Dreamers

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Dreamers All

“Dream” as a “sequence of sensations or images passing through the mind of a sleeping person,” is found as early as the mid-13c., probably related to Old Norse draumr, Danish drøm, Swedish dröm, Dutch droom, and Old High German troun and German Traum. In 1850 dream girl entered the vernacular — more imagination-than sleep-related. And from 1931 “dream” conveyed the idea of “aspiration” or “ideal” as in a dream job.

In this guide we focus on Dreamers and those who dream.

“Dreamers” emerged after the introduction of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act in 2001. They are a diverse group whose parents brought them as minors without documentation to the U.S. While the majority is Latino, seven of the top 24 countries are in Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean. Thousands have come from South Korea, the Philippines, India, Poland, Jamaica, Pakistan, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria and Guyana. In 2012, the Obama Administration created a temporary program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Activities get students closer to the young people who are American in every way but on paper.

We also look at two individuals who dream of athletic achievement through the lens of age. What do a legend and a legend-in-the-making have in common? Students may examine their own goals and the aspirations of those who live in your community. Are there those who dream of athletic, artistic, academic or humanitarian achievements?

Each in his or her own way a dreamer. Dreamers all.
As House approves ‘dreamers’ bill, Biden pushes for support amid GOP resistance in Senate

By Seung Min Kim and Marianna Sotomayor

Originally Published March 18, 2021

President Biden on Thursday implored lawmakers to enact permanent protections for immigrants without legal status who came to the United States as children, a path that would formalize their footing in a country they have known as home for years.

On Capitol Hill, though, nascent legislative efforts on the issue have become immediately intertwined with the increasing number of unaccompanied migrant children now arriving at the U.S. border — an escalating challenge that the Biden administration has struggled to manage.

As legislation establishing a pathway to citizenship for those known as “dreamers” easily cleared the House on Thursday, Senate Republicans have made it clear in early private negotiations that any measure that includes legalization would be difficult absent measures that would bolster border enforcement and tighten U.S. asylum laws, according to senior GOP and Democratic senators. At least 10 Republican senators are needed to pass most bills in the evenly split Senate.

Such changes are almost certainly antithetical to a White House that has already reversed several of President Donald Trump’s most restrictive immigration orders and an increasingly liberal Democratic caucus in Congress that is calling for more generous treatment of the young migrants who are fleeing to the United States, primarily from Central America.

“They’ve got a choice to make: Do they want to control the border and set the conditions for an immigration solution, or do they want to just say, ‘I was the opposite of Trump’?” Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) said in an interview Thursday. “Right now, they’re on a glide path not to be able to get anything done on immigration and have a political nightmare on their hands.”

Biden said on Twitter that “it’s long past time Congress gives a path to citizenship for Dreamers … who strengthen our country and call our nation home” and he urged lawmakers to “come together to find long term solutions to our entire immigration system.” In a statement Thursday night, Biden said, “My Administration looks forward to working together with Congress to do the right thing for Dreamers and [Temporary Protected Status] holders who contribute so much to our country.”

Graham and Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) have introduced legislation that, like the House approved on a 228-to-197 vote Thursday, would create a pathway to citizenship for about 2.5 million immigrants who came to the United States as children.

But now, reflecting the views of many Republicans, Graham is suggesting changes to the current asylum process, such as revoking a 2008 anti-trafficking law that bars unaccompanied migrant children from being promptly deported unless they are from Mexico or Canada.

Graham is also calling for the reinstatement of the so-called “remain in Mexico” policy of the Trump administration that Biden quickly reversed, which requires asylum seekers to wait for their court hearings outside U.S. soil.

While the Biden administration has also kept in place a Trump-era order called Title
which allows for rapid deportation of migrants to Mexico in an effort to contain the coronavirus pandemic — it has stopped the practice for teenagers and children.

“They’re going to have to start deporting unaccompanied minors back to their home countries or find a humane place to keep them in Mexico because if they don’t, the numbers are going to continue to grow,” Graham said. “But when you can get the numbers back down, and you get new policies in place, then that’s the time to sit down and talk.”

The debate on Capitol Hill is unfolding as the number of minors held in government custody along the southern border continues to spike. Administration officials said Thursday that roughly 4,500 children and teenagers were being held by Customs and Border Protection — far surpassing the previous high of 2,600 minors in June 2019.

