

The Prisament Paper

VOL. I Issue 6

OSSINING, NY SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2020

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- United States halts funding for the W.H.O. due to concerns about their management of the coronavirus spread.
- The Prisament paper has its new official website! Go to : www.rayprisament.com/paper
- New York State Governor Cuomo extended social distancing until May 15th; New Yorkers are required to wear masks in public.

Reflections

ALWAYS BE READY

by Clifford Prisament

April 15, 2015, five years ago exactly, I started a new position as Learning Center Director at Berlitz in White Plains. I woke up early that morning - showered, shaved, and put on a full suit. I was beyond excited to be the highest-ranking member of the White Plains Learning Center.

"You're the new guy?" I was greeted bright and early from our 30-year veteran office manager. "Umm, I am..., Cliff, nice to meet you." "How long are you planning to stay?" Lourdes abruptly asked. I was confused until an hour later when my boss called. "Cliff, listen, welcome. White Plains is down 20% this month compared to last year. Last year sucked. What's the plan?"

A year and two-months later I found myself in an eerily similar situation. This time I was the new, clean-shaven Executive Director at the Princeton Review. I was shown my corner office and checked my work email for the 1st time. "All Hands on Deck", was the title of the 1st email I saw on day 1. Our Senior VP of Sales was frantically warning "execs" to quickly derive a plan to increase growth & profitability before the quarter ended. We were in bad shape.

Two years later, I'm the Director of Marketing for an Edu-Tech startup in New York City. It's Deja vu, all over again.

Another year later and I'm a full-time teacher at an international private school in Westchester. Life is good. At the interview, they asked why I wanted to teach again after years of management experience. I said one word, "stability". "Finally," I remember thinking, "I found my home for the next 10-15 years." It was a dream come true until an invisible parasite known as Covid-19 came along. Business evaporated. It's now Deja vu all over again, again.

The thought of change, especially forced change, brings tremors to many people. For some, their identity is so closely linked to a job title that if something were to happen to the latter, severe depression or worse would surely ensue. I know people whose patriotism to their employer is on-par with the Pope's belief in Catholicism. Frankly, it's not healthy.

Due to various forces of nature, I have found myself riding a never ending roller-coaster of uncertainty. For some, what I've been through would be torture. For me, it's been great. I've had more experiences in the past decade than some do in a lifetime. I've seen the inner workings (and similarities) of more companies than anyone my age should. I know everything is fleeting and have no naive belief that my next position will "be the one". It's hardened me, for the better.

Life is a series of ups and downs and it's important to remember that determination and willpower is stronger than any employer or title you may have. It's also important to always be ready. Make sure you have a resume. Keep LinkedIn up to date. Save the business card of the CEO you met last August; send them an email. Being ready allows for some control of the uncontrollable. And while this time it happened a bit sooner than expected, I am excited to continue my journey into the unknown.

4/16/2020

WHEN WILL THIS EVER END?

AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE TO THE PANDEMIC

by Noah Prisament

This semester I have been taking a class called Graph Mining that studies the applied use of graphs in computer science. Graphs in computer science are networks with nodes and edges that connect them. One such type of graph that is very pertinent is a contact network that has nodes for individuals and edges that connect those nodes if the two people interact. Using contact networks like this, epidemiologists can use diffusive models to study the spread of diseases. This class, for the past few weeks, somewhat became an epidemiology class where we worked to model Covid-19. There were a number of interesting results and realizations from these discussions and lessons.

The first was of the nature of "the curve", the figure that I am sure everyone by now has seen is somewhat deceiving because it is not drawn to scale, the reality is that the capacity for our hospitalization system as it currently stands would be nearly imperceivable on a properly drawn version of the chart. This means that social distancing doesn't aim to reduce the peak number of concurrent infections by a factor of 2-3, but rather by factors in the 50-100+ range.

