruthless competition of Russia and Britain in Iran, part of the religious hierarchy, the King and other reactionary forces. In the second part of the program, Kourosh Taghavi along with Milad Jahadi and Saman Fathpour performed several beautiful songs from that era that were popular among the masses.

The special guest of the program was Professor Ahmad Karimi Hakkak, the renowned scholar of arts and literature of Iran. He spoke about the role of literature in the revolution and vice versa. He mentioned how intellectuals such as Talebof, Mirza Molkom Khan, Akhondzadeh, Dehkhoda and others played a great role in awakening the masses. Professor Hakkak noted the following other factors that were instrumental in developing an effective progressive movement:

- Development in the print industry was instrumental in printing newsletters and literature and vast distributions.
- Development of sense of unity and patriotism in Iran as a country.

- Change in the concept of poetry from romanticism to social and political awareness.
- Rebirth of the Persian Language from the complex writing of the Royal Court to simple and modern Persian.

The last part of the program consisted of questions and answers.

**PCC (Persian Cultural Center) News:**

- Change in the concept of poetry from romanticism to social and political awareness.
- Rebirth of the Persian Language from the complex writing of the Royal Court to simple and modern Persian.
Film and Discussion Group meets on the first Sunday of the month at the Iranian-American Center.

- On July 5, 2015, the group hosted the award winning photographer and cinematographer Aziz Sa’ati. His documentary about the cinematographers of Iran was shown followed by his talk about the role of a cinematographer in creating a movie and the use of various techniques. Mr. Sa’ati also shared some experiences from his long career. He said that he would like to make a second part to the documentary, covering the cinematographers after 2000. The program continued with a Q&A session. In closing, Mr. Sa’ati was presented with a plaque from PCC appreciating his presence and long, successful career.

- On August 2, 2015, the award winning movie, “Under the Olive Trees,” by Abbas Kiarostami was shown at the Center. This movie is part of a trio by Kiarostami about Hope, Life and Love, made after the devastating earthquake in northern Iran. The Toronto Film Festival has recognized this movie as one of the top 100 movies ever made.

Tasnifkhani (singing workshop), by Kourosh Taghavi takes place at the Center on the third Friday of every other month. At the August 21, 2015 gathering, Kourosh Taghavi, accompanied by Milad Jahadi, presented three old Tasnifs (songs) from the Qajar era. The participants sang along and learned about the composers and musical setting of each song.
A MASHHADI LONDONER RETURNS TO BEAUTIFUL IOWA

By: Shaghayegh Hanson

It was the summer of 1989 when I first stepped onto American soil, in Boston. With a newly minted law degree in my pocket and an overstuffed backpack, I was ready for some well-earned adventure. At 21 years of age, I was ready to swallow life whole, take it all in until I was full. The Bostonian accent ringing out over the airport announcement system sounded strangely familiar, like a regional British accent that I had never heard before. Iranian passport in hand, London accent on my tongue, I told the customs officers that my ultimate destination was Iowa City. They actually laughed. They looked over my all-black attire, paying particular attention to my Doc Marten boots and biker’s jacket, and said, “Why the hell would YOU want to go to Iowa? There’s nothing there but corn!” And so, even before I met Iowa, I became defensive of it. With an indignant air, I responded, “The boy I love is there too.”

Twenty-six years later, this summer of 2015, I returned to Iowa after having gone for a long time. The baggage I carried was not a student backpack but an equally bulgy emotional load. I had married that boy, had lived in Iowa for a decade, had worked for its highest court as an attorney, and then had left this place for California, had two children thereafter, and then divorced the boy. If Iowa was a person, it felt like running back into the arms of an old and steady friend, a trusted mentor, who had given me an invaluable start in life and shown me that love, happiness and friendship can be found in the most unexpected places.

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Back in 1989, I fell in love with Iowa City, a small, cozy town located in Eastern Iowa. A river ran through it, surrounded by green banks and grand old trees. The University of Iowa was (and still is) the centerpiece of the City. Academic buildings, and the University Hospitals and Clinics, dotted the city campus and gave it that rarified air of endless learning and intellectual curiosity. Like all college towns, Iowa City had a diverse population; there were professors and students from all over the United States and the world (there was even an Iranian student organization on campus). Everywhere I went people seemed so welcoming, so nice, so ready to engage in meaningful conversation. There were students with multiple Ph.D.s pumping gas, washing dishes or waiting on tables; these people had made learning a means in itself and worked side jobs only to support their study habit. I had never seen such a concentration of eccentric-looking, “nutty professor” types, who would have been dismissed as the lunatic fringe or mistaken for disturbed homeless people in any other place but Iowa City. This was a town that would love you for your mind and heart, not the size of your pocketbook, the make of your car, the label on your clothing or the shape of your body. Lest you think I am exaggerating, you should know that Iowa City is the only City of Literature in the U.S., as awarded by UNESCO in 2008, making it a part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Also, the University’s renowned Writer’s Workshop Program has been affiliated with 28 Pulitzer Prize winning faculty and graduates.

Many of those educated in Iowa City spilled over to Iowa’s capitol city, Des Moines, the third largest insurance market in the world. In 2014, NBC ranked Des Moines as the “Wealthiest City in America” according to its criteria. I was a part of that migration, moving to Des Moines after attending law school at the University of Iowa College of Law. I was lucky enough to soon be working for the Supreme Court of Iowa as a staff attorney, a job I was to have for almost six years. As an Iranian born, London-raised “misfit,” I found the same environment of acceptance and intellectual curiosity as I had in Iowa City. Sure, people had pre-conceived notions but they were eager to learn about their own misconceptions through constructive, intelligent debate. I was welcomed into the community like a lost stranger to a warm hearth on a cold winter’s night. Ironically enough, this type of hospitality reminded me of my own Iranian culture of courtesy and respect. I made the truest friends and the most inspiring mentors in those years.