Durbin, who chairs the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee and has negotiated multiple immigration overhaul efforts in the past, said Republicans have told him that asylum revisions must be discussed as part of discussions over “dreamer” protections. But doing so, Durbin said, would be better saved for later negotiations over a more comprehensive overhaul of immigration laws.

“This treatment of children is so sensitive and I’m not going to give on that. I doubt if my colleagues will,” Durbin said.

The White House has not said whether it would seek additional, emergency funding from Congress that would help house and care for the children arriving alone at the southern border, many with the goal of reuniting with a family member already in the United States.

Instead, it has pointed to Biden’s comprehensive immigration proposal as a potential panacea, considering it contains billions in additional funding to address the root causes of migration from Central America.

Efforts to pass a large-scale proposal has already proven difficult even in the Democratic-led House that can clear bills with a simple majority. Early tests of support for Biden’s bill have shown that it so far lacks the support to pass the chamber, according to people familiar with the talks. For that reason, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and her leadership team have espoused a piecemeal approach to immigration that had previously been anathema to Democrats and advocates.

The American Dream and Promise Act would create a pathway for dreamers who are currently protected from deportation under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

Nine Republicans joined all Democrats to pass the bill. Three freshmen Republicans from Hispanic-heavy districts in California and Florida helped increase that GOP number since a vote in 2019.

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act, which also passed Thursday on a 247-to-174 vote, would also give agricultural workers a pathway for legalization.

Unlike with other party priorities such as gun restrictions, Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) has not committed to taking up the dreamer legislation immediately. Durbin had asked Schumer for some time and space to negotiate with Republicans on the matter, particularly because any immigration legislation would need GOP votes, according to a senior Democratic aide.

In response, Schumer told Durbin that he’d give him some time, but not too much, according to the aide, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private deliberations among senators.

The ongoing challenges at the border have not only complicated efforts by Democrats to enact immigration policy changes, but to craft a cohesive and coherent message pushing back against assertions from Republicans that the administration has lost control.

House Democrats received talking points from Pelosi’s office Saturday that had been passed along by the White House. In it were 16 bullet points broken that emphasized Democrats’ view that Biden’s immigration plan is the necessary fix for the border and that the blame should be pinned on Trump for dismantling key Obama-era provisions.

“We have a road map to reform our immigration system and are taking immediate action today to solve the problem,” read the email, obtained by The Washington Post. “Our approach makes us safer and is more effective but will take time to build out fully.”

But lawmakers familiar with the situation at the border say that Democrats must do more to educate each other and their base about the differences between how the Biden administration is housing children in comparison to the Trump administration.

“I would encourage, and I have encouraged, the Biden administration to get on TV more,” said Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-Tex.), who represents El Paso. “It’s always best to be as transparent as possible and to actually allow the media in and allow folks to answer questions because I think anything that’s shrouded in mystery is not good. That mystery breeds misinformation.”

Rep. Sylvia Garcia (D-Tex.) said she’s already seeing Texas Republicans argue that immigrants arriving at the border are spreading the coronavirus.

“We need some messaging on responding to the open borders bringing disease because that’s just not true,” she said. “The public needs to know that and I don’t think the administration is doing a good job right now to reassure people that that’s just not true.”

The congresswomen, along with others, are trying to succinctly explain the complex, highly partisan issue to voters whom Republicans target often.

Republicans have capitalized on the Democrats’ response to the border crisis, appearing the most united on the immigration issue in contrast with other popular items like the coronavirus bill that the opposition largely spearheaded.

“By granting amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants,” Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.) said, “Democrats are signaling to the world and human smugglers that our laws can be violated with little consequence.”

Nick Miroff and Mike DeBonis contributed to this report.
Who Are the Dreamers?

In 2001 the first Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was introduced. Since then the young, undocumented immigrants have been referred to as Dreamers. At least 11 versions of the Dream Act have received bipartisan support, but never enough for passage into law.

1. Become acquainted with the current acts introduced in Congress.
   
   **2021**
   
   Read the act as introduced to the House of Representatives
   
   H.R.6 — American Dream and Promise Act of 2021
   
   
   Read the act as introduced in the Senate
   
   S 264 — Dream Act of 2021
   
   
   Read a summary of the Dream Act
   
   The Dream Act: An Overview
   
   [https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/dream-act-overview](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/dream-act-overview)

   What are three main provisions of the House American Dream and Promise Act of 2021 and of the Senate Dream Act?