Next, what happens when restrictions are loosened? Well, a striking result of our models is that if restrictions are loosened before the virus is sufficiently defeated, then a second wave could hit that would rival, if not be larger than, what had been predicted for the initial wave sans social distancing. The reason being that the coronavirus initially is introduced into a region through only a few concentrated carriers whereas if it has been kept at bay but

Continued on Page 2 ...



PHOTO: RAY PRISAMENT

Archeological Discovery

The First Village Cafe in Ossining, NY displays an artifact dated from sometime in March 2020 "B-C" (Before Coronavirus.)



The Downeaster "Alexa!"

To pass time during the lockdown, Greg, Julie and Skyler created a colorful cover of the Billy Joel classic. [Click to view.](#)

CHAIN STORY - INSTALLMENT 4

Continued by Greg Prisament

My mind raced as I tried to decipher the cryptic letter. Phase I evacuations have begun. Do not be worried about Phase II. I am not an orphan.

Like a hamster on a treadmill, my mind raced without making any progress. "DING!" I jumped when my phone notified me of an incoming text message. "Did you take the elevator when you left work?" It was from my co-worker Anna Travnikov. I texted back: "No, I took the stairs, why?" A moment later: "You're lucky. Everyone who took the A thru M elevator has disappeared." I tried to text back "I'll call you" but it wasn't delivered. My phone suddenly had no reception.

I decided to take a walk to get some fresh air. I opened the door to my apartment to find two men standing there wearing neatly pressed suits, each with a black earpiece on one ear. "Sophia," said the younger of the two men, "we are FBI agents and we need your help."

Suspecting I did not have any other good options, I followed them down four flights of stairs to the lobby. I was glad they did not take the elevator. We headed out the front entrance of the Jamison and Co. apartment building. The license plate on their black car read "222 47". I remembered that number from the envelope. Were these two really FBI agents? In any case, they seemed polite and like they knew what was going on. I got into the car.

As we drove away, the older of the two agents, presumably talking to someone on the other side of his earpiece, whispered "We've found Acorn. She's with us. No...she didn't recognize us. Presumably she has no memory of project Serra or anyone else in the cohort."

To be continued ... by YOU

Birthday Zone!

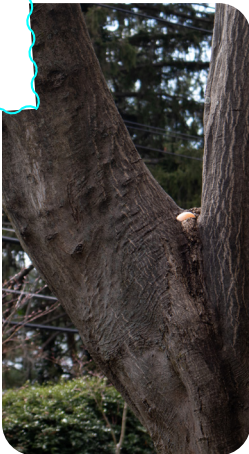


April 17
Evelyn Prisament
(Co-Publisher :-)



April 18
Alex Lipovsky

On page 2: Humor Pages! Fun Zone and more!



Easter Egg Hunt!

Can you find six eggs in the photos?
Elena, Clayton and Lucas found them all (after a few days!)

The Humor Pages

ODE TO TOILET PAPER

by Marc Prisament, Global Supply Chain Poet

Oh, toilet paper, toilet paper, how do I miss thee toilet paper.
Once you were plentiful and soft,
But now you are scarce and not as loving as you were.
I remember those days, when the sun would shine,
And you would be around to help me in times of need.
Those glorious days will hopefully return,
When the stars all align again, and the monsters of supply retreat.
Let’s conquer this plague on humanity,
And enjoy the true and unbridle pleasures
that only you can bring.
That day is coming and we all pray it will be soon!

CORONAVIRUS TRAVEL GUIDE

TEN PANDEMIC-FRIENDLY DESTINATIONS

by Ray Prisament

Your Kitchen

Have you visited your kitchen lately!? Don’t answer that.

Travel experts say that despite a steady decline in visitors over the years, your kitchen is now experiencing a surge of foot traffic, driven by renewed interest in not starving to death.

“We think it’s because they have no choice,” said your micro-wave, chairperson of your kitchen’s Convention and Visitors Bureau. “Whatever the reason, it’s really been a joy to be called upon to reheat such a vast and unrelenting variety of Hot Pockets.”

