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Newsweek

05.29-06.05.2020



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Newsweek

FEATURES

EARNING FAITH

The coronavirus pandemic is changing almost everything, including how and where people shop for a huge range of products. More than ever, Americans are looking for value and brands they can believe in.

COVER CREDIT

Illustration by Alex Fine for Newsweek



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"The Era of Hope Is Over"

The propaganda battle between China and the U.S. is heating up over everything from COVID-19 to tech theft.

BY BILL POWELL

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In these uncertain times research firm BrandSpark and Newsweek reveal which brands in 175 categories Americans have the most confidence in.

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People around the world fight and disagree about just about everything except one: ice cream.



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Steven Asarch, David Brennan, Nina Burleigh, Dan Cancian, Brendan Cole, Shane Croucher, Chantal Da Silva, Benjamin Fearnaw, Jenni Fink, Kashmira Gander, Ari Georgiou, Alexandra Hutzler, James LaPorta, Jason Lemon, Phil Martinez, Noah Miller, Tom O'Connor, Ewan Palmer, Bill Powell, Asher Stockler, Ramsey Touchberry, Marc Vargas, Andrew Whalen, Janice Williams, Kelly Wynne

VIDEO

Video Production Manager _ Jessica Durham

Bangalore Video News Editor _ Nandini Krishnamoorthy

Video Producer _ Zoe Jones

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Chief Executive Officer _ Dev Pragad

Chief Content Officer _ Dayan Candappa

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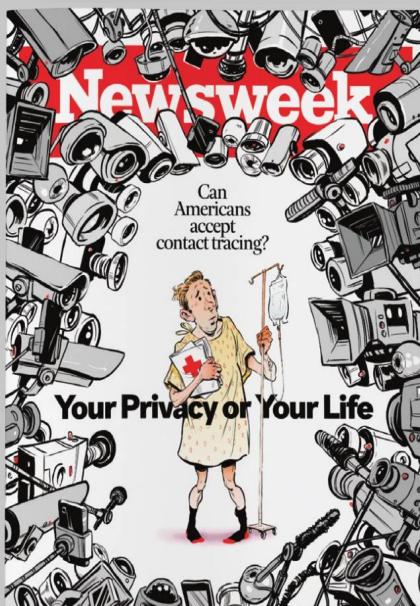
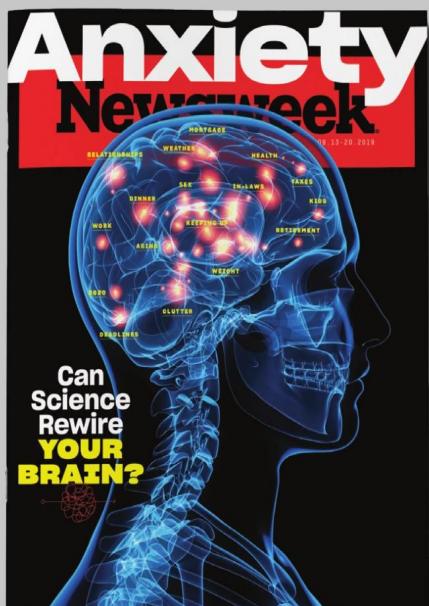
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“Journalism I don’t see elsewhere until later, if at all.”

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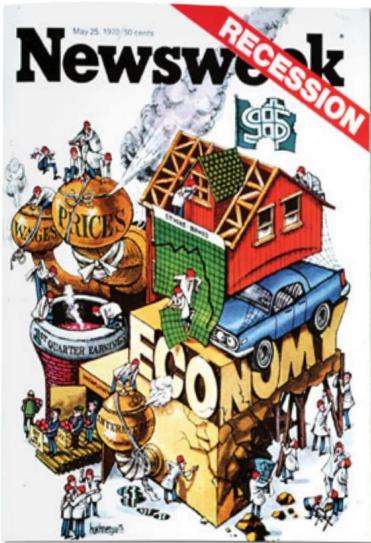
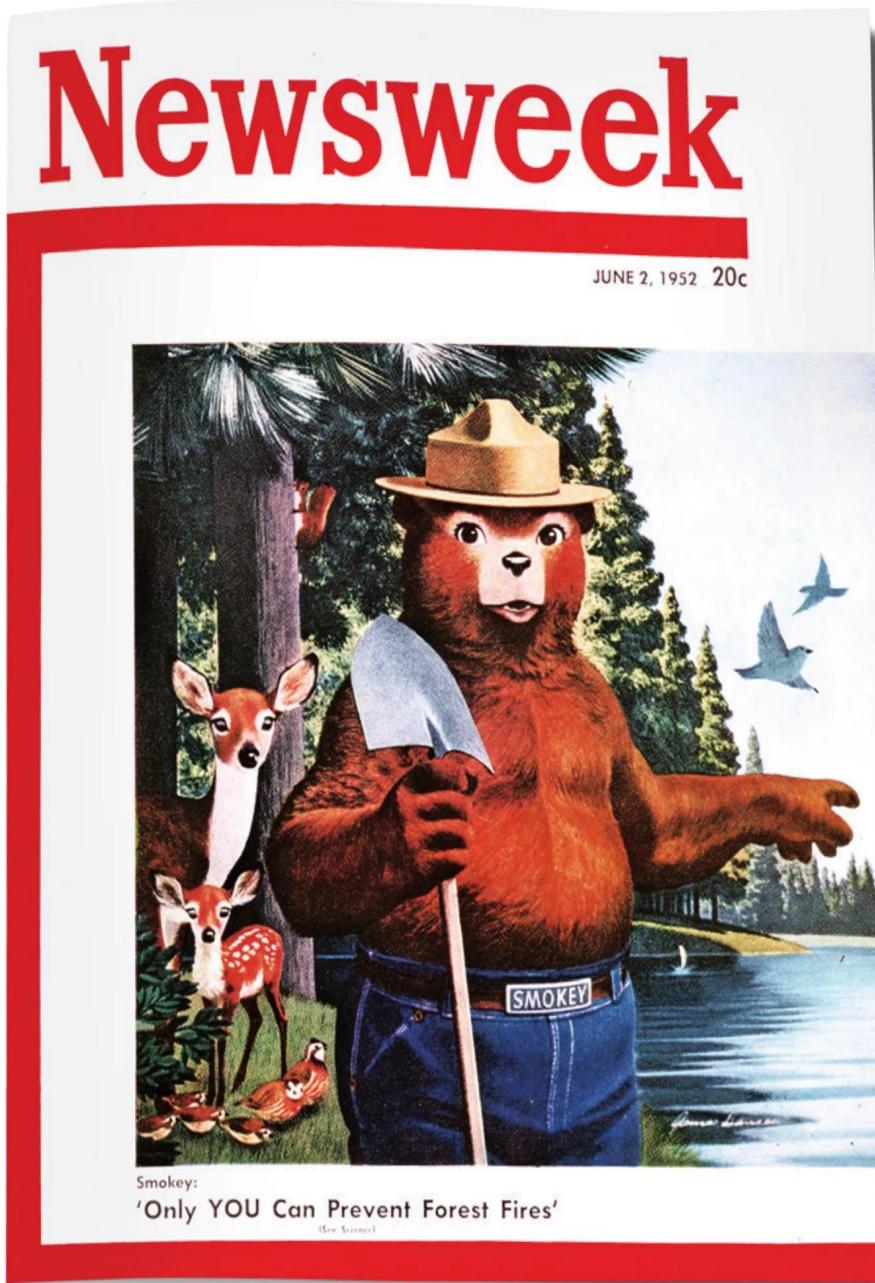
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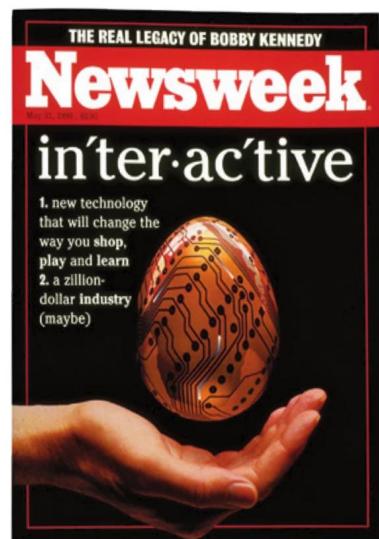
1952

