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The New York Times**Opinion
Today**January 15, 2024

**By Neel V. Patel**
Staff Editor, Opinion

Freezing temperatures hitting huge swaths of the country. Multiple court cases embroiling former President Donald Trump, still the Republican front-runner in what's sure to be a fractious election season. Ongoing wars in Gaza and in Ukraine. Lingering questions around Covid as it and other respiratory illnesses hit the population hard, again, this winter.

Those are just some stories that we were sitting with this weekend — each one rife with its own set of questions that have no clear answers. And we can expect the rest of the year to have more questions and more uncertainty in store for us.

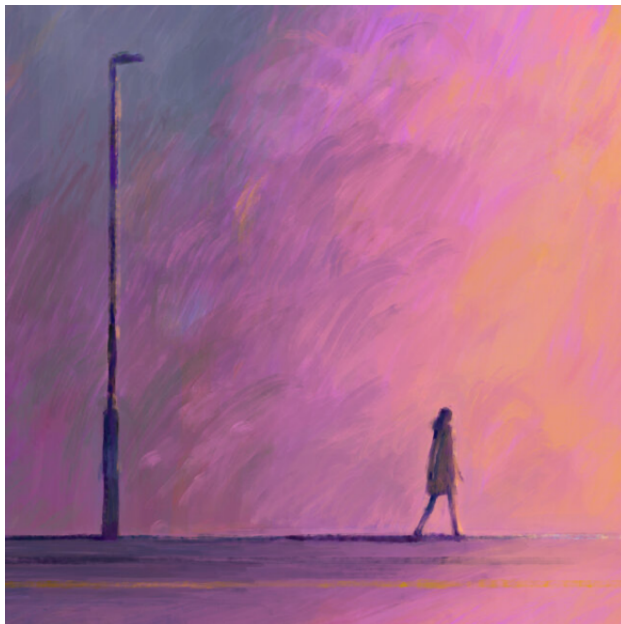
That's probably not very comforting to read. But perhaps it should be. In her [guest essay for Opinion](#), the author Maggie Jackson makes a strong argument for why uncertainty in our lives should not be something we flee from — but instead something we embrace and use as a tool to better understand the world around us, and to make positive change for ourselves.

It's quite a challenging appeal. When we feel uncertain, our instinct is to either find answers, or cope with the uncertainty by finding a way to put it out of our minds. Coming to grips with simply *not knowing* something and accepting that feels especially out of place in the modern day, when our smartphones beckon us to resolve uneasy feelings as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

I find the idea of embracing uncertainty to be especially difficult as a journalist. My entire career is built on the habits I've cultivated: to ask direct questions, to utilize whatever tools I have at my disposal to get to the bottom of something and to tell the rest of the world what I've found when I'm done.

But Jackson makes it clear that leaning into uncertainty doesn't mean simply sitting in the proverbial dark. Accepting uncertainty can be a path forward to actually finding the information you seek. It's an approach that may help you shake off biases and assumptions, to find new starting points from which to seek knowledge. To that end, it could really be considered a valuable tool for journalists and readers alike.

Read the guest essay:



Holly Warburton

GUEST ESSAY

How to Thrive in an Uncertain World

It's harder than ever to predict the future. That should be a positive to embrace.

By Maggie Jackson

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Here's what we're focusing on today:

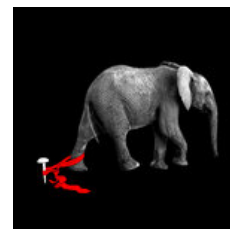
Editors' Picks

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The Responsibility of Republican Voters

In Iowa and other states, Republican voters have the opportunity and the obligation to select a presidential candidate who will uphold the rule of law.

By The Editorial Board



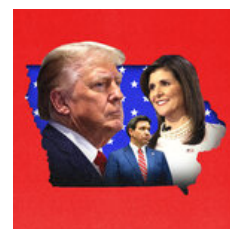
More From Opinion

ROUND TABLE

Is Trump Steaming Toward a Candidacy-Sinking Iceberg? Three Writers Look at Iowa and Beyond.

Is there more than one ticket out of Iowa?

By Frank Bruni, Kristen Soltis Anderson and Mike Murphy

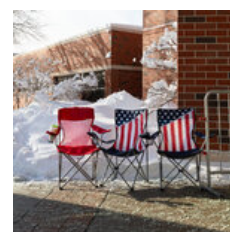


THE CONVERSATION

The Weather in Iowa Is Not the Only Thing That Is Bitterly Cold

It might as well be “Frozen III” in Des Moines. And what a cast of characters.