When people learn that I lived in Des Moines, Iowa, they often say, “I can’t imagine you living in the Bible Belt!” And then I find myself becoming defensive again. To reduce a highly educated state with a history of progressive politics to this monkier is to do it a great injustice. For example, Iowans played an instrumental role in the “Underground Railroad,” an organized system for helping escaped slaves from the southern states reach freedom in the North or Canada in the years before the Civil War. In 2008, then-U.S. Senator Barack Obama of Illinois won the Iowa Democratic Caucus, making him the first African American to win the caucus. Same-sex marriage has been legally recognized in Iowa since a unanimous decision of the Iowa Supreme Court on April 3, 2009. Yes, religion plays an important role in Iowa, but it is not generally the type that produces killers of abortion doctors or pastors who threaten to burn the Koran.

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Back to this summer; I was returning for a funeral on the rural outskirts of Des Moines, in a small town called Jefferson (home of George Gallup of Gallup Polls fame). This was where I would get to say goodbye to my ex’s step-mother, Elizabeth, someone who had played an important role in my youthful debut in Iowa. She had always been there for us. As with all families, our relationship was not always smooth sailing, but as with all the best families, it had endured and bloomed because of, not in spite of, the adversities we had shared for over twenty years. She had suffered greatly over the last year with a debilitating illness that had left a strong, independent woman weak and in need of twenty-four hour care. She was a lifelong nurse, having been gone a long time. The baggage I carried was not a student backpack but an equally bulgy emotional load. I had married that boy, had lived in Iowa for a decade, had worked for its highest court as an attorney, and then had left this place for California, had two children thereafter, and then divorced the boy. If Iowa was a person, it felt like running back into the arms of an old and steady friend, a trusted mentor, who had given me an invaluable start in life and shown me that love, happiness and friendship can be found in the most unexpected places.

The Iowa I knew and loved was in full force. Again reminding me of the Iranian sense of community and family values, the ladies of the local Methodist Church had gone into action, planning the food (all home-made) for the funeral, and organizing the church hall for attendees. Not a penny was expected to exchange hands for this although a donation of whatever amount to the church was appreciated. A steady traffic of people from the community, young and old, came to the house to pay their respects, to comfort and to reminisce. Everyone wanted to help out in any way they could. When my sister-in-law’s car decided it would break down outside the funeral home the night before the service, a local mechanic stayed past closing time to fix the problem…and charged nothing under the circumstances.

The Pastor at the Church was a wonderful woman, yes, a woman. On the Sunday morning before the funeral, our entire family
attended morning church service during which she renewed my faith in humanity by what she preached. Iowa, like other places had experienced an influx of immigrants over the years and certain fear-based attitudes had brimmed to the surface. The Pastor first told us the story of Daniel in the Old Testament: King Darius (yes, Persian) was forced to throw Daniel into the lion’s den due to pressure from the men around him who held Daniel’s praying to God against him. However, Daniel survived the den because God protected him. The Pastor then used this story to preach tolerance and acceptance of immigrants despite religious or cultural differences. Wow, I had to come to a Christian church in small-town Iowa to hear the most progressive and humanitarian statement that I had heard in a long time! And you better believe that it is good people, foot soldiers on the ground, like this Pastor, who make an impression on people’s hearts and minds in everyday settings. I felt gratitude and admiration in my heart; a sort of deja-vu of what I used to feel regularly when I lived in this place that is appropriately named the “Heartland.”

After the service, no sooner had I thanked the Pastor for her inspirational oratory, than I found myself having a stimulating conversation with her husband, a religious scholar, about the unfortunate prevalence of Islamophobia in the land. He had even read Reza Aslan’s “No god, but God.” He was saddened by the trend and put it down to media sensationalism and lack of education. Again, WOW, here I was in a town of about 4000 people, surrounded by cornfields, and I hear a white, Christian male acknowledge something that I had yet to hear from anyone like him in San Diego, that Islamophobia exists in this country and that it is unacceptable!

The Pastor did an equally wonderful job at the funeral service and, just as Persians do on such occasions, she gave a general invitation to any of those present to speak if they had something they wanted to share about Elizabeth. Several people spoke; it was heartbreakingly beautiful to hear what Elizabeth had meant to people in this world and the indelible footprint she was leaving.

After the funeral, family and friends gathered at the family home on Elm Street, Jefferson, a house that my ex’s grandfather built with his own hands for his young wife, never knowing that they would raise six children in that house (one of them my father-in-law), who would appoint him to the federal court, or that his oldest son would someday go to the White House and meet President Kennedy, or that he had six children in that house (one of them my father-in-law), or that he lived in any metropolis in the world, would come back to that house (my father-in-law), a renowned pediatric geneticist, who could have

Coping with Insomnia
By: Lisa Hildreth, M.S. LMFT

Insomnia is a common complaint I hear in my practice. According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, 30-35% of adults have symptoms of insomnia. Insomnia occurs when you have one or more of the following problems:

- You have a difficult time initiating sleep
- You struggle to maintain sleep, wake frequently during the night
- You wake too early and are unable to go back to sleep
- Your sleep is of poor quality (nonrestorative)

Symptoms of insomnia are caused by several factors to include biological, social, and psychological. Predisposing factors include genetics, tendency to worry or ruminate (anxiety), sleep schedule, and environment. Precipitating factors include situational stressors, environmental changes, illness/injury or acute stress reaction. Perpetuating factors of insomnia include maladaptive habits and dysfunctional beliefs, attitudes, and cognitions.

Risk groups include:

- Middle-aged and older adults (due to physical problems making it more difficult to sleep well)
- Women are more likely to develop insomnia
- People who use medications (side-effects)
- People who have a medical or psychiatric illness

Treatment
Research has found Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBTi) to be most effective. It involves a combination of the following:

- Cognitive Therapy – Changing attitudes and beliefs that hinder sleep
- Relaxation Training – Relieving your mind and body
- Sleep Hygiene Training – Correcting bad habits (see below)
- Sleep Restriction – Limiting sleep/time spent in bed trying to sleep and gradually increasing time in bed/sleep

Also effective are over-the-counter sleep aid products and prescription sleeping pills/hypnotics when used short-term.