Newsweek reported that in 1951 "blazes burned 10,781,039 acres of forest lands, destroying almost \$50,000,000 worth of growing timber." However, Smokey Bear was helping raise awareness and reduce wildfire incidents. "Since he started his crusade [in 1944], forest fires have decreased 90 per cent of the normal prewar level, despite the fact that 45 per cent more human beings have taken to the woods." Last year, Smokey Bear celebrated his 75th birthday, just after California experienced its worst fire season on record, with an estimated 1,963,101 acres burned.



1970

"Churning into the second half of 1970, the U.S. economy presents a confusing outlook of recession blended with inflation," said Newsweek. During this recession—which lasted less than a year—GDP fell 0.6 percent in 1970's first quarter. By comparison, GDP fell 4.8 percent in the first quarter of 2020.



1993

The concept of the internet was still somewhat foreign to the public when Newsweek explained that this new technology "turns every citizen into a master of a digitalized universe." At the time, Microsoft was in talks with telecom giants AT&T and Time Warner to create "interactive TV"—a precursor to digital TV and, eventually, live streaming. ■

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In Focus

THE NEWS IN PICTURES



ALLENTELL, PENNSYLVANIA

Unmasked Man

U.S. President Donald Trump speaks following a tour of medical supply distributor Owens and Minor Inc. in Allentown, Pennsylvania, on May 14. As has been his practice during the COVID-19 pandemic, the President was one of the few visitors and employees who declined to wear a face mask.

MANDEL NGAN





MONTMEYRAN, FRANCE

School's Out

Children, aged 4-7, attend a class in a forest near Upie, on May 12. Some pupils went to "school" again, with parents acting as teachers, to protest the closing of the village school by the town's mayor. The children were taught subjects like math and reading. Many French schools were supposed to open May 12. But, the local mayor said the town lacked workers to clean the schools and ensure a safe learning environment.

→ JEFF PACHOUD

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Good to Go?

The Caturday Cat Cafe in Bangkok reopened May 8 after being shuttered as COVID-19 spread across the country. Seen here is an employee taking the temperature of a customer. Result? Not known. Reportedly, pre-COVID, there were 16 such cat establishments in Bangkok. Food served! Who knew?

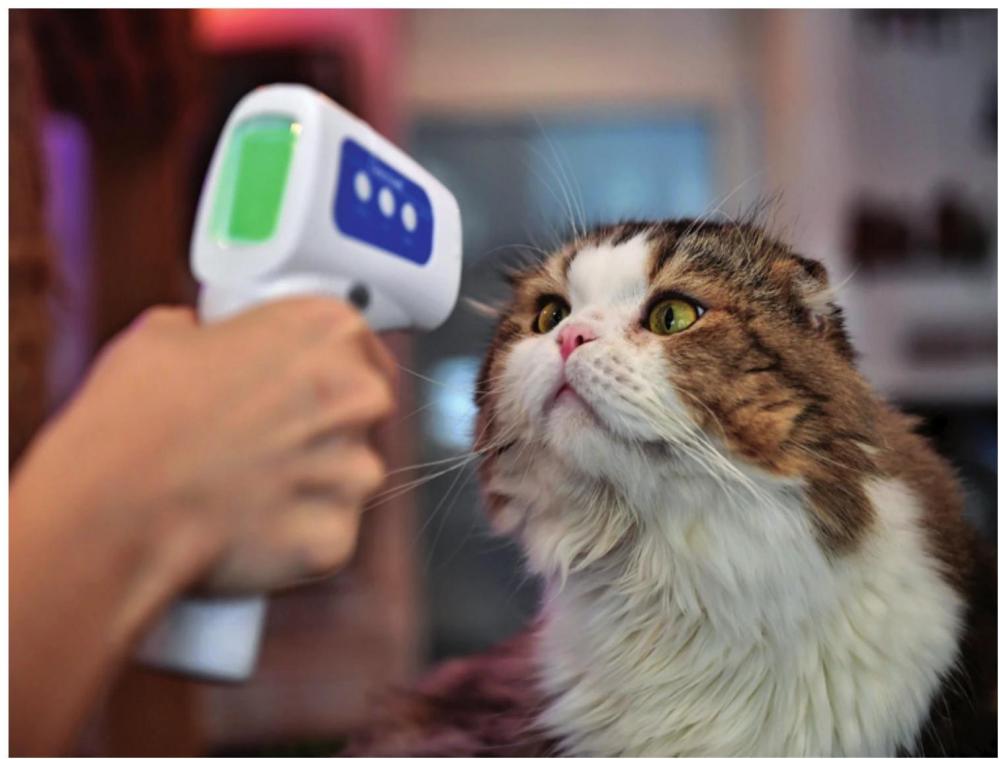
→ LILLIAN SUWANRUMPHA

NABLUS, THE WEST BANK

Yankee Go Home

Palestinian men burn a cardboard cutout of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a protest against his visit to Israel on May 14. Pompeo had landed in Tel Aviv the day before for talks on regional security and Israel's plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