2. After reading the Fact Sheet summary of the Dream Act as provided by the American Immigration Council, create your own highlight sheet to share with your classmates and others who may be interested.

3. Read “As House approves ‘dreamers’ bill, Biden pushes for support amid GOP resistance in Senate.”
   
   a. What argument does President Biden make for passing the Dream Act?
   
   b. What objection to the legislation do Republican senators have?
   
   c. Although Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) co-introduced the bill, he has suggested actions that must be taken before real immigration reform can be addressed. What are they?
   
   d. In what ways have recent arrivals of unaccompanied minors added to the debate over passage of the act into law?
   
   e. What is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program?
   
   f. Representatives from Texas-border districts are encouraging the Biden administration to take actions. What are the acts? Why are they needed?
   
   g. Summarize the main idea of the article.

4. What additional questions do people have about the Dream Act of 2021 and Dreamers? State a minimum of two questions. Do research to find answers to the questions. Note: You may have different points of view expressed in the answers.

5. Follow the process of moving the Dram Act of 2021 through the Senate. Give the dates, action taken and senators who are involved in the action that takes place.
Interview a Dreamer

Past Post curriculum guides provide guidelines and handouts for conducting interviews. Review the following guides to see which would be most useful for your students and to assist you. They are all found at nie.washingtonpost.com.

- *The Interview* | March 2016
- “A Source of Inspiration” — Departures | September 2015
- *Writing About People* | February 2007

Teachers may also wish to review the guidelines and examples of lede writing. Conduct a search at nie.washingtonpost.com. You might begin with *Ledes, Focus and Journalistic Values* and *Got Those Varsity Blues.*

Depending on where you live, your current classroom situation, your course and age of your students, you may conduct a press conference, invite a guest speaker, work in pairs or individual to conduct interviews.

Whichever approach you take, give students clear guidelines on the end product. Are they preparing a Q&A, a profile, or an explanatory piece of journalism? Is the person interviewed meant to be representative of all DACA recipients or a certain group of Dreamers?

**Interview a Dreamer**
You may wish to take the approach of interviewing someone who is a Dreamer whose life’s next direction will be influenced by Congressional action.

Students need to have background in what DACA is and who Dreamers are. What criteria define these individuals? Teachers may wish to use the resources in the Read About Dreamers and DACA sidebar of this guide.

Is there an organization in your community that could help you locate someone willing to be interviewed? Maybe one of your students can help. You should be clear as to where the interview may be published — within your classroom? On the Internet?

**Interview Someone with Dreams**
You may wish to have students interview someone who is close to them in age who has aspirations for academic, athletic or artistic high achievement. You may interview an older member of your community who achieved recognition or aspired to highest rewards — either achieving them or finding other more rewarding outlets.
What abolishing DACA would mean for thousands of admirable ‘dreamers’

BY DONALD GRAHAM

I want to tell you three things about the “dreamers,” the young people covered by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy. The Supreme Court hears arguments on Nov. 12, that might lead to the abolition of DACA, and I would like you to know what that would mean.

First, the dreamers and other undocumented students are arguably the most discriminated-against students in the United States. Second, perhaps because of this discrimination, they are incredibly, almost impossibly, motivated to get a college education.

Up until the 1960s, most state universities in the South were closed to African Americans. And that is now the situation of dreamers at the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech and Georgia State. They are banned from attending, by state law. What if he’s a graduate of a Georgia high school? Doesn’t matter. What if she’s the valedictorian? No difference.

Undocumented students (other than those with DACA) are banned from all state colleges in Alabama and South Carolina. And discrimination isn’t limited to the South. In Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa and Missouri, among others, in-state tuition cannot be offered to undocumented students. At Missouri public colleges, these mostly impoverished students pay about three times the in-state tuition rate.

Worse, the dreamers receive no federal grants or loans. None of them. Not a cent.

And yet thousands of dreamers have graduated from college in the United States. How do they do it? The motivation of many of these students is so strong it is almost absurd.

Take one of my favorite examples, Maria Nava, whom I met in Chicago this year. Illinois public colleges are among the nation’s most expensive, and Nava, who graduated from high school in 2003, received no state aid. But her generous sister promised to contribute her own earnings to help put Nava through college.