Sleep Hygiene Tips/Guidelines:

- Sleep only as much as needed to feel refreshed
- Have a routine wake-up time, seven days a week
- Your bedroom should be comfortable and free from light and noise
- Caffeine – Avoid caffeine 4-6 hours before bedtime
- Nicotine – Avoid before bedtime
- Alcohol – Avoid alcohol after dinner
- Sleeping Pills – Research has found sleep medications are effective only temporarily (2-4 weeks)
- Exercise – Avoid vigorous exercise within 2 hours of bedtime
- Napping – Avoid daytime napping
- Avoid excessive liquids in the evening
- Don’t have worry time in bed. Plan time earlier in the evening to review your day, plan the next day, or to deal with problems.

Lisa Hildreth holds a Master of Science degree in Counseling and is a licensed therapist for children and families both in private practice and school settings.
In the course of the 19th century the Qajar state (c. 1785-1925) in Iran developed a broad range of interactions and dealings with a number of contemporary states, such as Ottoman, Russian, British, and the French, that had complex structures. By comparison, however, Iran did not have a centralized government administration nor did it have a centralized archive to the extent that we see elsewhere.

For instance, in a hypothetical working day during the Qajar period it was not the minister who would walk to the ministry but the ministry that would go to the home/office of the minister—it was within the minister’s personal and private space that most of the meetings and the bulk of the paperwork of his ministry were handled. Also often such documents and material would either remain within ministerial families, as routinely elder sons or other close relatives would be next in line for the same office, or if the principal office holders fell from grace then some (although not all) of the papers and documents would be transported to the home/office of the new office holder, and so on.

Perhaps an exception here was the initiative taken during the short lived premiership of Mirzâ Taqi Khân Amir Kabîr (1807-1852) to classify and safeguard copies of foreign treaties and correspondences (“savâd-e mokâtebât”) at the royal court. But here too, both institutionally and spatially, the court (darbâr) was one and the same as the royal residence and household (dargâh), and no physical or juridical demarcations separated the two.[1] Further development in this exception can indeed be noted within the ministy of foreign affairs where from around mid-1860s onwards, largely thanks to the measures introduced by Mirzâ Hossein Khân Sepahsâlîr (1828-1881), copies of treaties and other forms of foreign records were being kept in more or less organized manner in an annex within the Golestân Palace in Tehran.[2] In turn Sepahsâlîr himself had been influenced firstly by his observations of Russian administration while he served as a career diplomat in Tbilisi, and then by what he had witnessed in the Ottoman Empire where he was posted as the Iranian ambassador during the period of Ottoman reforms (the Tanzimât).

The above exception notwithstanding, various types of official material that were thus being held within private households and among other sorts of private papers can therefore be viewed as significant documents for the historiography of Qajar period. In fact it was not until a series of civil reforms that were initiated in the late 1920s during the early Pahlavi period that various departments of the Iranian government found an independent mailing address of their own that was independent from that of the personal residence of the minister in charge.[3] Even following the civil reforms of the late 1920s the bulk of the ministerial material, especially reports, letters, and various forms of memoranda relating to the Qajar period were not transferred to newly restructured ministries (or for that matter to the national archives which was instituted at a much later period[4]) but remained, as it were, within the household of old families with administrative or bureaucratic background and were inevitably mixed with their private papers ranging from letters, property deeds, affidavits, inheritance probates, accounts books, receipts, and such like. Further changes in the political and career fortunes of old ministerial families in the course of the twentieth century and the inevitable generational turns saw to further dispersal and disappearance of such material.

Also a closer look at what has survived clearly shows the scope and variety of such documents that went far beyond administrative, governmental, commercial, and private papers and included a broad range of judicial records and papers relating to matters of legal nature, covering almost all aspects of personal status and private law from inheritance, property transactions, endowment allocations, payment orders, and such like.[5] However, as noted above, in the course of the twentieth century many such material were discarded or otherwise perished. Some that survived have occasionally been recovered and published by historians and researchers and have contributed significantly to the historiography of the period by a diverse community of scholars at home and abroad. These include a broad range of documents that reflect the broad spectrum of social circles and individuals that such documents originated from—such as material produced or used by courtiers, high officials, provincial governors, clerics, educators, and merchants.[6] Within each group they also range from outward communications and records to more personal notes such as travel accounts (real or imaginary), diaries, and memoirs, and in fewer cases meditative pieces or literary miscellanies.[7] Together these documents constitute the wealth of research material that has thus far impacted and enriched the historiography of Qajar period.[8]

Although in the course of the last few decades a diverse list of such material have been edited and published or otherwise been digitized and made available for research, a considerable volume is yet to be identified and to be made available.[9] In particular it will be of utmost importance if more documents are located, edited and introduced with regard to legal transactions. Modern judiciary
in Iran that was founded from the late 1920s onwards did not put in motion a process of transferring document from pre-modern to modern phase; instead it required the use of new forms, formats, and procedures for all new documents, transactions, or litigations with public or private nature. Prior to this transformation, such matters were often settled in public or private courts, respectively referred to as, in singular, mahkame-ye `urf and mahkame-ye shar`.[10] Documents generated in such courts and tribunals provide ample insights not only to Iran’s legal history but are also informative on various aspects of social life, family history, and commercial or otherwise monetary transactions. They are furthermore significant with respect to the arts of arranging documents, ranging from terminology and syntax, to textual economy and composition, and to the overall aesthetics of documentation.[11]