→ JAAFAR ASHTIYEH



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: JEFF PACHOUD/AFP/GETTY; LILLIAN SUWANRUMPHA/AFP/GETTY; JAAAFAR ASHTIYEH/AFP/GETTY

Periscope

— NEWS, OPINION + ANALYSIS



"Packages will be delivered by self-driving vans." »P.18



TELEVISION

Chasing the Ghost of Walter Cronkite

Broadcast news is experiencing a boom in the wake of COVID-19 as Americans look for information they can trust. How long can it last?

ON APRIL 6, 12 MILLION AMERICANS WATCHED AS ABC news anchor David Muir called coronavirus "our Pearl Harbor, our 9/11 moment." Beginning that day and for the rest of the following week ABC's *World News Tonight with David Muir* did something that even the late, great Walter Cronkite had been unable to do: beat out everything else on television to become the highest-rated show on the air.

World News Tonight was the highest-rated show for six of eight weeks in March and April, topping the likes of highly-rated network entertainment shows like *NCIS*, *The Voice*, *American Idol* and *The Masked Singer*. ABC is not the only news operation feeling the boost; competitors *NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt* and *CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell* have also been beating most entertainment programming. For the six weeks ending April 26, ratings for ABC's newscast surged 48 percent compared to the same time a year ago, while NBC and CBS were up 37 percent and 24 percent, respectively.

(Cable TV evening news shows, which are an hour long compared to broadcast's 30 minutes and have much smaller viewerships, have also seen big gains. Broadcast TV reaches 120 million U.S. homes, compared to about 90 million for cable.)

The strong numbers have continued into May. "The swelling audience is the reflection of a nation," Muir says. "It's rare to witness the intersection of a dire health threat, an economy in collapse and a test of leadership. People want a place to turn to collectively." On May 6, Muir scored a 13-minute interview with President Donald Trump that attracted 9.7 million viewers, more than any other show on broadcast or cable that day.

While TV news is a radically different business now than it was in Cronkite's heyday (Muir's 12 million viewer audience is only about half the size of Cronkite's at his peak)

some network news executives dare to hope for a rebirth and return to relevance for the evening newscast in the COVID-19 era.

BY
PAUL BOND

"Coronavirus is a profound event that will have lasting impact, so news is essential viewing," ABC News president James Goldston tells *Newsweek*. "The evening newscast is an extremely efficient vehicle for telling people everything they need to know and that's more valuable now than it has ever been."

Not that it's all been roses for broadcast news. If coronavirus has brought more eyeballs to evening newscasts, it has also clobbered advertising sales, according to first-quarter financial reports from Comcast, ViacomCBS and Walt Disney, the parent companies of NBC, CBS and ABC, respectively. And in the midst of improved ratings, NBC abruptly ousted its head of news, Andrew Lack, who has been sharply criticized for his handling of accusations of sexual harassment against former *Today* show host Matt Lauer as well as for how NBC covered disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

"People are realizing our mission has never changed. It's a format that helps them understand their world. Many had forgotten that that's what evening news does," *CBS Evening News* executive producer Jay Shaylor says

All the network shows, however, have had to recreate themselves on the fly. "We've proven that we're capable of a technology revolution in a matter of days, delivering high-quality broadcasts from anchors' homes," said Janelle Rodriguez, senior vice president of editorial at NBC News. "We all feel a tremendous responsibility as there's never been a bigger story that we've covered. We need to get this one right."

At CBS, anchor O'Donnell has introduced four coronavirus segments to her show: "Racing to a Cure," "Financial Fallout," "From the Front Lines" and "The New Normal,"

the latter of which recently featured the theory that carhops, outside wait staff for drive-in restaurants, may be making a comeback.

Likewise, ABC's Muir has introduced new wrinkles to his show, including introductions as long as four minutes, not unusual for cable news but unique in broadcast, as well as his feel-good "Made in America" and "America Strong" segments.

Recently Muir aired a story on a disabled veteran who waited for hours at a food bank only to find that the shelves were empty. In a follow-up, Muir showed videos of viewers donating cash to the appreciative vet. "It was so profound because he said when he's back on his feet he would pay it forward. No matter how dire things are, there are moments of connection, and they matter," Muir says.

All this comes at a time of intense political polarization and widespread mistrust of the media. In a poll last November, the public relations and marketing firm Edelman, found that while 66 percent of Democrats said they trusted the news media, only 33 percent of Republicans did. Coronavirus may be changing that somewhat. Research firm SmithGeiger said in April that local and network news boasted approval ratings of 75 percent and 61 percent, respectively, much higher than any government body (Congress, at 32 percent, was last). And Pew Research said in March that while 62 percent of Americans believed the media was "exaggerating the risks" of coronavirus, 70 percent still gave high marks for coverage.

Christina Bellantoni, the director of the Media Center at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, believes this is the start of something. "As people tune into news more, they'll build up that trust and loyalty to news personalities,

and we'll have that Cronkite-feeling again," Bellantoni says.

Al Tompkins, a senior faculty member at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, a nonprofit journalism school and research organization, says crises have tended to help TV news win viewer trust, even if that can be short-lived. "If audiences determine they didn't trust what they saw in the COVID-19 coverage, it will be a short peak indeed," he says. "But with emergencies, TV news usually comes out the other side as having done laudable work. Even President Trump's critique of 'fake' and 'unfair' news hasn't resonated very well. Look at coronavirus protesters. Their signs don't say 'fake news,' they say 'open up the country,' which is very interesting."