Your kitchen appliances then issued a joint statement, saying they plan to celebrate the newfound attention by self-destructing at noon tomorrow.

Your Bathroom

Granted, the lack of toilet paper means your bathroom’s main attraction has lost some of its luster. But your bathroom is about so much more than that!

For example, it’s a great place to “flatten the curve” by washing your hands, which you should do for the length of time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice in binary. Careful: if you touch the doorknob to exit, your hands are dirty again, and it’s time for two more binary Happy Birthdays. Instead, we recommend knocking the door down with your feet, then going back into the

bathroom to wash your feet.

You can also use the bathroom to take a shower but, why?

Your Kitchen

Shoot, I already did this one.

Your Bedroom

You already knew your bedroom was a great place for sleeping. But did you know it’s also a great place to be when you’re *not* sleeping, and also not allowed to leave the house? Check it out!

Your Hallway

For the sophisticated traveler who wants a little of everything, your hallway can feel like a “portal” between all the parts of your abode. That’s because it is.

Your Local Supermarket

Not only is visiting your local supermarket fun and educational, but as an Essential Activity, it’s still legal! (Check your local regulations.)

Visitors from places other than the Star Wars Cantina may find it bleak at first. Yet watching the mask- and glove- wearing patrons browse empty shelves, stay six feet away from each other, and get into knife fights over the last remaining bar of soap truly provides an authentic post-apocalyptic travel experience.

Don’t forget to pay for what you buy, because that’s still a thing. And while it’s okay to grieve for the sudden and dramatic decline of civilization, whatever you do, *don’t ask for a single-use plastic bag*.

Your Local Park or Nature Preserve

Just kidding, it’s closed and they’ll arrest you if you try to go in.

Your Neighborhood Library

Just kidding, same.

Um, Okay, Maybe the Supermarket Again, At Least It’s Open?

No it closes at 5pm now.

Wait, How Many Pandemic-Friendly Destinations Did We Promise?

Ten but we did Your Kitchen twice, so we need to make up one more.

Happy Happy Fun Land

Don’t lack imagination! Just because you can’t physically travel doesn’t mean you can’t explore the world in your mind.

To visit Happy Happy Fun Land, close your eyes, picture the most wonderful place you can, and say “I’m going to Happy Happy Fun Land” three times while clicking your ruby red slippers.

If you do it right, when you slowly open your eyes, you’ll be in:

your kitchen. But that’s okay, because Happy Happy Fun Land was fake anyway. Bon Voyage!

TRAIN TRACKS

by Elena Prisament

Boy: No! Dad, don’t do it!!!
Dad: What?
Girl: We’re in a movie, remember?
Dad: Yeah...
Boy: In a movie, whenever a car goes over train tracks, it gets hit by a train!
Girl: Or it ends up flying!!!
Boy and **Dad:** What?
Girl: Never mind.
Boy: No, no, no, no, don’t, Dad!!!! You’re getting closer! Stop it, stop the car!!!
Girl: Yes, please!!!
Dad: Come on, nothing’s going to happen. Look, there isn’t even a train coming.
Girl: It always comes when you least expect it!
Boy: Yeah! Don’t go over the rails!
Dad: If we get hit by a train, I won’t have to spend a hundred dollars on Christmas presents! Yay!!!
Girl and Boy: What?!!!
Dad: I’m just joking, please. I simply love spending my hard-earned money on toy cars and jelly beans.
Girl: Okay, good. Because I really like those jelly beans.
Boy: Focus, Dad! Look! A train might be coming!
Dad: The lights on the signs will blink if a train is coming.
Boy: What if they’re broken?
Dad: They’re not - *sigh*. Listen, we really need to get to the mall to pick up your mom, and this is the shortest route!
Boy: You’re going to get us killed!!!
Girl: Don’t kill us, Dad! You don’t want us to die!!!
(They begin to go over rails. Dramatic music builds up)
Girl and Boy: AHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!
(They go over the rails normally, without any problem. No train comes. Dramatic music fades away. Girl and Boy slowly look up, nervous and confused)
Dad: See, it was fine.
Girl: What? How?
Boy: Huh? But that’s impossible!
Dad: The magic of being off-camera.
Boy: Yes! We didn’t die!!! WE DIDN’T DIE!!!
Girl: WE DIDN’T - Wait, but then what was the dramatic background music for?
Dad: Makes the story more interesting, I guess.
Boy: OH NO! Dad, don’t cross the bridge!!!
Dad: What?