Trouble was, their combined earnings weren’t much. Nava used up the small private scholarships she earned as a top-ranking student. Most semesters, the sisters could afford just one class at Nava’s local community college.

One class at a time. Nava graduated from her two-year college in 11 years. How much motivation did that take? Consider Sadhana Singh, from Georgia. She was banned from the top universities in her home state and couldn’t afford out-of-state tuition elsewhere. At 28, she finally found our scholarship program, TheDream.US, which would pay for her tuition at a college far from home in Washington. For room and board, she launched a GoFundMe campaign for her first semester and after that worked part-time jobs — while compiling a 3.9 grade-point average.

Or Dulce Lopez. She, too, came from a state with no in-state tuition for dreamers — Wisconsin. So she applied for and won a scholarship from TheDream.US to Arrupe College, a two-year school in Chicago. But how could she get there? Lopez took the train every morning from her home in Wisconsin, then walked from the station. An hour on the train and an hour’s walk. Each way. Four days a week.
Four hours a day, four days a week — to go to a two-year college. She is on the dean’s list, will graduate in the spring and plans to enroll in a four-year college. She wants to be an orthopedic surgeon.

Created in 2012, DACA was the big break for young people like these — undocumented students, or people with high school diplomas, who had been brought here before their 16th birthday (the average student in our program came at age 4) and who have no record of felonies or serious misdemeanors. DACA gave them no money. What they got was two years freedom from deportation, a work permit and a Social Security number. The last two expire with DACA. The most important thing was the ability to work.

And now let me tell you the third thing I want you to know about the dreamers: If the Supreme Court overturns lower court injunctions and says that President Trump followed the law in rescinding DACA, not one of these amazing, accomplished young people will be able to work for a law-abiding employer in the United States.

After all of Lopez’s four-hour commutes, after Nava’s 11 years at a two-year college, after more than 8,000 DACA teachers have been hired by U.S. school systems, after 14,000 DACA nurses and other professionals got jobs in healthcare — all who have jobs will have to be fired when their DACA expires. Those who are students will be ineligible for a job with a law-abiding employer.

No group of people ever relied on the word of their government more than the dreamers relied on DACA. They invested their money, their time, their boundless energy to do the things DACA made possible: to go to college, to find meaningful work. They knew it was possible that DACA would go away. They hoped it would not.

I love my country and love that it is governed by the rule of law. I pray that the court finds a way to leave the injunctions in place, to see whether Congress at last will do what most Americans say they want — let the dreamers stay here, study and work.

I pray that Congress will ignore Stephen Miller as well as his counterparts on the left, for whom no deal is ever good enough.

I pray that the court will be wise enough to follow the law, but keep us from doing something truly hideous to some of the most admirable young people I have ever met.

Donald Graham is chairman of Graham Holdings and a co-founder of TheDream.US. He was publisher of The Washington Post from 1979 to 2000.

UPDATE: On June 18, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled (5-4) that DHS’s rescission of DACA violated the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) because the agency did not provide a reasoned explanation for its action. Chief Justice Roberts wrote the opinion. He was joined by Justices Ginsburg, Breyer, Kagan, and Sotomayor (Sotomayor dissented from the small portion of the opinion that addressed equal protection). Justice Thomas penned a dissent that Justices Alito and Gorsuch joined. Justices Alito and Kavanaugh additionally wrote their own dissents. SOURCE: National Immigration Law Center
Youth vs. Age

The sports reporters of both profiles begin with variety ledes. They take the reader immediately to the background of Paige Bueckers and the face of Conrad Anker. Their names and accomplishments are familiar to those who follow their sports. The profile writer must give insight and more depth of personality to succeed. From the headlines and first paragraphs (the ledes), readers know they will be reading about legends — one in the making and one highly respected in his twilight.

Connecticut's Paige Bueckers, left, joined former Huskies star Maya Moore as the only freshmen to be the Big East freshman of the year and player of the year in the same season.

“We are born, and we struggle, and, in the end, gravity wins,” says Conrad Anker, one of the world’s premier mountaineers.