Muir says part of the equation is making sure his broadcast tells stories that resonate with folks of varying opinions, so he's determined to cover those who protest lengthy closures of businesses right along with others who warn of the consequences of reopening too quickly. "It's not one side against the other. You just arm them with facts, and that breaks down the anxiety," he says. "In a polarized nation, those who report the shared concerns will be rewarded. Audiences will come back. There are lots of people who aren't protesting even though they'd like to go back to work and see their children in school again, but they also worry about safety. The truth probably lies somewhere in the middle."

Andrew Heyward, a former president of CBS News who now is working on journalism projects for the MIT Media Lab and the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University says that while there may never again "be another 'Uncle Walter, the most trusted man in America'



THAT WAS THEN TV news in the Kennedy era was often a communal experience and anchors like Cronkite (below) were widely trusted. President Trump, however, now frequently complains about “fake news.”



building trust over titillation is what's bringing news to the fore at the moment." Heyward says it is "striking" how local news, in particular, "is staying away from mindless incrementalism. They used to stress recency over relevancy. Not anymore."

What may help broadcast news, as well its cable cousin, keep recent viewers will be the upcoming presidential election and the lasting impact of coronavirus on the nation's pocketbooks.

"The economy will take a long time to rebound and people will look for broadcasts that can help them find or keep a job; and the concept of defeating Donald Trump will be must-see TV," says USC's Bellantoni. CBS' Shaylor agrees: "This story will affect our safety, financial well-being, education and our grandparents for a long time. Our viewers will stay with us."

The Poynter Institute's Tompkins, though, doubts an era of families gathering to watch the news will make an enduring comeback. He points out that the demographic which is most loyal to TV news and most susceptible to COVID-19 is an elderly one. Still he says, "For many people, this is a re-introduction to a habit of watching TV news each night that they have gotten away from. And there is a chasm to fill as newspapers cut back and some in rural areas shut down."

CBS' Heyward predicts numbers for cable news will revert back to normal levels over time, but broadcasters will experience a lasting uptick. "Cable news is a utility that is highly polarizing, which is a good business model," he says. "Broadcast will keep some of its gains as it plays the role of trusted curator of information. Younger audiences are suddenly watching. To keep them, stations must figure out which of their attributes translate best to mobile. It's an opportunity." **N**



CORONAVIRUS

Jet-Skiing Through the Pandemic

Brazil is one of the most unequal countries in the world and its poor have been hit hard by COVID-19. But President Jair Bolsonaro acts like the crisis doesn't exist

FEW WORLD LEADERS HAVE BEEN as exposed by the coronavirus pandemic as Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. The far-right leader has consistently rejected any suggestion that the virus—which has killed some 12,400 Brazilians—poses a threat to his citizens, and repeatedly attacked any lawmakers, media figures or even his own ministers who disagree.

Bolsonaro was swept to power in a wave of anti-establishment sentiment

in the 2018 presidential election. The 65-year-old was already one of the most divisive world leaders before the pandemic, but its arrival in Brazil has highlighted the shortcomings of the populist who has shown little regard for science or public health. There have now been more than 178,000 confirmed cases in the country—the eighth-highest case load in the world—and the daily increase in that total is still accelerating.

Last weekend, videos emerged of Bolsonaro enjoying a floating BBQ, jet-skiing out to meet others on a boat and flouting social distancing guidance. The president has also repeatedly mocked lawmakers who have introduced tighter restrictions on public freedoms and economic activity, and when asked about the Brazilian death toll

BY

DAVID BRENNAN
@DavidBrennan100

WHAT, ME WORRY? Bolsonaro denies COVID-19 is a serious health threat. Below, gravediggers at work in Manaus on May 8,

reaching 5,000 last month simply replied: "So what?"

Coronavirus is a perfect storm for Brazil—one of the most unequal countries in the world. The country's poorest live in densely-populated and poorly serviced favelas—shantytowns on the outskirts of Brazil's major cities. Some 12 million people live in the favelas, where the state's authority can be weak and where the police and military periodically demonstrate their power through deadly raids against powerful criminal gangs.

Favelas have generally been a low priority for the federal government. Successive administrations have preferred to hide the areas away from the world, building walls to block them from the view of visitors and keeping them off tourist maps.

Now coronavirus is spreading through such communities, overwhelming scant medical services and threatening destitution for many. Meanwhile, Bolsonaro's dismissal of the crisis is making it difficult for community activists to keep their communities focused.

Eliana Sousa Silva is the director of the Redes da Maré organization in the Maré favela of Rio de Janeiro, close to the city's international airport and home to around 140,000 people.

Silva told *Newsweek* that all of Redes da Maré's projects have been undermined by the pandemic, with widespread hunger becoming a fresh challenge for activists. One of the group's first priorities was to secure enough food to support 6,000 of the favela's most vulnerable families to ensure they would not starve.

Redes da Maré is also providing

more than 300 meals each day for the favela's homeless residents, Silva said, plus more for those in the area who are sick and quarantining. As a side benefit, the program also provides jobs for unemployed people struggling to make ends meet.

Unemployment is on the rise nationwide, and last month the privatization secretary, Salim Mattar, warned that the number—currently

just over 12 percent—could soon double. The federal government has passed a bill providing a 600 reais (around \$103) monthly payment for informal workers and small business people who have lost their income, but the plan's rollout has been beset by delays and confusion.

Silva said few in Maré had been able to access the payments, and even for those who have, it is a "very little amount of money." *Newsweek* has contacted Bolsonaro's office to request comment on his government's response to the coronavirus pandemic and support for at-risk communities around the country.

Meanwhile, the favela's health system is collapsing. Maré has seven family health centers and one medium-sized hospital, Silva said, which were already stretched to breaking

When asked about the Brazilian death toll reaching 5,000 last month Bolsonaro simply replied: "So what?"





point before the pandemic arrived. Now, the system is in “complete chaos,” she warned, with treatment for all other illnesses stopped.

Homeless residents and those with drug problems are especially at risk. Maria Angélica Comis is the director of É de Lei in São Paulo, an organization that works to support such groups. She told *Newsweek* that É de Lei has pivoted to a more active health provision role since the pandemic began, distributing health guidance, medical supplies and water.

But they are fighting a losing battle. “The situation got worse very quickly,” Comis explained. The organization relies on food donations to feed those it supports, but when businesses and offices started to close these donations dried up.

