



**EXCLUSIVE:** President Trump talks to Michael Goodwin about impeach battle

*'It sounds strange to say I'm energized, but I love it, I love it'*

# FIGHTING WORDS

President Trump tells Post columnist Michael Goodwin that he's optimistic his impeachment fight with the Democrats will go his way. "It's a fraud, a hoax, a witch hunt."  
**PAGES 6-7**

Post photo illustration



At after-school program the Talk, tweens gather in a Park Slope brownstone to discuss sex and puberty with Rachel Lotus.

# Birds, bees & selfies

From **SEX ED** on Page 33

that? Was the target audience fourth- and fifth-graders? No. So it doesn't seem like this is something that is safe and healthy and appropriate for you to be consuming."

She also finds herself fielding queries from teens about sexting. "The questions that I typically get are 'How do I handle it if somebody asks me to send something like that?' 'How do I handle it if somebody forwarded me a picture that they got from somebody else that I know I'm not supposed to see?'" Lotus says.

When those arise, she focuses on the laws surrounding sexting and having explicit photos of minors on their devices. The goal: To explain in an age-appropriate way that — while it might be fun at first — photos like those could have a life of their own after they've been sent.

"You may have exchanged pictures with someone right now in this moment when you guys are crazy about each other and your relationship feels like it's going to last forever. But most people don't go on to marry their middle-school sweetheart," she tells the kids, whom she groups by age and, sometimes, gender.

Lucy, a Park Slope mom, decided to send her daughter to the Talk so she could hear real talk like that, and some positive messaging around sex.

"As a young woman, being told in a class that you are allowed to set boundaries, that consent is up to you, that your body is not there to be a playground for anybody else and that you have the power to make choices is, I think, quite the opposite of learning about sex and then wanting to go and try it," says Lucy, who declined to share her last name for privacy reasons.

Though her daughter didn't want to go at first, Lucy says her tween has now happily attended for three semesters, and hasn't gotten bored yet.



Rachel Lotus, founder and director of the Talk.

Lotus' classes have themes, including gender roles and expression, consent, media, sexual identity, puberty and reproduction — and she covers sex for pleasure and masturbation.

But even within those topics, she says, each class is different, because she tries to let her students guide the discussions.

"We might watch a short video clip, we might listen to an interview on NPR, we might look at some kind of graphic together, we might go out on the street," says Lotus.

The bottom line, the educator says, is that kids should have enough information to make smarter choices about sex and sexuality — and so parents don't have to hover over them, "Blockers"-style.

"Let's equip kids with decision-making skills so that when we're not overhead supervising, they have their own sense of what they should be doing," she says.

# I NEED A

Poolside photo shoots, tropical drinks and social-media bragging rights: These moms took the ultimate break from their hubbies and kids

By JANE RIDLEY

**M**AMA needs a break! Momcations — solo getaways for moms, no husband or kids allowed — are having a moment. The hashtag #momcation has been used on more than 48,000 posts on Instagram, affixed to shots of moms living their best lives. There are moms gazing out on city skylines in sexy going-out tops, moms perching on boats atop aquamarine seas — and moms sitting seaside, drinking cocktails out of coconuts, like 43-year-old Mindy White. "Hit the pool, drank vodka. Didn't have to wipe anyone's ass but my own," writes White



Stefano Giromanni

## Jewish non-profit's edgy ads spark controversy

Jew gotta see it to believe it. A cheeky ad campaign, seeking to catch young Jews' attention around the high holy days, is raising eyebrows uptown. "Even if you think kugel is an exercise you do for your vagina... JewBelong," reads one ad plastered on kiosks on the Upper West and Upper East sides, referring to a Jewish noodle casserole that is easily mistaken for Kegel

pelvic contractions. "The kugel/Kegel confusion is too good to ignore," says Archie Gottesman, 56. She and Stacy Stuart, 53, are the co-founders of JewBelong, a nonprofit that aims to bring "disengaged Jews" back into the religion through memes, online holiday guides, modernized prayers, meetups and ads. They're part of a new wave of local Jews looking to rebrand the religion; another organization called Kugel targets "hip, intellectual millennials and Gen Xers" with Shabbat soirees. Gottesman and Stuart knew their slogans would get people talking. They once worked on those controversial ads for Man-



This ad replaced JewBelong's controversial kugel ad.

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# #MOMCATION!



