

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

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Concussion Girls Are

By A

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. Sept. 24 — Hannah Stohler beside the piano she could no longer play, in the living room that spun like a carousel the chair in which she tried to read but could not remember a word. Ten months after a third concussion while playing high school soccer knocked her into a winter-long haze of headaches and dizziness, depression that few around her could comprehend, Stohler recalled how she once viewed concussions.

"I thought they were a football injury — a boy thing," Stohler, a junior at Conant High School in West Hartford, Conn. "Those guys are trying to hit hard and knock people to the ground. But anyone can get a concussion, and I don't think a lot of girls recognize that. They have no idea



SUZIE ALLEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
A cellphone photo of Kelly Pellin at a hospital after her last concussion in April.

Note From Justice Verdict Ag

By

A jury indicated yesterday that Madison Square Garden's Knicks Coach Isiah Thomas is guilty of sexually harassing and fired marketing executive Acha Browne Sanders, but it has not yet reached a verdict on nine points of the lawsuit.

The jury of four women and three men was to return today the federal courthouse in Lower Manhattan to work through an unresolved question of whether Thomas should be assessed punitive damages.

The jury in the trial made information known in a note to United States District Court Judge Gerard E. Lynch late yesterday afternoon. Lynch read the jurors' note in open court after receiving it at 4:40 p.m. It said that jurors had decided eight of the points but could not re-

S. & P. 500	1,547.04	↗	20.29
Dow industrials	14,087.55	↗	191.92
Nasdaq composite	2,740.99	↗	39.49
10-yr. Treasury yield	4.55%	↘	0.04
The euro	\$1.4238	↘	0.0036

Itineraries

Shhhh!

Hotels use soundproofing to keep out the noise of the nightclub downstairs or the freight train outside. C8



EBay Takes Big Charge on Skype
Thatcher's Ad Agency Is Now La.
G.M. Pact Calls for More Plant C.
China Investigates Steroid Produ

Sports Tuesday, C17-20

Business Day

Noises Off, Please

More Hotels Seek to Silence the World Outside Your Room

By JOE SHARKEY

The recorded voice that answers the phone at Acoustiblok Inc. in Tampa, Fla., speaks quietly. So does the chief executive, Lahnne Johnson, though Mr. Johnson says it is not by design.

"I wasn't really aware of that," he said, softly.

But Mr. Johnson is in the business of thinking about sound, specifically how to reduce it. And the hotel industry has been turning to people like Mr. Johnson, whose company makes a range of sound-insulation construction products, because hotel guests are increasingly demanding a quiet night's sleep.

Mr. Johnson, 49, came to noise abatement as a noise generator. In 1983, he founded a company called Sensuous Sound Systems, which sold high-end home entertainment audio systems with bass sounds that would go through "10 feet of steel," Mr. Johnson said. But then he saw new opportunities to "do a 180-degree turn."

"You're paying for a decent hotel and you're hearing the people in the next room talk about what they'll have for breakfast? That's unacceptable," he said. "You should be able to expect some privacy."

Hotel guests typically complain about things like poor service, dirty rooms and unreliable or costly Internet hookups. But a recent J. D. Power and Associates guest satisfaction survey found that customers said noise was their top concern in every hotel segment except the luxury niche.

Even in the luxury segment, however, noise is an issue, especially as older hotels undertake renovations.

"Some hotels make the mistake of not even acknowledging to guests a renovation that is clearly going on," said Paul M. McManus, the chief executive of Leading Hotels of the World, an alliance of more than 430 luxury hotels.

Older luxury hotels often were built "like the Maginot Line, with enormous thick walls," Mr. McManus said. They were essentially soundproof. But when hotels add plumbing or wiring to a structure built like that, he added, they have a temporary noise problem that they need to acknowledge to guests and work on.

Builders of hotels like the Four Seasons always consider acoustics and "do things to a construction standard, with double-glazed windows, sufficient insulation in and padding on the walls — even the grade of the carpeting has to do with it," Mr. McManus said.

On the other hand, some hotels, especially in the luxury market, deliberately encourage the kind of bustle and excitement in lobbies and bars that can lead to noise seeping into guest rooms.

"If you look at certain brands, there is this tremendous amount of activity and buzz," Mr. McManus said. "The vibrant lobby and bar action is part of what attracts guests. Never mind that the property is a converted single-room-occupancy with thin walls. At these places, I think the rooms are almost an afterthought. They put in Philippe Starck sinks and the guests are happy."

But other less fashionable hotels have found it difficult to balance a thumping nightlife scene downstairs with the de-



ALAN ZALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
The developer of the Hampton Inn in Kingston, N.Y., which has a noisy rail-freight line about 100 yards away, built the hotel with soundproofing in mind.

mands of guests upstairs who want a good night's sleep.