The federal government is, meanwhile, “making everything difficult,” Comis added. “They are systematically denying the COVID problem and the COVID crisis in Brazil,” she explained. The São Paulo city government is trying to retain some services and provide some food for the homeless, but Comis said it is not enough.

“Police violence is also very present,” Comis said. Harassment, pat-downs, and even rubber bullets and tear gas still face those with nowhere to go.

Limited coronavirus testing and health care access mean people are dying in the streets, Comis explained. Though in theory homeless people have access to medical care, “in practice what happens is that they face a lot of stigma and prejudice from healthcare professionals, so they often choose not to look for these services.”

Comis said her group had recorded at least 20 homeless deaths across the 10 days before she spoke with *Newsweek*. But Comis’ group only works with a small number of the city’s homeless people and many other deaths are not even being recorded. As a result, it is hard to gauge the true scale of the disaster.

Back in Rio’s hillside favelas known as Complexo do Alemão, Raull Santiago—the vice president of Coletivo Papo Reto—said the coronavirus crisis has “increased our existing inequalities” and presented a new “huge problem.”

Facing it is not easy when the

COVERING UP Tailane, an unemployed resident of Rio de Janeiro’s Morro Da Providencia favela, fits her children with donated face masks on April 22.

president is pretending that nothing is wrong. “Having a president such as Bolsonaro say things publicly that go expressly against the World Health Organization’s guidance is the biggest problem we face,” Santiago told *Newsweek*. “It incentivizes people to not follow social isolation and to keep leading their lives normally as if nothing has happened.”

As elsewhere, organizers in Complexo do Alemão are struggling to protect residents who do not have good access to clean water and are unable to socially distance. But hunger has become “more of a problem than ever,” Santiago said, and the biggest one they face. Coletivo Papo Reto—which is reliant on donations—is “being overwhelmed” by the amount of work and struggling “with no political participation from any level,” Santiago added.

In some favelas, there have been reports of criminal gangs doing what the federal government has not—handing out medical supplies, drinking water and enforcing curfews to try and slow the spread of the virus. “The government doesn’t want to do anything to help the favelas,” Santiago said, but they are also failing to give any useful information or even convince people there is a problem.

Last week, Bolsonaro claimed that the “worst is over” for the coronavirus pandemic in Brazil, even as the daily death toll and infection rates rose. But as the country moves into winter and its annual flu season, the activists who spoke to *Newsweek* did not share their president’s optimism. Asked if he agreed with Bolsonaro, Santiago replied: “On the contrary.” ■

NEWSMAKERS

Talking Points

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

"I wish I had done more to call attention to the danger."

—BILL GATES
ON CORONAVIRUS

"SIR, WHY ARE YOU SAYING THAT TO ME SPECIFICALLY? THAT I SHOULD ASK CHINA?"

—CBS NEWS REPORTER
WEIJIA JIANG, PRESIDENTIAL PRESS CONFERENCE

Weijia Jiang

thanks to some f----- bat eating, wet market animal selling, virus making greedy bastards, the whole world is now on hold, not to mention the thousands that have suffered or died from this virus."

—BRYAN ADAMS

TMZ

"I know you guys are working hard, I know you guys are tired. I just want to say I appreciate all you guys and keep up the good work and please keep being safe."

—SHAQUILLE O'NEAL TO HOSPITAL WORKERS IN SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY

Mother Jones

"I DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF BLEAKNESS BECAUSE I'M A SHINING EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE."

—Stacey Abrams on what keeps her optimistic now



Stacey Abrams

"The history of this when we look back will be of wrong prediction after wrong prediction after wrong prediction."

—SENATOR RAND PAUL, SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE HEARING

Twitter icon

"I OWE A LOT OF WHAT I DO TO LITTLE RICHARD AND HIS STYLE; AND HE KNEW IT. HE WOULD SAY, 'I TAUGHT PAUL EVERYTHING HE KNOWS.'"

—Paul McCartney

Shaquille O'Neal

TECHNOLOGY

Game of Drones

How Amazon's bet on autonomous vehicles can protect us from the latest threat to our survival

WITH THE WORLD ON PAUSE DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS AND HOME DELIVERY increasingly important, including for those who never relied on it before, Amazon.com's ability to deliver essentials to our doorsteps has never been more important. Before the pandemic, Amazon.com had already saturated the American ethos, consuming 2 percent of U.S. household income; even more American households are Prime members (57 percent) than attend church (51 percent). Yet, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos—the world's richest man in 2019—has never been content to rest on his laurels. In his new book, *Bezonomics*, award-winning Fortune magazine reporter Brian Dumaine examines how Bezos used technology to disrupt business models and consumer behavior. In this excerpt, Dumaine discusses the future of the last-mile of deliveries and its implications for helping contain costs, delivery time—and even viruses by reducing the need for humans to get the job done.

WITH THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN STILL in force in most parts of the country, Americans remain shut up in their homes, Zooming their work or school and waiting for signs of relief. Quarantining doesn't make much sense, however, if they still run out to the market to buy food and supplies. That's why many consumers have turned to online stores that can deliver right to their door. Families stock up on food and household staples, including toilet paper and hand sanitizer when they can find those precious commodities.

As a result, Amazon, Walmart, Instacart and Fresh Direct have seen online orders soar and are scrambling to make deliveries to coronavirus shut-ins. The demand is so overwhelming that Amazon can no longer offer one- or two-day deliveries for its Prime customers and has had to prioritize groceries, household goods, medicines and other

essential items. At the same time, the e-commerce giant suffered outbreaks of the virus at some of its warehouses and was hit by a handful of strikes by employees who believed that the company wasn't doing enough to protect them. In response, Amazon in late April said it would spend \$4 billion—more than its projected second quarter profit—to buy 100 million masks, 31,000 thermometers and to institute employee testing, among other safety measures. The hope is that enough warehouse and delivery workers will remain healthy enough to keep delivering food, medicine and other crucial goods.

While it's too late for this round of the virus, Amazon and others have been working on a technology that could help contain future epidem-

ics. Amazon's founder and CEO Jeff Bezos has jumped headlong into the autonomous vehicle race. Bezos sees a future

BY

BRIAN DUMAINE

where packages will be delivered by self-driving vans, small bots rolling through neighborhoods and drones buzzing to their destinations. And they will be unstoppable because robots don't catch the flu. When that day comes—and Bezos is betting billions that it will—one could imagine our robotic brethren bringing everything from Beyond Meat to oat milk to millions of quarantined souls.