WHEN WILL THIS EVER END?

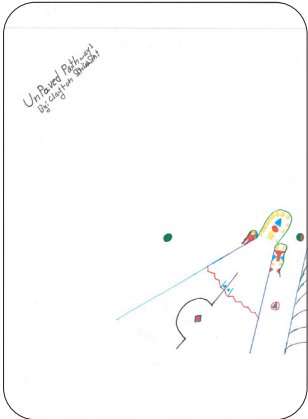
From Page 1 ...

been spreading for a long period of time, if restrictions are lifted then there will be a much larger number of initial unknowing carriers who are much more spread out within the region. This could increase the start of the spread exponentially.

This brings us to another important point, how do we stop the virus? There are two ways to stop the spread of a harsh virus like Covid-19, especially one which is very infectious and asymptomatic. The first is to develop herd immunity and the second is to create a vaccine. Whenever someone gets the virus, they can spread it to a number of people, in order for the virus to stop spreading this number of people must, on average, be 1 or fewer. Currently statistics show that the average person who contracts Coronavirus spreads it to 2.5 people which would mean that we would need 60% of the population to be immune to contracting the virus in order for the average number of new infections to reduce to only 1 per person. The other alternative is a vaccine which would artificially grow that herd immunity without the need for people to develop their own antibodies for the virus.

One thing to consider while listening to epidemiologists in the news, or rather anyone talking about some model or estimate of Covid-19 spread is the inherent problems with such forms of models. There is always a trade off in these types of models between complexity and over-simplification. The more parameters or intricacies that are added to a given model can make it more accurate, however, these parameters generally require assumptions and some amount of assumptions that could potentially make the model perform wildly incorrectly or be very unstable. On the flip side, if the model is too simple, it could miss out on important phenomena in the spread of the virus. Therefore, it is often difficult to discern meaningful results that do not over-fit the poor data we already have. It is important to always take the predictions with a grain of salt, especially those which do not explain their epidemiological models or do not have one to begin with.

I want to end by reiterating that everything isn’t bad news; we can, and will stop the virus, and you can be assured that there are multitudinous people tirelessly working to model the spread of the virus accurately and find the best ways to inhibit it. It is only a matter of time and caution.



Welcome to the "ROMA" (Revolutionary rOad Museum of Art)

With the mueseums closed, Elena (above left, "Windows"), clayton (above right, "Unpaved Pathways") and Lucas (left, untitled) turned their home into a contemporary art exhibit as part of Evelyn's birthday celebration.

MAGIC NUMBER 17

by Elena Prisament, Concept invented by Benjamin Franklin

5		2	
	1		
2			5
7		3	

Fill the empty boxes such that **every row** and **every column** adds up to 17.

Your
Ad
Here?
:-)

Solution to last week's Sudoku

1	4	5	6	8	2	7	3	9
9	8	3	7	1	5	4	6	2
2	7	6	3	9	4	8	5	1
6	9	2	1	4	3	5	8	7
4	3	7	2	5	8	9	1	6
8	5	1	9	6	7	3	2	4
5	1	8	4	2	9	6	7	3
3	2	9	5	7	6	1	4	8
7	6	4	8	3	1	2	9	5