The budding legend of Bueckers

Still just a freshman, Connecticut’s star guard is already breaking the game

BY DAVE SHENININ
March 21, 2021

There are precious few secrets anymore when it comes to Paige Bueckers, who was a Minnesota hoops phenom as a seventh-grader; who 13 months ago became the first high school girl to grace the cover of Slam magazine; who on any given day might dish out fashion tips or social-justice truth to her 671,000 Instagram followers; and who, as the final seconds of overtime ticked down on the evening of Feb. 8 in Storrs, Conn., might as well have worn a sign saying, “I WILL BE TAKING THIS LAST SHOT.” ¶ The clock dwindling, the Connecticut freshman broke open. A defender draped on her, she gathered the ball near the top of the key. A hand in her face, she let it fly. ¶ Bueckers’s dagger bounced impossibly high off the back rim before falling in — her 11th, 12th and 13th consecutive points for the Huskies down the stretch, and her 29th, 30th and 31st for the game as U-Conn., ranked No. 2 nationally at the time, took down top-ranked South Carolina.

TWILIGHT OF THE ALPINIST

Conrad Anker says he is done with epic ascents after a career filled with summits and loss

BY NICK EHLI
In BOZEMAN, Mont.
March 24, 2021

Thousands of hours strapped to the side of miles-high mountains, freezing wind assaulting exposed skin, the sun reflecting almost blindingly off snow — it all shows on Conrad Anker’s face.

The lines confirm his nearly 60 years, most of them lived as one of the world’s elite alpinists. It’s a profession with an infinitesimal margin for error: how high is too high, which slope is too steep, where to find the edge between adventure and foolishness, adoration and reproach, life and death.

The long list of friends Anker has lost to climbing grows every year, and their absence weighs heavy on him. He is the anomaly, the aging patriarch who again and again has confronted a grim question: Why not me?
The budding legend of Bueckers
Still just a freshman, Connecticut’s star guard is already breaking the game

BY DAVE SHENININ

*Originally Published March 21, 2021

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“There’s guys who lug the piano up onstage, and there’s guys who play the piano. And there’s a reason why the guy who plays the piano makes all the money — because that’s what people come to watch,” Connecticut Coach Geno Auriemma said afterward. “Paige is a good piano player.”

As the top-seeded Huskies (24-1) prepare to open a most unusual NCAA women’s tournament Sunday night against No. 16 seed High Point — in a controversial quarantine “bubble” in San Antonio, and

Connecticut’s Paige Bueckers, attacking the basket vs. Villanova, was named the Big East freshman of the year and its player of the year.

JESSICA HILL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

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without Auriemma, who tested positive for the coronavirus this past week — it is worth revisiting their hard-earned win against South Carolina, both for what it said about Bueckers, who, at 19, might already be the best player in the country, and about U-Conn.

First, about U-Conn.: No other program could call a four-year period featuring three Final Four appearances (and one tournament canceled by a global pandemic) a drought. But in Storrs, where success is measured solely by national titles, the term fits. Last spring, the Huskies, for the first time since 2008, graduated a senior class that failed to win an NCAA title.

All 10 of their championships this century have been won behind generational talents — Sue Bird, Diana Taurasi, Maya Moore and Breanna Stewart — who have 13 WNBA championships and 23 first-team all-WNBA nods. But none of them were asked to step in as freshmen and do what Bueckers has this season, for a Huskies team that has five other freshmen and no seniors.

She is averaging 35.7 minutes, nearly 14 more than Stewart did as a freshman, while scoring more points (19.7) than Moore (17.8) did and dishing out nearly twice as many assists (6.1) as Taurasi turned in (3.3).

“It’s been a long time since one player has had to carry the team as much as she’s had to in some of these games,” Auriemma said.

The South Carolina win was the most vivid example, proving that, when tested, U-Conn. will put the ball in Bueckers’s hands and ask her to win the game. Such tests are few and far between; U-Conn.’s 10 wins since Feb. 8, including three in the Big East tournament, have come by an average margin of 33 points. But she’s there if the Huskies need it.

“Coach put in my head as a senior how he was going to want me to step in and be a leader right away,” Bueckers said in a telephone interview. “That was kind of different — actually learning and going through the process of being a good leader for the team right away.”

Bueckers played all 45 minutes against South Carolina, scored the game’s final four points of regulation and all nine for the Huskies in overtime, single-handedly outscoring the nation’s No. 1 team 13-5 in that span. It was her third straight 30-point game, something no other player in U-Conn. history had done. Those last three points came with everyone in the arena knowing she would be taking that shot.

A month later, McNutt, a former standout guard at Georgetown, still had trouble processing what she had seen.