Early training in such style and skills often helped one’s administrative career mostly within the government but also when serving the secretarial needs of religious institutions or the merchants and the land owning classes. In bureaucratic Persian such skills were broadly referred to as “khatt va rabs” (and occasionally with an additional third term, “zabi”) (lit. penmanship, book-keeping, and administrative skills), a combined expression that particularly came into use during the Qajar period. It included skills such as literary knowledge, command of grammar, elegant and accurate (or, if the occasion demanded it, deliberately vague) composition style, good hand writing together with a sense of logic and measure in transcribing documents, knowledge of the ‘urf and of its terminology and diction, as well as the knowledge of traditional accounting and book-keeping (siyag).[12]

Locating, preserving, and introducing what is left of such documentary material will significantly contribute to further development of the historiography of Qajar period. Nevertheless a question which continues to challenge historians is the necessary care and competence needed to properly contextualize and analyze private papers which are now accessible or will be made available in future. It seems that the problem now is not just limited to the lack of documents and their availability, but also the scarcity of well-trained and qualified scholars who are prepared to read them carefully and engage in thorough historical research. This is particularly the case with regard to certain classes of material such as legal papers or financial records that often tend to employ specialized language and accounting techniques.

Endnotes

[1] I am grateful to Abbas Amanat for drawing my attention to broader aspects and implications of this point and to Mohsen Ashtiani for commenting on an earlier draft of this essay. For an indication of such an institutional fusion in later Qajar period, see, for example, a detailed list of gifts (in cash or in kind) that were presented to Mozaffar al-Din Shah (r. 1896-1907), in return of acquiring government posts and positions in and around the country, in Bahman Bayani (ed.), Pishkesh-hā-ye Mozaffar al-Din Shāh, Tehran: Tourān, 1386 (2007).


[3] A significant case in point is the personal custodianship and the safekeeping of most government financial and tax related documents by Mirzā Yousef Khān Ashtianī (Mostowfi al-Mamālēk) (c. 1812-1886) who had a long career as the main finance minister during the reign of Nāser al-Din Shāh (r. 1848-1896).

[4] Although in 1930 a center was instituted to organize and archive government documents, the parliamentary bill that authorized the founding of the National Archives (Sāzmān-e Asnād-e Melli) was ratified in 1966.


Khatt va Rabt:
The Significance of Private Papers for Qajar Historiography

[7] Among such miscellanies reference can be made to the famous literary compilation by Farhād Mirzā Mo’ tamed al-Dowleh, Zanbil, new edition, Tehran: Kolāle-ye Khāvar, 1345 (1966); or, by contrast, to a previously unknown text by a learned bazaar merchant during the late Qajar period which reflects a broad variety of abstract topics, see Hājj Mirzā Mohammad Tehrānī, “Fawāţa al-‘Āsāţīn, athar-e Hājj Mirzā Mohammad Tehrānī: Matni Falsafi va ‘E’tegādā dar ‘Awākker-e Qājāriyeh” (“Fruits of Gardens: An Unpublished Philosophical Miscellany in Arabic and Persian in late Qajar Iran, c. 1914”), complete Persian sections, edited with a Preface and notes by Ali Gheissari, in Rasoul Ja’fārīān (ed.), Jashn-Nāmeh-ye Ostād Sayyed Ahmad Hosseini Eshkevari (Sayyed Ahmad Hosseini Eshkevari Festschrift), Tehran: Nashr-e ‘Elm, 1392 (2013), pp. 723-817. It is worth noting that in this latter and densely written text no reference is given to personal, social, business, or political matters, instead it is entirely devoted to abstract matters including ethics, metaphysics, and theory of knowledge, it also includes several recourses to topics in modern science such as liquid physics, electricity, colors, and light.


[10] For a recent study of certain legal aspects of urban history in the Qajar period with particular reference to the shari’a courts and the law of endowment (vaqf), see Nobuaki Kondo, Islamic Law and Society in Iran: A Social History of Tehran, London: Routledge, 2016 (forthcoming).


Vajizat al-Tahrir was intended to instruct proper style for future use in administrative and legal letter writing, and as such it can be viewed as a good source for the study of both administrative and religious legal language of the Qajar period. For further study of religious legal documents in the Qajar period, see for example, Omid Rezā’i, Darāmādī bar Asnād-e Shar’i-ye Dowreh-ye Qājār, Tehran: Pajzouheshgāh-e ‘Oloom-e Ensānī va Matţāle‘-āt-e Farhangī, 1389 (2010).

Ali Gheissari is professor of history at the University of San Diego and has research interest in the intellectual history of modern Iran. He studied law and political science at Tehran University and history with concentration on Iranian Studies at St. Antony’s College, Oxford. He has written extensively in both Persian and English on modern Iranian history and on modern philosophy and social theory. His books include Contemporary Iran: Economy, Society, Politics (ed., Oxford University Press, 2009); Taft and Rasht in the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (ed., Tehran, 2008); Democracy in Iran: History and the Quest for Liberty (with Vali Nasr, Oxford University Press, 2006, 2009); Iranian Intellectuals in the Twentieth Century (University of Texas Press, 1998, 2008); Persian translation of Immanuel Kant’s Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics (with Hamid Enayat, Tehran, 1991; new revised edition, 2015); Manfred Frings et al., Max Scheler and Phenomenology (tr., Tehran, 2015); and Kant on Time and Other Essays (Tehran, 2016, in press). Dr. Gheissari serves on the Editorial Board of the Iran Studies book series published by Brill (Leiden) and on the Board of Directors of the Iranian American Scholarship Fund (IASF), and is also the Editor-in-Chief designate of the journal Iranian Studies.
Events in San Diego

**Persian Cultural Center**
Tel: (858) 552-9355  Fax & Voice: (619) 374-7335
www.pccus.org

Maz Jobrani, comedy Show
September 17-19, 2015
www.americancomedyco.com
619-795-3858
6th Ave, SD, CA

Frenzy of Two or more
A play by Eugen Lonesco
play raeding by Mahmoud Beroozian
Saturday September 26, 2015 at 8PM
at the Iranian-American Center

Mehregan Celebration
San Diego Museum of Art
Saturday October 2, 2015 at the Museum