While helping the afflicted is a noble cause, that's not why Bezos is embracing this technology. The challenge for Amazon and all other grocers is that delivering food and other goods is costing the company a fortune. In 2018, Amazon spent \$27 billion on shipping—a 23 percent increase from the previous year. The cost of a single delivery can range on the high end from \$7 to \$10. The last mile is where the costs pile up. It can account for more than half of the total cost of shipping a package. McKinsey & Company predicts that autonomous deliveries to a customer's door will allow retailers to slash shipping costs by more than 40 percent, saving Amazon more than \$10 billion a year, and giving it yet another edge over its competitors.

So the race is on to create reliable and affordable autonomous delivery vehicles. Amazon's vast computing power and machine-learning expertise make it a potentially formidable player in the field. In 2016, the company earned a patent for a system that helps autonomous cars figure out which direction traffic is traveling to help a vehicle safely enter the proper lane. In its partnership with Toyota, Amazon is developing a self-driving concept vehicle called the e-Palette, a minivan that can move people or packages. It had been planned to be unveiled at the 2020 summer Olympic games in Tokyo, which have since



been postponed due to the pandemic.

In early 2019, Amazon led a \$700 million investment round in Rivian, a Michigan company that is developing a battery-powered pickup truck and a sport utility vehicle. Ford later that year invested another \$500 million in the company. Around the same time, Amazon led a \$530 million investment round for Aurora, a Silicon Valley self-driving vehicle start-up that is developing the AI brains behind autonomous vehicles and plans to partner with retailers like Amazon and major automakers to create state-of-the-art autonomous vehicles.

MOBILE PERSONAL SHOPS

LAST-MILE FIXES

Clockwise from top:
Toyota's e-Palette
concept vehicle
was displayed at
the Consumer
Electronics Show in
2018; a JD.com drone
demonstration in
China; and Amazon's
perky Scout navigates
by way of sensors.

One thing that's almost certain is that when autonomous vehicles do first appear in significant numbers, they'll be delivery vans. That's because carrying packages rather than humans greatly reduces the risk posed by self-driving vehicles. If an order of Dr. Bronner's castile soap gets crushed in a fender bender, that's unfortunate, but not a tragedy. In an accident, the vans will be programmed to sacrifice themselves to avoid harm to pedestrians, bicyclists or drivers of other vehicles. In other words, they'll crash into a tree rather than collide with a pedestrian or other car.

Also favoring delivery vans in this first-mover role is that, for the most part, they have predictable routes and therefore can more easily learn the ins and outs of complex cityscapes—reducing the chance of navigation errors and accidents. A number of innovative companies, working with big retailers, are already running pilot programs with autonomous delivery vans. On January 30, 2018, the Silicon Valley start-up Udelv made what it claims to have been the first self-driving delivery for Draeger's Market in San Mateo, California.

The basic concept is that a customer uses a smart app to request a delivery for a certain window of time. Much as Uber does, the app can track the location of the vehicle as it makes its way toward its destination. When the van rolls up to the home, it texts the customer a code and a notice that the package—whether it is groceries, dry cleaning or prescription drugs—has arrived. The person walks up to the van and punches the code into a screen on the side of the vehicle that pops open a door to a storage compartment. Once the package has been retrieved, the door closes and the van drives to the next destination.

Self-driving delivery vehicles come

"Bezos sees a future where packages will be delivered by self-driving vans, small bots rolling through neighborhoods and drones buzzing to their destinations."

in all shapes and sizes. In early 2019, Amazon let loose six Scout delivery vehicles on the sidewalks of Snohomish County, Washington. The two-toned, baby-blue-and-black, battery-powered devices look like small coolers on wheels. They can travel the sidewalks at a walking pace and avoid pedestrians and pets. The Scouts use an array of sensors to navigate their way across streets and around obstacles. The self-driving delivery bot stops when it recognizes its destination, alerts the shopper by text and pops open its top. When the person picks up the package, Scout closes its lid and heads back for its next job. So far, Amazon likes how Scout rolls, and in the summer of 2019, the company decided to expand the program into Southern California.

While the Scout seems to make sense for simple deliveries, it's not

yet a good substitute for humans. A robot—at least not yet—can't open gates, climb stairs, ring doorbells or slide a small package safely between a storm door and front door to keep it dry on a rainy day. These vehicles only work when the customer is at home, which limits their usefulness. What if the customer is a no-show? How long does the car wait? Amazon and others believe part of the solution will be to build personal lockboxes where

robots can drop packages, but rolling out such an infrastructure will take years if not decades. And what happens when some mischievous kid tips a Scout over? Or when armies of Scouts jam up city sidewalks? These vehicles might solve the last-mile problem, but they will create a last-50-feet problem.

Not all autonomous delivery vehicles roll along the ground. In 2013, Bezos appeared on CBS' *60 Minutes* and explained to correspondent Charlie Rose how Amazon's drones could deliver a 5-pound package to customers within a half hour. The significance is that, according to Bezos, some 86 percent of all packages that Amazon delivers weigh 5 pounds or less.

Drones have many positive attributes. Theoretically, they emit less greenhouse gas than gasoline-powered delivery trucks, and they can

"When autonomous vehicles do first appear in significant numbers, they'll be delivery vans."



BOOKS

Q&A: Brian Dumaine

BY
MEREDITH WOLF SCHIZER

A star engineer resigned over Amazon's treatment of warehouse workers and the firing of whistleblowers during the pandemic. What kind of problems do you foresee for the company resulting from this chain of events?

Amazon made some mistakes handling safety issues during the pandemic, and the resignation of this engineer gives credence to those workers' complaints. The company, which said it will spend \$4 billion on COVID-related safety issues, is working hard to address those problems, but its reputation as America's most-trusted brand has taken a hit. Also, Congress has asked Bezos to testify about uncompetitive practices, and he's sure to be grilled about his treatment of these workers,

something the world's richest person can't be happy about.

Why this book?