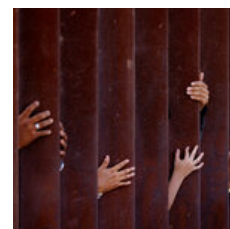
By Gail Collins and Bret Stephens



GUEST ESSAY

This Border Deal Is a Political Trap for Democrats

What we need are ambitious solutions that can address the scope of today’s migration challenge.



By **Andrea R. Flores**

GUEST ESSAY

What Trump Voters Understand About the Economy

Condescending to Trump voters will not win many of them over; we should not shrink from honestly assessing economic performance under Trump as well as under Biden.

By **Roger Lowenstein**

GUEST ESSAY

Another Gun Fight Is Looming in Tennessee

Shunned by their own representatives, Republican gun-safety advocates are throwing in their lot with Democrats.

By **Margaret Renkl**

ZEYNEP TUFEKCI

A Strongman President? These Voters Crave It.

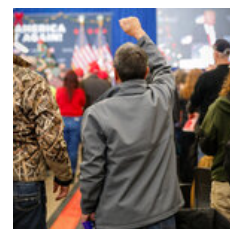
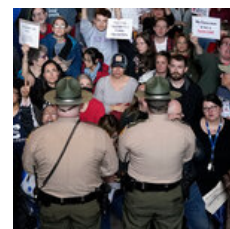
Authoritarian leaders project qualities that many voters — not just Trump voters — admire.

By **Zeynep Tufekci**

GUEST ESSAY

What Nikki Haley — and I — Learned at a Segregation Academy

What segregation academies taught the governor of South Carolina — and me — about slavery.



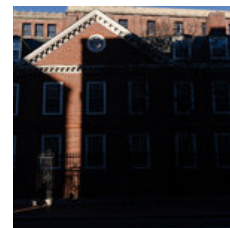
By Elizabeth Spiers

DAVID FRENCH

This Is the Actual Danger Posed by D.E.I.

The problem is when admirable goals are pursued through illiberal or unconstitutional means.

By David French



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It's Dangerously Cold in Iowa. What Does That Mean for Voting?

The state's historic weather is upending plans for everyone — candidates, reporters and voters.

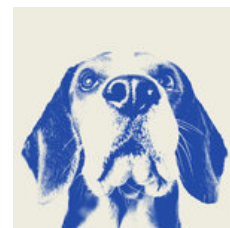
By Katherine Miller, Vishakha Darbha and Jillian Weinberger



To Reward or Punish: How the Culture Wars Came for Dogs

On the internet, everything is polarized — even dog training.

By Alicia P.Q. Wittmeyer and Sophia Alvarez Boyd



MICHELLE COTTLE

Why This Could Be a Dangerous Year for the Iowa Caucuses

The political rules in the state were already convoluted, but judging this year's results may be unusually difficult.

By Michelle Cottle



DAVID BROOKS

What Makes Nikki Haley Tougher Than the Rest

She's seen as a descendant of the Republican establishment, but she's actually the kind of bruiser who's in line with the current G.O.P. vibe.

By David Brooks



ROSS DOUTHAT

The DeSantis Campaign Is Revealing What Republican Voters Really Want

The G.O.P. coalition is poised to choose irresistible theater over a more effective but lower-drama alternative.

By Ross Douthat

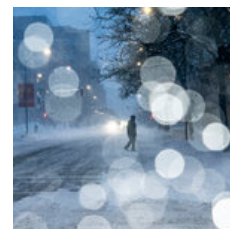


MAUREEN DOWD

Here Comes Trump, the Abominable Snowman

The truth and the media are slip-sliding around in Iowa.

By Maureen Dowd



Taiwan's Voters Defy China

The island saw what China did to Hong Kong and said: Not here.

By Nicholas Kristof



GUEST ESSAY

The Necessary Risk of America’s Military Strikes in Yemen

Given the increasingly critical threat the Houthis pose to the freedom of commerce and navigation in the Red Sea, the United States had to act.

By **Bilal Y. Saab**



GUEST ESSAY

Martin Luther King Jr. Wasn’t a Lone Messiah

He built a movement more collaboratively than history gives him credit for.

By **Joy-Ann Reid**



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Rita Puig-Serra Costa

LETTERS

‘A Broken Health Care System’ for Ill People and Their Caregivers

Readers discuss a guest essay about caregiving by the wife of Ady Barkan, who died of A.L.S.

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