“I will admit I was a little skeptical,” McNutt said in a telephone interview. “But, boy, did she shut me up. She’s as good as anyone I’ve seen at that age.”

Bueckers already has joined Moore as the only freshmen to be named the Big East freshman of the year and player of the year in the same season. She has a chance to become the only freshman in history to be named national player of the year. By at least one objective measure, the honor would be warranted: Her 11.0 win shares, per herhoopstats.com, lead the nation.

If there is a secret remaining with Bueckers — her fame underscored by an Instagram account that has more followers at the moment than those of Bird, Rudy Gobert and Katie Ledecky, among others — it lies in the question of how: How does she coax so much production out of a 5-foot-11 frame so unsubstantial that her high school coach nicknamed her “Olive Oyl” after the gangly Popeye character?

How, at 19, can she carry a team that plays its home games beneath 11 national championship banners?

Put more simply: How is she so good?

The answer can be arrived at in a few ways.
Obviously, she is athletically gifted, with impressive speed, enough hops to grab the rim and remarkable hand-eye coordination. Though she stopped playing baseball after fourth grade, her father, Bob, said she made the league all-star team: “When she threw the ball, it was on a rope and hit you in the glove.”

She is also a self-described gym rat who has yet to come across someone who can outwork her.

“She lived two blocks from a gym, from the field (tops among guards) and 47.4 percent from three-point range (third in the nation). McNutt compares her size and skills to Taurasi, arguably the best playmaker in WNBA history, and her handle to Stephen Curry and Kyrie Irving. “She’s in an elite class of playmakers,” McNutt said.

But the true source of Bueckers’s greatness might be her court vision. Perhaps better than anyone in recent memory, she reads the constantly shifting geometry of basketball — the formations, the defensive shifts, the openings, the passing lanes — and reacts to it soonest and fastest, but never too soon or too fast, with precisely the correct pass, move or shot.

“She’s just built with unbelievable vision, to where she sees the floor two or three passes in advance,” said Brian Cosgriff, who was Bueckers’s coach at Hopkins High in Minnetonka, Minn.

Lifet ime Fitness, and when I’d call to pick her up for practice, she’d say, ‘Pick me up at Lifet ime,’ ” recalled her AAU coach, Tara Starks. “And then, when practice was over, she’d want me to drop her off back at the gym.”

An incurable hoops junkie, she will watch NBA games if there are no college games on TV, and G League games if there are no NBA games. Asked if she ever detaches from basketball, she reacted with horror: “No. I can’t detach from family, and I can’t detach from basketball.”

And she is well-rounded: Though she considers herself a pass-first point guard (she’s tied for ninth in the country in assists per game), she is also shooting 53.9 percent shifts, the openings, the passing lanes — and reacts to it soonest and fastest, but never too soon or too fast, with precisely the correct pass, move or shot.

“She’s just built with unbelievable vision, to where she sees the floor two or three passes in advance,” said Brian Cosgriff, who, as Bueckers’s coach at Hopkins High in Minnetonka, Minn., bestowed the “Olive Oyl” nickname upon her. “When she’s bringing the ball down the floor, she’s seeing and reading where everyone else is on the floor, and she’s going to make the right read 99 percent of the time. You’re just born with that. You can’t teach it. You can’t practice it.”

Bueckers agreed that it is a skill she was born with.

“The biggest thing I take pride in is making my teammates around me better,” she said, “and, yeah, court vision has a lot to do with it. Just seeing things before they play out and being two or three steps ahead.”

Cosgriff compares that aspect of Bueckers’s game to Magic Johnson. Others have invoked names such as Pete Maravich, Larry Bird, Draymond Green or even NFL legend Jim Brown — the latter comparison coming from the 66-year-old Auriemma.

“She takes her time,” Auriemma said. “… She’s like when Jim Brown used to run. When she gets the ball, she kind of [says]: ‘Should I [take] that hole, that one, that one? What’s the best decision for me right now?’ She waits until the absolute last minute, and nothing rushes her.”

Bueckers also has an intense competitiveness that can border on nasty. She has been known, on occasions when an opponent has gotten mouthy, to tell said opponent what is coming next — “I’m going to come off a screen to your right and hit a three in your face” — and then do it.