**Helen Bennett loves husband Dave, daughter Sophie and son Luis. But she also loved road-tripping through Ireland without them (inset). "It was liberating," she says.**



in a Facebook post about her solo trip to Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville resort. "Hitting the casino tonight. Take time for yourselves!"

"Everyone needs their alone time," White tells The Post of her April vacation.

Her husband, Thomas, 47, held down the fort in West Harrison, N.Y., and watched 7-year-old Eli and 5-year-old Alaina while she spent five days living it up in Florida.

"At first, I didn't know how to sit still on the beach, because I'm so used to getting up and down for the children. But then I relaxed," she says.

White's initial apprehension is typical, says solo female travel expert Gemma Thompson, who blogs at GirlsThatTravel.com.

"There is a lot of anxiety about leaving the kids at home — the good, old-fashioned mom guilt," says Thompson, who lists Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Scotland, Florida and upstate New York as especially hot destinations for moms.

Helen Bennett, 46, experienced that during her 2017 momcation to Ireland.

"Initially, I felt a bit guilty about being on vacation on my own," says the Jersey City mother of two, who took a six-day road trip around her late father's homeland, touring Dublin, Cork and Kerry. She

wasn't used to traveling without husband Dave, 7-year-old Sophie and 5-year-old Luis. But once the shock wore off, "it was liberating," she says. "A welcome break from being a full-time nanny, dog sitter, cleaner and cook."

That desire to flee from routine is what brings moms to travel agent Laurel Samuela, who focuses on French Polynesia and the South Pacific.

"There's a demand from women wanting to leave their

she booked her "fantasy vacation" to Bora Bora and Moorea through Samuela. The Los Angeles resident juggles her busy furniture business with watching stepchildren Anthony, 16, and 14-year-old Jessie, for half the week since she and her husband, Tony, share custody of the kids.

"I was just exhausted," she says. "As women and mothers, we always put ourselves last after making the school lunches, driving the kids to activities and generally taking care of others."

Her six-night June getaway cost her \$12,000, but she says it brought her something priceless: As she swam with stingrays off the shore of Bora Bora, with all her stresses on the other side of the world, "the sense of peace was overwhelming," she says.

Returning to Manhattan Beach, the newly tanned mom felt gorgeous and renewed.

"I was ready to participate with my job and the kids again. I had new energy," she says.

Tales of moms successfully solo-tripping warms White's heart. In a post to the Facebook group Bad Moms of Westchester, she urges fellow moms to hop a flight and take care of themselves.

"Recharge and refresh!" she writes. "Let your pre-mom, pre-wife soul shine, ladies."



**Mom-of-two Mindy White wastes away in Margaritaville.**

everyday lives behind," says Samuela, who offers seven-night momcation packages to Bora Bora and the nearby island of Moorea starting at \$7,740.

Gina Quatrone, 58, was certainly seeking that out when

hattan Mini Storage. (Remember "When your closet is shrinking as fast as her right to choose?")

"We have to take a bit of risk and push boundaries to get people to look up," says Stuart.

Look up, they did: Upper East Siders found that kugel ad so scandalous that they complained to the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District board in mid-September. Complaints spilled into JewBelong's inbox.

"I saw your 'vagina' ad. Yuck. Was that really necessary?" wrote one critic.

Ultimately, JewBelong was asked to sub in a less salacious ad. Unfazed, they offered a close-up shot of bacon and eggs, captioned: "So you eat bacon. God has other things

to worry about."

"Some criticism is a very small price to pay," says Stuart. She points to JewBelong's fan base: Its e-mail list has about 40,000 subscribers, and the org has garnered local love, too.

When New Rochelle resident Jackie Saril, 53, saw photos of the kugel ad, "I thought, 'Anybody who can do an ad about Judaism that uses the word 'vagina' is OK in my book.'"

Another fan? Orthodox rabbi Chaim Steinmetz, of Upper East Side's Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun.

"If the ads get someone to stop and take just 10 seconds to think about being Jewish, then it's a victory," says Steinmetz.

— Rebecca Raphael

**BIG NUMBER**

# 46%

of people who lend money to family or friends say it ends badly, according to a poll by personal finance website Bankrate. After lending cash to friends or family, 37 percent of respondents lost money, and 21 percent say the experience hurt their relationship with the borrower.

— Jane Ridley

Cathy Images