Dastan Ensemble and Mahdieh Mohammadkhani in Concert
Saturday, October 17, 2015
at the Q Auditorium, Qualcomm

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,
First Sunday of the month at the Center
Sept 6, 2015 at 5:30
Oct. 4, 2015, at 5:30
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

Jong-e Farhangi
Every Second Friday of the month at 7:30 pm
September 11, 2015 at 7:30
October 9
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

Setar Class by Kourosh Taghavi
Registration and info: (858) 717-6389

Tombak Class by Milad Jahadi
Registration and Info: (858) 735-9634

Daf Workshop with Ali Sadr,
Tuesdays 6 to 7:30 PM at The Iranian-American Center (IAC)

SanTour Class by Arash Dana
Registration and Info: (619) 278-1851

Piano Class by Farid Afshari
Registration and Info: (858) 349-1913

**Iranian School of San Diego**
858-552-9355

**ISSD Registration 2015-2016**
Branch I
Sunday September 13, 2015 at 9:30am-12pm
Mt. Carmel High School

Branch II
Thursday, September 10, 2015 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**
(858) 552-9355  www.pccus.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**
Tel: (619) 232- Iran  Balboa Park,
Sundays 12:00-4:00pm

**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

**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

Visit Persian Art Gallery
at the san Diego Museum of Art
A major component of The San Diego Museum of Art’s mission is to preserve our permanent collection and safeguard the world’s artistic heritage on behalf of future generations. As such, the Museum is proud to continue its partnership with the Persian community to expand and enrich its gallery of Persian art with a new fall event—a celebration of Mehregan! Please join us on Friday, October 2 for a festive evening of music, food, and art to support the Museum’s collection of Persian art.

You can help even more by joining the Friends of the Persian Gallery membership group. Enjoy all the benefits of the Museum’s CIRCLE membership plus receive recognition as a Friend of the Persian Gallery on all donor-related materials. Become part of your own membership group dedicated to the preservation and growth of this rich cultural legacy of Persian art.

Benefits: Friends of the Persian Gallery Membership

Patron’s Circle | $1,500
- Free Museum admission for two adults & children under 18
- Eight guest passes and more upon request
- Invitations to CIRCLE Openings for select exhibitions
- Private tour with a Museum curator for up to 10 people, upon request
- Reciprocal membership to over 500 museums nationwide
- Recognition on the Museum website & Digital Donor Board
- 10% Discount at the Museum Store & Panama 66

Director’s Circle | $5,000
All the above benefits plus:
- Invitations to exclusive pre-tours before CIRCLE openings
- National art travel: Invitations to enjoy specially curated luxury travel with Museum curators and the Executive Director to art destinations and private collections
- Private tour and reception at the home of a local art collector

Benefactor’s Circle | $10,000
All the above benefits plus:
- A copy of all publications produced by the Museum during your year of membership
- International art travel: Exclusive invitation to travel with the Executive Director to visit international museums, galleries, and private collections
- Entertainment privileges: The opportunity to reserve the facility for a special occasion for up to 100 people with venue expense waived

For more information, or to join the Friends of the Persian Gallery, please visit SDMArt.org or contact: Samantha Wilson at 619.696.1920 or swilson@sdmart.org

Note from Marika Sardar, Associate Curator for Southern Asian and Islamic Art at The San Diego Museum of Art

Curator’s Circle | $3,000
All the above benefits plus:
- Invitations to exclusive behind-the-scenes events for an insider’s look at the permanent collection with the curators
- Regional art travel: Invitations to regional day trips with Museum curators
- One 12-month gift membership (Individual or Household)

FALL FÊTE
Mehregan
Celebrating the Museum’s Persian Gallery and Centennial Exhibition The Art of Music.
Friday, October 2, 2015 | 7:00–10:00 PM
THE SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF ART
$75 members | $95 nonmembers
SPACE IS LIMITED. To purchase tickets visit SDMArt.org
Describing the culture shock I experienced during my first visit to Iran usually causes expressions of confusion and usual responses are something like that’s odd and but you are Iranian. The response of shock matched my personal emotional momentum of reverse culture shock and sense of disorientation. This was less than expected.

The political relationship between the United States and Iran was uneasy in 2000, the year of my first visit. “Axis of Evil” and “War on Terror” introduced Iran with new air quotes and political rigidity. During the onset of the 2000s, Khatami was elected president with 70% of the majority vote and his election campaign was based on a strong promise of symbolic gestures of unity. Iranian-American relations remained uneasy.

As an eleven-year-old, my understanding of the world was too black and white to appreciate Iran’s rich historic culture or the beautiful scenery; I found the large and public murals of Khatami on side buildings, outside major highways and open-air markets off-putting and found the call of prayer haunting. It was hard for me to understand the separation of government and its peoples. I later learned there was a wide separation and resistance toward the government, but because it was a silent resistance, my awareness fell between the cracks.

I was shy and had a near rigid temperament: I had a routine group of foods, new experiences were met with caution and traveling to Iran was definitely out of my comfort zone. Iran was far away and beyond my understanding of how the world worked; yearly visits from my grandparents living in Iran were as Iran as any of my Iran experiences were. My relatives living in Iran and me were separated by a ten year age gap and and without a peer social circle, my visit became a flurry of family visits, which meant a lot of couch time or TV time. One time I got really lucky at my great aunt’s house—she had an old Indiana Jones movie, in English! Farsi was my first language and communicating with my relatives was not part of my reservations while I was visiting; trying to cross the busy streets, finding public Western-style restrooms and training my mind that the members of the Morality Police, dressed in intimidating dark garbs, were part of the day-to-day.

What are some of the things you enjoy doing at home? My aunt asked one morning over breakfast.

After some basic ta’arof-ing, I admitted that I enjoyed roller skating.

Roller skating! Azzaam, my dear, we have roller skating paene khayboom! (Her English turns to Farsi when she’s excited)

And with that, ta’arof-ing was over and there was no turning back.