Lately, she has been hassling Auriemma about her playing time, complaining whenever he dares to take her out of a game. Late in one recent game, with the Huskies enjoying a comfortable lead and a teammate at the free throw line, she looked over at the scorer’s table, spotted a sub preparing to enter for her, and told the teammate to miss the free throw, so she might stay in.

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“Then she came off and checked the stat sheet,” Auriemma recalled with feigned indignity, “and she goes, ‘You owe me two more minutes tomorrow, because I didn’t get to play my average [minutes].’ … I love her and everything, but there’s something not quite right about her.”

Auriemma, her teammates, anybody with the good sense to tune in and watch: We are all, in a way, Monica McNutt near the end of that South Carolina game, struggling to process what we are witnessing and asking ourselves a question that might be partially answered over the next few weeks:

How does the legend grow from here?
Thousands of hours strapped to the side of miles-high mountains, freezing wind assaulting exposed skin, the sun reflecting almost blindingly off snow — it all shows on Conrad Anker’s face.

The lines confirm his nearly 60 years, most of them lived as one of the world’s elite alpinists. It’s a profession with an infinitesimal margin for error: how high is too high, which slope is too steep, where to find the edge between adventure and foolishness, adoration and reproach, life and death.

The long list of friends Anker has lost to climbing grows every year, and their absence weighs heavy on him. He is the anomaly, the aging patriarch who again and again has confronted a grim question: Why not me?

But not on this day, which he is spending in Hyalite Canyon, barely a half-hour south of his home, chainsawing a storm-toppled pine tree to clear a trail. The canyon is a special place for him. Ancient geological oddities built it, and each winter water seeping from cliff walls freezes and creates a vertical playground of icefalls the color of Caribbean waters. Adventurers with picks, spiked boots and sufficient bravado come from all over, and they shower Anker with questions about avalanche conditions and requests for photos.

“Mayor of the ice slag,” he calls himself, a title Anker embraces while considering what’s next personally and for the sport he loves. His many first-ever ascents, his discovery of British mountaineer George Mallory’s body during a trek up Everest, have brought international fame. Climbing is pitiless, though, and his exploits have

**TWILIGHT OF THE ALPINIST**

Conrad Anker says he is done with epic ascents after a career filled with summits and loss

By Nick Ehli

In Bozeman, Mont.

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come at a cost. Boldness can be viewed as arrogance in this sport, especially when things go wrong.

“We are born, and we struggle, and, in the end, gravity wins,” he says. “What we do in climbing is a way of respecting it.”

Nearly a decade ago in the Himalayas, Anker summited Everest without the aid of supplemental oxygen and then, with partners Jimmy Chin and Renan Ozturk, became the first to go up Meru via its “shark fin,” a spiteful slab seen as unclimbable.

“Part of all that is having a high pain threshold and knowing what your limits are and not going over that edge,” Anker explains. “It’s like licking honey off a razor. If you turn the axis the wrong way, you’re screwed.”

Anker, 58, calls Meru the culmination of all he had accomplished as an alpinist — a feat highlighted by a movie bearing the mountain’s name — and he realizes now that it should have been enough. “Instead,” he says, “I went out after more.”

That more was Lunag Ri, among the tallest unclimbed peaks in Nepal. On his second attempt in 2016 with Austrian David Lama, his heart seized at 20,000 feet as he clung to the side of an ice-covered granite blade. How ironic, he thought. “Celebrated mountaineer felled by heart attack” was not the headline he envisioned at the end of his life. Yet there he was.

Anker credits Lama for saving him, for helping him rappel down Lunag Ri and coaxing him across a perilous ice field. The journey to emergency surgery took nine hours, and nine hours is a long time to reflect on mistakes and regret, even for an atheist like Anker. Mostly, he thought about his wife.

“I can’t believe I did this to Jenni,” he remembers thinking. “I can’t believe I made her a widow again.”

Jenni is Jennifer Lowe-Anker, and the “again” part can’t be ignored in any account about Anker. In 1999, he was with her husband, Alex Lowe, and another climber, David Bridges, when an avalanche swept Tibet’s Mount Shishapangma and killed both of those men. “I ran a different direction and walked away,” he says.

Anker returned to Bozeman, where he and Jenni bonded over their grief. Two years later, they married. A headline in Outside magazine summed up the situation around that time: “His friends are gone. His life is a soap opera. His career is in overdrive.”