Amazon represents an inflection point in the way we live and do business. Bezos is digitizing the physical world. I wanted to examine what that will mean for all of us. Businesses will have to learn to integrate big data, machine learning, the Internet of Things and AI into their operations. This is not easy to do, and Amazon has a huge head start. Amazon didn't start as a bookseller. It started as a tech company that just happened to sell books. It has the latest tech in its DNA and keeps getting smarter and smarter. One of the facts that really surprised me is that Amazon has 10,000 engineers, scientists and others working on Alexa alone.

Then there are the societal implications. Amazon's drive for automation in everything from its warehouses and delivery vans is likely to lead to massive unemployment, and business and governments will have to work together to find solutions to that.

Bezos himself said "Amazon is not too big to fail." Do you agree?

In principle, Jeff is right—even some of the best companies eventually fail. While spending time at Amazon talking to its executives I didn't see any evidence of that. In fact, it was the opposite. Amazon is driving headlong into new industries. I think Jeff said it to keep his workers from being complacent. That's one of his greatest fears.

reach remote areas to deliver crucial medicines. They can help monitor utility lines and bring crucial supplies to disaster areas. They can also be used to bring consumers in rural areas more choice at better prices. In China, online retailer JD.com has used a drone to cut the delivery time to a remote mountain village from days to minutes, while slicing the cost dramatically.

In April 2019, the FAA, which regulates U.S. airspace, let Alphabet, the parent company of Google, start a test drone delivery service in Virginia, the first of its kind in the U.S. Amazon soon followed. If drones start frequenting the skies, Amazon can expect serious blowback from local communities. Some worry about privacy—are the cameras on the drones being used to spy on people? Drone makers say the cameras are low

resolution and only meant to aid in navigation and to improve the drone's performance. That might be the case now, but there's no guarantee that the cameras won't get better and nosier.

The bigger worry is noise. A 2017 NASA study found that heavy road traffic in residential areas is much less annoying than the back-and-forth high-pitched buzz of drones. When Alphabet's Wing division started using drones to deliver hot coffee and food in three minutes or less to customers in the Australian suburb of Bonython, Canberra, the buzzing didn't go over well. Jane Gillespie, a local resident and a member of Bonython Against Drones (BAD), says the drone's loud, high-pitched whirrs sound like a "Formula One racing car."

Whether it's a drone, a Scout delivery bot or a full-sized autonomous delivery van, autonomous delivery

conveyances make more economic sense than human drivers. That means the future lies in self-driving delivery vehicles, and people will need to get used to them plying the streets. At first, these machines will make for some bizarre encounters. In a pilot program in Ann Arbor, Michigan, an autonomous Ford Fusion hybrid was used to deliver Domino's pizza to the front doors of suburban homes. After getting their pizza, some customers, caught on videotape, would say "Thank you" to the car.

It's hard to understand why anyone would do this. Perhaps they were afraid that when our robot overlords take over, the first thing they'll do is check the old log files to see who was nice to the robots and who wasn't. ■

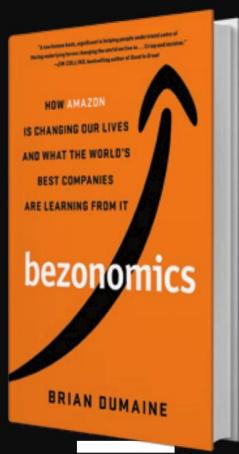
→ Adapted from **BEZONOMICS** by Brian Dumaine, published by Scribner.

What do you think is the single most important thing behind Amazon's success?

I've never seen a corporate culture so single-mindedly focused on doing whatever it takes to please the customer. A lot of companies say that, but Amazonians really believe it and act on it. Every time I interviewed someone at the company, the phrase "everything is for the customer" came up as if Amazon's smart computer scientists had hardwired their brains. Now they're applying that fanaticism to new industries like media, health care, finance, consumer electronics and advertising. Watch out.

Are you a Luddite? Or an early adopter of technology? Somewhere in between?

Before I started researching this book I had Luddite tendencies,



BEZONOMICS (January) examines how the underlying principles such as automation and AI utilized by Jeff Bezos and Amazon have remade the way all companies do business and we live everyday life.

but the project forced me to fill my house with a few Alexa Echos, a Google Home and an Apple HomePod. My wife hates talking to Alexa, but I like it. I think she's jealous.

Are you an online shopper? Your favorite sites?

I shop online too much. I know it, but I can't help it. I love to research products online and the majority of the time I end up back on Amazon to find what I needed. I like Crate and Barrel for furniture and household goods—they seem to have things Amazon doesn't. And of course, Harry & David for sending holiday presents.

Are you a Prime member? Yes. The thing about Prime is that you get so used to the convenience of free, fast shipping

that you don't even price-comparison shop. You just hit the Amazon "Buy" button.