We would go roller skating tomorrow.

The dimly lit room attached to the skate rink smelled of old socks and French fries and was ornamented in heaps of dingy skates, situated upside down, flipped, all on top of each other, wheels exposed. Attempting to peer over a particular heap as we stood in the entryway of the roller skate rink, a young boy jumped from behind a heap yelling payda-shod! I found it! as he ran with a quad (four wheel) and a traditional (two wheel) skate. He sat in between two skate mounds, both Christmas tree-high, quickly adjusted the skate straps, and wheeled across a narrow entryway to an unevenly paved, gas-station sized parking lot: an outdoor roller skate rink. How he balanced one leg with a four wheel skate and one with a two wheel skate was magic. His fellow skaters were balancing magically as well, skating in opposite directions, bodies crashing against one another while managing to skate in a circle. This is a magic skate rink, I thought to myself.

My sister excitedly began the scavenger hunt for finding a pair of skates while I took my time, and similar to my Cultural Swap Day with the Girl Scouts, I attempted to find a believable reason to excuse myself from skating. The magic flowing through the skate rink did not fail us as we found a pair—with the same number of wheels—faster than you can say alloakbar. My skating experience was short lived. One go-around and I was ready to hang my skates. Or toss them in a pile. As we exited the skate rink, my mom and her friends announced they were taking us to a popular pizza restaurant for dinner. My mom squeezed my hand to reassure my timid temperament to sit this one out—pizza was universal.

The busy storefront heightened my excitement for pizza, a much needed post-Iranian-style—“roller-skating”—comfort. Pizza would help me make sense of the world again! In an attempt to avoid another unique experience, I ran through The Mental Checklist, somewhat of a routine at this point during the trip.

Smell: smells like pizza
Look: lots of people, lots of smiles, loud bout of laughter...what does the pizza look like?
Pizza: looks like pizza!

Relieved, I take a deep nafase-omigh, a deep breath, and leisurely people-watch and look around the restaurant. It is during this leisurely scan that I notice something strange. Iran, don’t fail me now, and I realize I should have known the loud bought of laughter was nothing unique to the pizza but just to Iranian culture. Have you ever failed to hear a group of Iranians? You can’t miss them because their loudness alone gives away not only their location, but their Iranian-ness. They will let you know they are having a good time at maximum volume. I notice two bottles on every table: a familiar looking red plastic bottle and a short, clear bottle with an olive-toned liquid. The bottle became familiar—ironically enough—when the pizza restaurant became part of a choreographed dance without music; the happy pizza eaters, in unison, picked the red bottle and squirted ketchup on their pizza.

I do a double-take at a pizza being served by the waiter, the only person not participating in the choreographed dance, and spot what looks to be hot dog as a pizza topping. This. Cannot. Be. Happening. I quickly asked my mom if that was ketchup and hot dog. She nodded and also told me the other bottle contained olive oil. If this experience was a movie scene, it would be shot in slow motion with my hands closed in a fist, upward toward the sky, yelling nooo or the familiar ay-baba.

When the pizza arrived, I discreetly went through The Mental Checklist 2:

Smell: still smells like pizza
Look: looks like pizza (I did not order the hot dog pizza)
Mid bite and in complete relaxation and for the first time during the trip, pleasantly unaware of my surroundings, our waiter appears: ketchup mail dareen? Would you like some ketchup?

Marriam Zarabi
Marketing Communications | Iranian Alliances Across Borders
Should You Consider Knee Surgery?

If you are between the ages of 35 and 65 with knee pain, more than likely, you are or have contemplated knee surgery at some point. If so, you are not alone.

Orthopedic knee surgeries have seemingly built quite a profitable niche within the medical community. Arthroscopic meniscal tear repairs, the most common knee surgery in the United States, costs an estimated $4 billion dollars a year alone. This is an operation under spinal or general anesthesia performed by orthopedic surgeons who make an incision in the knee, insert a camera to look inside while simultaneously repairing or smoothening out the very common wears and tears on this crescent-shaped piece of cartilage inside the knee. Middle-aged patients who concomitantly suffer from arthritic and age-related changes in the knee with wear and tear on the meniscus comprise the largest group of patients who undergo this operation, and who perhaps should think twice about doing so.

The truth is, not everyone with knee pain truly needs knee surgery. In fact, most don’t.

There was a very enlightening and ground-breaking study released in the New England Journal of Medicine in December of 2013 that truly confirmed what some of us doctors, including orthopedic doctors, have suspected all along – meniscal tear repairs are just as effective as sham surgery. They studied 146 patients from age 35 to 65 who were divided blindly into two groups of patients: one group who did have the true meniscal repair, and another who had an incision (and was led to believe they had the surgery) but no repair was done. Interestingly, both groups reported similar improvement after one year. Yes, this means that this popular knee surgery is no better than a fake operation on the knee for most patients according to this study, suggesting that the over 700,000 estimated patients who undergo meniscal repairs each year may be having unnecessary surgery. Pretty astounding.

With all that being said, it doesn’t mean that meniscal repairs should never be considered for anyone. There is a subset of patients who may benefit from this operation – typically young athletic patients without significant arthritis and with an acute injury prompting the pain may find the operation beneficial.

But for the average middle aged patient, those who are inactive and not losing significant functioning or quality of life, those with moderate to severe arthritis, or those with an occasional ache or pain that is relatively tolerable and manageable, it may be wise to consider other options and discuss them thoroughly with your doctor before pursuing surgery (or even an MRI).

Bottom line: Just because you have a meniscal tear, it doesn’t mean that it’s the cause of your pain, and it doesn’t mean that surgery will improve your pain.

In fact, for most people…it won’t.