Anker is still riled by the unsigned hate mail, accusing the couple of selfishness and irresponsibility, that regularly arrived during their early years. He helped raise the three boys of the man he calls “my brother from another mother,” and today those boys are men and call him Dad. He and Jenni will celebrate their 20th anniversary next month.

Better than most, his wife understands all that comes with being married to a climber, both the glorious and dark sides to their risk-reward equations.

“We are all here for a moment in time,” she notes. “We are a blink. Well, what are you going to do with your blink? Is it going to be meaningful to you? What is your responsibility to the Earth, to humanity, to the people in your life you love? We all get to make those choices.”

The spring before Anker’s heart attack, ice melted on Shishapangma, and the mountain finally gave up Lowe and Bridges. They were cremated there, their families present. Gravity eventually caught up with Lama, too. Three years after he saved Anker — and after going back and conquering Lunag Ri solo — an avalanche killed him and two other climbers in the Canadian Rockies. He was 28.

The high-altitude ascents that landed Anker on magazine covers are no longer an option — a post-heart-attack concession to his wife and doctors. But he has twice been on expeditions to Antarctica, twice scaled El Capitan in Yosemite National Park and regularly assaults Hyalite’s experts-only pitches with a fleet of 20-somethings out to test themselves.

Chin, his longtime climbing partner and close friend, says Anker’s judgment is what still sets him apart: “There is a reason why Conrad is still here with us. There is climbing skill, sure, but it’s the capacity to assess and manage risk that makes him a great climber. That’s his brain; that’s the way it works.”

His wife still sees his excitement each time Anker heads out, even if it’s just up to Hyalite to navigate a new climbing route.
“Be safe,” she tells him. “Call me from the top.”

Anker has long sought to share his passion. He led groups of veterans ice climbing in Hyalite for several years and often instructs local high school students there. He freely loans equipment from his “gear room” adorned with mementos from expeditions around the world. Stop by, and he’ll sharpen your ice picks in the garage.

Of late, he has been thinking about how to make his sport more inclusive. A spark was a “climb free” day at a nonprofit gym in south Memphis, part of a national event that outdoors outfitter North Face holds annually. Anker was there as a representative of the company’s climbing team, and he was struck by the turnout at Memphis Rox. Black and White students were side by side, tackling the walls and ropes. How else, Anker wondered, might climbing shake its “White sport” status and maybe make a difference?

“It comes down to the fundamental understanding that, when you go climbing, you trust someone with your life,” he says. “You are not going to get that connection on a golf course.”

The logical next step for Anker was to bring some of the Tennesseans to Hyalite Canyon; with funding from North Face, he did just that. A documentary, “Black Ice,” was made about their trip, and now some of those climbers hope to be part of the first all-Black expedition to Everest. Anker, “the sage on the side,” is only advising.

Malik Martin, 32, is one of those climbers. He was working the front desk at Memphis Rox that day in 2018 when Anker walked in. Last summer he summited with him — “My mountain Dad,” Martin says — on Grand Teton in Wyoming and Granite Peak, Montana’s highest point.

Anker knows that many people question why he does what he does. Why keep risking your life? Why encourage others, given the inherent danger? Get off the mountain, old man. He struggles, too, with how to explain his motivation to those who don’t climb, who haven’t seen the vistas he has seen, who don’t know what it’s like to survive what shouldn’t be survivable.

“If you are already into it, I’m going to guide that and share what is meaningful to me,” he says. “And at the same time, understand … you don’t get a mulligan if you don’t tie your knot correctly.”

His adopted son Max was 11 when Alex Lowe died. As a boy, he agonized every time Anker left on another trip, all too aware that it could be a destination from which he might not return. Now a professional filmmaker and photographer with his own far-off assignments, Max Lowe says it has become easier to understand Anker.

“Climbing is the thing that brings him to life in a way that nothing else does,” he says.

Anker cried on the peak of Meru, but his outlook has shifted appreciably. He doesn’t measure success by new ascents but rather in coming home and walking through the door to Jenni.

By his desk in his basement office, he keeps a 1969 copy of Life magazine, its cover a photo of Neil Armstrong on the moon. It reminds him that all things are possible, even though Anker realizes some of them no longer are possible for him. He has no regrets, he says, about the climbs he won’t make.

“Eventually,” he allows, “the bell curve of what I do will get to the point where walking down a path will be my personal Everest. And I’m fine with that.”