One example is Shephard's Beach Resort, a hotel in Clearwater Beach, Fla., with a large and popular nightclub on the ground floor. The resort had problems renting rooms on the first five floors because of the noise until it hired Mr. Johnson's Acoustiblok company to soundproof walls, ceilings and floors.

"They're now doing quite well," Mr. Johnson said.

Acoustiblok says it is supplying its sound-insulation products for Trump Tower hotels in Chicago and Las Vegas and other major hotels, including an Intercontinental Hotel under construction in Pakistan.

Construction techniques can dampen noise. But when other guests are generating a commotion, it can and should be addressed as a matter of basic social manners, said Susan Fitter, a consultant on etiquette who travels frequently to give seminars, usually in hotels.

"Being disturbed by loud talking, high-volume televisions and music and in-corridor rackets happens to me all the time," Ms. Fitter said.

She said the hotels must "take a position on the matter of guests being considerate to other guests, and to really respond to complaints." At the same time, she said, hotels can train employees to avoid making undue noise themselves, and to deal politely but effectively with loud and inconsiderate guests.

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Of course, one person's annoying noise is sometimes another person's basic routine, with no offense meant. Ms. Fitter said she recently took her daughters to their dormitories in separate colleges in Virginia and was amazed at what is considered a normal level of noise.

"The dorms encourage the kids to keep their doors open. Yet the kids seem to be in bliss," she said.

Given different notions of tolerance, "We all can be taught new ways to show consideration toward one another," Ms. Fitter said.

Jay Modhwadia opened a Hampton Inn in June near a busy rail-freight line in Kingston, N.Y. He thinks that abatement is great, but prevention is more prudent. His hotel has eight-inch walls between rooms.

"We're only about 100 yards from the railroad tracks, and it's very noisy, very annoying," he said. Mr. Modhwadia said he owned two independent hotels before building the Hampton, which is a midlevel brand in the Hilton chain popular with business travelers. He plans to build more.

Mr. Modhwadia said he used Acoustiblok products throughout construction, and "it has tremendously worked for us" in reducing rail and highway noise.

"It's a bit expensive upfront, but it pays off," he said. "At any hotel being built today, it is very essential to put in sound-deadening insulation to reduce the noise problem from room to room."

Deal to Mapm Signals For No

By LAURA M

Nokia's plans map and navigation maker Navteq raise the stakes among handset makers trans like Google to deliver information advertising directly

The acquisition is an industry move as Nokia and other are headed, Navteq location-based uses the Global View to track movers information about routes and because the set include advertisements related to

The acquisition help pave the maps on cell

wireless carrier phone makers a new source of revenue "It's a step toward the Swiss said Roger Entner president of consulting firm IAG Research. "I go, where to go, how to find does everything"

Nokia, the world's largest phone maker, said it would pay \$78 million for a share of the digital map data

The acquisition is a broader strategy based in Finland, said a source familiar with the move, but it has not yet reached a verdict on nine points of the lawsuit.

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PHOTO BY ALAN ZALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
A room in a hotel with soundproofing measures.

Stocks On Ho Credit Is in the

By MICHAEL M.
Blue-chip stocks record territory y investors seemed to summer's problem prime mortgage le for now.
The Dow Jones f age soared more f in midafternoon t the index above high, set on July 1 the Dow Jones ind was up 191.92 poi cent, to 14,087.55.
The Standard stock index jumpe or 1.3 percent, to 1 just beneath recor
The Nasdaq co gained 39.49 poi cent, to 2,740.99, it in about six and a l
"We're beginn what we didn't kno ago," said Todd rator of trading i investment Resea some uncertainty t that gives investo confidence to dip the market."
The advances banks, Citigroup dicted declines i earnings or loss problems with m securities and loa
"When I got in would have bet
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Bank P In Euro Suffer,

By MARK L
and JULIA W
FRANKFURT, G
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than analysts and
underscored the e
some of Europe's
most prominent fi
tions are exposed
that rest on su
mortgages.

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She does not suggest that a guest confront the perpetrator. "Taking it into your own hands and putting your head out the door or knocking on a door to ask someone to be quiet, this can sometimes raise safety issues," she said. "Often-

times, people who are loud are drunk."

Of course, one person's annoying noise is sometimes another person's basic routine, with no offense meant. Ms. Fitter said she recently took her daughters to their dormitories in separate colleges in Virginia and was amazed at what is considered a normal level of noise.

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As a builder, he said, "my major concern is I want a quality hotel. We want to grow in this industry and have a good name."