Dr. Sanaz Majd is a board-certified family medicine physician who podcasts and blogs at http://housecalldoctor.quickanddirtytips.com.
Zereshk Polow
(Chicken with Barberries and Rice)

Ingredients: Three handfuls of basmati rice, 3 small red onions (totally 125g weighed), finely sliced, 500g chicken breasts/thighs, cut into substantial pieces, 4 tbsp butter, 1 tsp turmeric, 50g dried barberries, 1 tsp sugar, 4 tbsp milk, 1 pinch of saffron, 3 tbsp plain yoghurt, pinch of rock salt

1. Wash the rice thoroughly in cold water and place into a pan and pour in enough boiling water so that the water is roughly a thumb nail higher than the rice. (I tend to find this calculation works for me!) Cook on a low heat until the rice has absorbed the water and the rice has softened. Remove from the pan and place in a bowl.

2. Soak the barberries in cold water for 10 minutes. In a pan melt a tablespoon of butter then add the strained barberries followed by the sugar. Move the barberries around the pan so that they begin to puff up. They burn really easily so keep them moving for max 30 seconds and then place to one side.

3. In a small bowl add the milk and saffron, stir and allow to rest. Once the liquid has taken on a yellow hue add the yoghurt and mix thoroughly into the milk and saffron.

4. In a large pan add two tablespoons of butter and gently fry the onions so that they bronze slightly. Gently place the onions into a bowl to rest.

5. Place the chicken in a bowl with the turmeric and mix in thoroughly. Add another spoonful of butter to the same pan that the onions were in and gently brown the chicken on both sides. Then add 150ml cold water to the pan and allow the chicken to gently simmer uncovered for 15 minutes. Remove the chicken and place in a bowl to one side and place the liquid with all the extra bits from the bottom of the pan into another bowl.

6. Now for the layering: In the same pan that you have cooked the onions and chicken – I find my Le Creuset casserole pot works superbly – add the final tablespoonful of butter and make sure that it fully coats the bottom and the lower sides. Add a layer of rice so that it completely covers the bottom of the pot then place the chicken pieces on top. Next add another layer of rice mixed with the barberries. Then add the onions on the top followed by the yoghurt saffron milk and finally the juicy liquid that you have kept to one side. Scatter a pinch or two of rock salt over the top.

7. Place in a preheated oven at 150 degrees centigrade (300F) for 30 minutes with the lid on, allowing the flavours to blend together.

8. Serve straight from the pot when it is still deliciously hot and Noush e Jan.

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Public Announcement

Energy Solutions Partners
Message: August 2015

Article/Webpost

$\$$ Reap rewards for saving electricity on hot days with SDG&E’s Reduce Your Use Rewards program. Here’s how it works:

- Enroll in Reduce Your Use alerts so you know when to save.
- Receive a day-ahead alert
- Save energy between 11a and 6p on the actual day
- Automatically earn rewards for saving
- View your reward credits online or on your bill

Looking for other ways to keep cooling costs down?

- Get a free smart thermostat
- View one-minute videos for quick tips on home cooling, weatherization and more
- Help your bill take a dip by using our no-cost Water and Energy Saving Kit
- Request an in-home energy survey #espsdge
The Science of Nutrition

1- Facts about lipids in the diet
By Mohammad Ahrar, Ph.D.

Introduction

The human body requires nutrients for normal growth, production of energy, tissue repair, and maintaining health. Major nutrients include: lipids, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water. In this series of articles, we discuss the basic information about nutrients and their importance to human health. The materials are based on pure science and the contents have been gathered from authentic sources, such as academic research centers, official government sources, and scientific books and journal articles. We try to avoid any suggestions or comments about what to eat and what not to eat. The goal is to relay scientific information to our audience, and let them make their own judgment. The only request we have is to please keep the Peyk magazines handy, because the materials in the articles are related. This article provides some facts about lipids.

What is a lipid? Lipids are organic molecules, made of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. Lipid is a general term which includes fats, oils, phospholipids, triglycerides, cholesterol, sterols and waxes.

Are lipids necessary for our body? Yes. Here’s why:
1- The membrane of all cells in the body is made up of lipids (mainly phospholipid). Without these molecules, cells cannot function and organisms cannot survive.
2- Myelin sheath that covers the axon of most nerve cells is made of lipids. Degeneration of myelin sheath causes MS (Multiple Sclerosis).
3- Lipoproteins such as HDL and LDL are made up of lipids (plus protein), and are essential for transportation of fat molecules in the blood.
4- Cholesterol and essential fatty acids are necessary for the health of a growing fetus, and the health of our bodies in general.
5- Fats insulate the body and support and cushion most organs of the body. In addition, fats are concentrated sources of energy for the body.
6- 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 will be in jeopardy, and can result in health complications. Elimination of fat from the diet can reduce female fertility and may increase skin problems, mental problems, and even the incidence of stroke.

The difference between fats and oils: Fats are usually of animal origin, solid at room temperature, and contain mostly saturated fatty acids. Oils are usually of plant origin, mostly liquid at room temperature, and most of them contain unsaturated fatty acids.

What are the components of fats and oils? Fats and oils are made of two components—fatty acids and glycerol. Fatty acids (FA) are made up of a chain of carbon atoms with hydrogen atoms attached to them. Glycerol is a 3-carbon alcohol, and is an integral part of a triglyceride.

When three fatty acids attach to a glycerol, the compound is called a triglyceride. Most fats in food and the human body are in the form of triglycerides. The figure below (Figure 1) shows a typical triglyceride.

What is the difference between saturated fatty acids and unsaturated fatty acids?

Saturated fatty acids (SFA): These acids contain chains that are bound with hydrogen ions (saturated with hydrogen). The top two fatty acids on the figure are SFAs. When most of the fatty acids in a triglyceride are saturated fatty acids, the fat is known as saturated fat.

Unsaturated fatty acids (USFA): If some carbons in the fatty acid chain are not fully bound with hydrogen atoms, the compound is considered an unsaturated fatty acid. Therefore, unsaturated fatty acids have a double bond (C=C) between two unsaturated carbons. The lower fatty acid in Figure 1 is a saturated fatty acid. Unsaturated fatty acids are usually liquid at room temperature.

Monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA): These acids are fatty acids that have only one double bond in the chain. For example, oleic acid, which is found in olive oil, has one double bond.

Polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA): These acids have more than one double bond among the carbons in the fatty acid chain. For example, linoleic acid (found in some plant oils), has 18 carbons and contains three double bonds.

Are saturated fats bad for us?
The effects of saturated fats on health in general and particularly on the cardiovascular system is very controversial. Studies by leading medical and governmental authorities show that highly saturated fats in the daily diet is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. On the other hand, the results of some studies with a total of 643,226 participants revealed no link between saturated fat and heart disease. Other studies have shown that moderate consumption of saturated fats that contain short-chain and medium-chain fatty acids, such as butter and coconut oil, are...
associated with increased energy production in the body, rather than being accumulated as fat. Some studies have even found beneficial effects of saturated fats on the cardiovascular system, bone strength, healthy lungs, brain, and immune system. The basis for these controversies can be attributed to the amount and type of fat consumed, substitution of fat with other nutrients, physical activities, gender, age, genetics, and other factors. Not all researches have considered all these factors in one study. Let’s look at some other information about saturated fats.

Are all saturated fats the same? Although all saturated fats contain saturated fatty acids, they may also contain some unsaturated fatty acids. In fact, most fats and oils contain both saturated as well as unsaturated fatty acids, but the proportion of the fatty acids in the fat is different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Total fat g/100</th>
<th>Saturated Fatty Acids %</th>
<th>Monounsaturated Fatty Acids %</th>
<th>Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avocado</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almonds</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut oil</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn oil</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of fat and fatty acids in some common food is shown below (cholesterol is not listed)

Do unsaturated fats have any advantage? Saturated fats are more resistant to heat and, thus, more tolerant to oxidation during boiling and frying when compared to unsaturated fats. Food products that contain saturated fats also have a longer shelf life. The oils that contain a large percentage of unsaturated fatty acids—such as corn oil, canola oil, and olive oil—are more vulnerable to oxidation and rancidity. Direct light, trace minerals such as copper (Cu) and iron (Fe), and high temperature cause oxidation of unsaturated fatty acids. Frying foods using these oils will oxidize the oils and produce toxic smoke. Some toxic smokes contain acrolein which is mutagenic (causing genetic mutation) and carcinogenic (causing cancer). Maurice E. Shills and his colleagues report that oxidation of unsaturated fatty acids leads to the formation of free radicals or lipid peroxides, which are health hazards and risk factors for the development of atherosclerosis (plaque buildup in arteries) and cancer.

What about trans fat? Trans fats are produced artificially by injection of hydrogen into vegetable oils under pressure and heat in order to hydrogenate the carbons.

- Trans fats are not essential for the body, and provide no known benefit to human health.
- The metabolism of trans fats in the cells is different than that of natural saturated fats.
- Although some research shows that saturated fats increase levels of LDL (so-called “bad cholesterol”), trans fats not only increase levels of LDL in blood, but also lower the levels of HDL (known as good cholesterol) as well. Lowered HDL in blood can lead to changes in the phospholipid composition in the arterial endothelium (lining of arteries), thereby increasing the risk of coronary heart disease.
- It has been shown that regular use of trans fats and partially hydrogenated fats can promote systemic inflammation and increase the level of triglycerides in the blood. (Inflammation of the endothelium is one of the major causes of cardiovascular disease).
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has mandated that food manufacturers must list the percentage of trans fats and partially hydrogenated fats on their labels.

Health benefits of unsaturated fats: Results of some research at the University of Maryland, Mayo Clinic, and other research institutes show that unsaturated fats increase High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL) or so called good cholesterol. Research also indicates that some polyunsaturated fatty acids are very critical to healthy brain function and formation of nerve cells in growing embryos. Polyunsaturated fats, including essential fatty acids, are also related to mental health, reducing the risk of dementia in older people, and even have beneficial effects on diseases such as hypertension, arthritis, atherosclerosis, depression, adult-onset diabetes mellitus, myocardial infarction, thrombosis, and even some cancers.

Essential fatty acids vs. nonessential fatty acids?

Essential fatty acids are fatty acids that are necessary for the human body; because humans do not have the enzyme to produce them from other sources, essential fatty acids must be included in the diet. Nonessential fatty acids are also needed by the human body, but they can be synthesized from essential fatty acids and/or from other nutrients. There are two major essential fatty acids that humans need—including linoleic acids and linolenic acids. These two fatty acids are polyunsaturated and are known as Omega 6 and Omega 3 fatty acids, respectively.

More information about Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids and the proper ratio of them in the diet will be discussed in the next issue of Peyg. In future issues of Peyg, we will also discuss the importance of cholesterol, proteins, carbohydrates, calories and weight control, minerals, and vitamins.

References; More than 30 article were reviewed for this article. Due to limited space, only the most important references are listed here:


Web Links:
- http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/
- www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html

Mohammad Ahrar received his B.S. degree in Agricultural Science and his M.S. degree in Animal Science from Shiraz University. He received his Ph.D. from South Dakota State University, majoring in Nutrition, with minors in Biochemistry and Physiology. He did his post-doctorate research at the University of Minnesota. He moved to California in 2004, where he currently teaches biological science classes at various colleges and universities.
### California

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**La Jolla, CA  92037**

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**Shahrzad Restaurant**  
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**Balboa International Market**  
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**San Diego, CA  92111**  
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Tel: 858-552-1668

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Authentic Persian Restaurant  
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Tel: 619-230-1001

**Soltan Banoo**  
Eclectic Persian Cuisine  
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**Saratoga, CA  95070**

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Ms. Firoozeh Naeemi

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(617) 924-4978

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Las Vegas, NV 89147  
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Ms. Nazi A Kite

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Nashville,TN.  37211

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Great Falls, VA  22066  
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