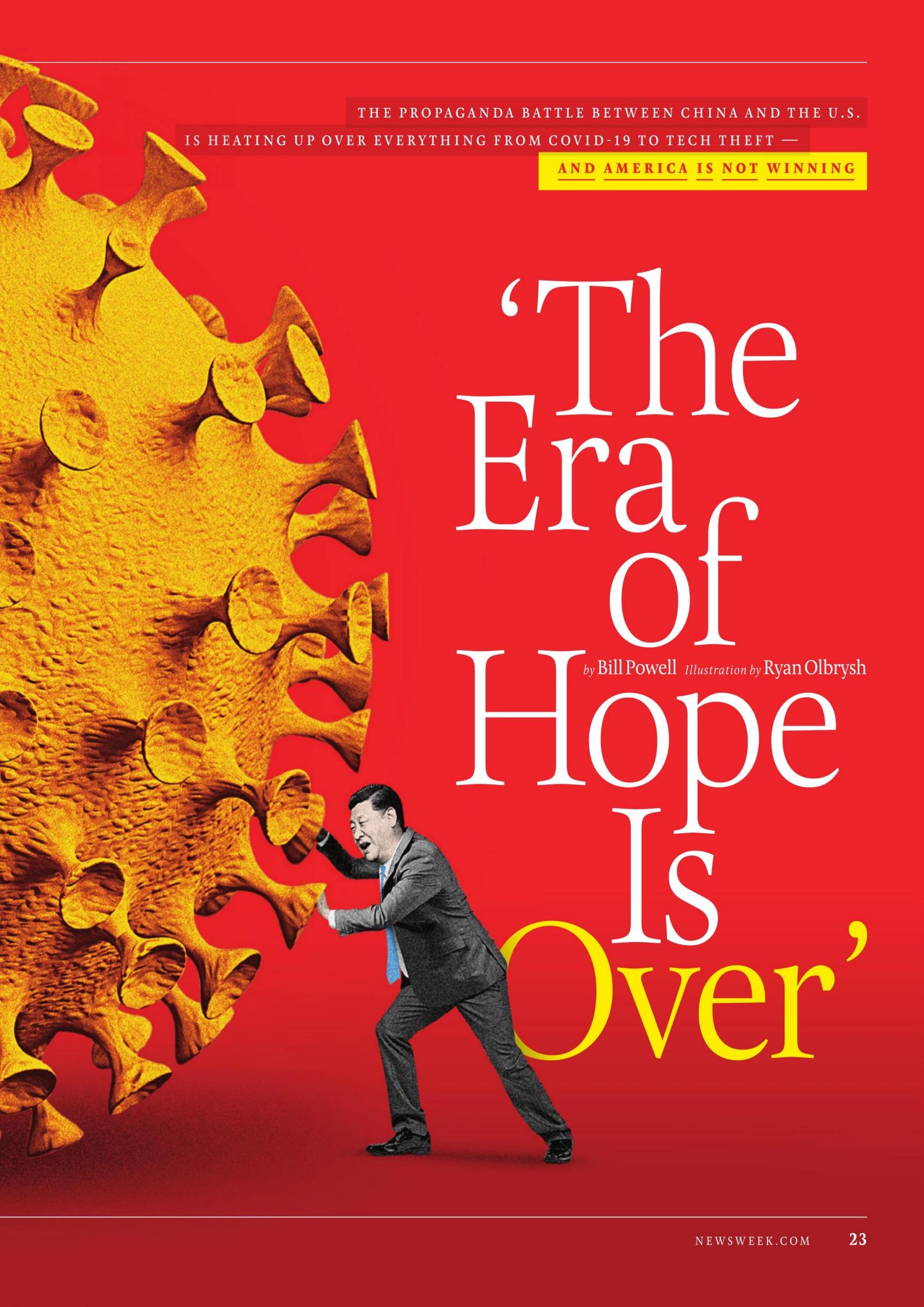
Delivery times during the pandemic have become much longer and even many staples are unavailable. Will this have long-term implications once things return to normal?

When demand for online goods surged, Amazon had to scramble. In March and April, it hired 175,000 frontline workers and is rushing to implement new safety protocols. Amazon being Amazon, it will eventually figure it out. This e-commerce giant will come out of this crisis stronger.

What's next for you?

I'm looking for the next global business titan to profile, but there are not a lot out there like Bezos. ■





THE PROPAGANDA BATTLE BETWEEN CHINA AND THE U.S.

IS HEATING UP OVER EVERYTHING FROM COVID-19 TO TECH THEFT —

AND AMERICA IS NOT WINNING

'The Era of Hope Is Over'

by Bill Powell Illustration by Ryan Olbrysh



It

HAD BEEN A BEDROCK BELIEF of U.S. policy for 40 years that it was possible to bring the People's Republic of China smoothly into the family of nations—and now, one of the architects of that policy was finally acknowledging the obvious.

In a speech six months ago, former World Bank President and Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick reminded listeners of his own famous 2005 call on Beijing to become a “responsible stakeholder.” He ticked off a few of the ways in which China had done just that: voting for sanctions on North Korea and limiting missile exports, for instance. But then he acknowledged that the project had gone off the rails.

“Xi Jinping’s leadership,” Zoellick said of the PRC president, “has prioritized the Communist Party and restricted openness and debate in China. China hurts itself by forging a role model for dystopian societies of intrusive technologies and reeducation camps.” He added: “The rule of law and openness upon which Hong Kong’s ‘One Country, Two Systems’ model rests may topple or be trampled. If

China crushes Hong Kong, China will wound itself—economically and psychologically—for a long time.”

Zoellick had that right. A global pandemic has brought relations between Beijing and Washington to its lowest point since China reopened to the world in 1978—even lower even than in those extraordinary days following the 1989 Tiananmen massacre.

What had been a more confrontational, trade-centric relationship since the start of President Donald Trump’s term, has now descended into bitterness in the midst of a presidential reelection campaign. Trump fears is slipping away. Any chance that the pandemic might spur Washington and Beijing to set differences aside and work together on treatments and other aspects of the pandemic—such as how exactly it started—is long gone. On May 13, the FBI announced an investigation into Chinese hackers that it believes are targeting American health care and pharmaceutical companies in an effort to steal intellectual property relating to coronavirus medicines. Without specifying how, the Bureau said the hacks may be disrupting progress on medical research.

“CHINA 2025

AMERICAN COM

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President Trump had already made it clear just how bitter he is at Beijing on May 7 when meeting with reporters at the White House. "We went through the worst attack we've ever had on our country," he said, "this is the worst attack we've ever had. This is worse than Pearl Harbor, this is worse than the World Trade Center. There's never been an attack like this. And it should have never happened. Could've been stopped at the source. Could've been stopped in China...And it wasn't."

The comparison of a virus, which originated in China and then spread globally, to the two most infamous attacks in U.S. history, stunned Trump's foreign policy advisers—even Beijing hard-liners. It will be impossible, U.S. officials acknowledge, for Trump to soften his hard line toward Beijing should he win reelection in November.

The president is right to reach for historical metaphor, given the weight of the moment. But the

would not be so rhetorically reckless as Trump, his foreign policy advisers acknowledge there's no turning back. Since Xi Jinping came to power seven years ago, China has imprisoned more than one million ethnic Muslims in "reeducation" camps, imposed an ever-tightening surveillance state on its own citizens and cracked down on all dissent. Overseas, Beijing's goal is to entice authoritarian regimes in the developing world to view it as a "model" to be followed. And, of course, selling the technology

those leaders need to create their own surveillance states.

"No one on either side of the political aisle in Washington is ignoring any of that," says one Biden adviser. "The era of hope that China might evolve into a normal

BETTER DAYS?

Left to right: President Donald Trump at a China "Phase-One" trade pact ceremony in Washington, D.C.; Robert Zoellick's hopes for Beijing have been derailed; spraying disinfectant and making masks on the mainland.



**IS ALL ABOUT
REPLACING ANYTHING THAT
PANIES SELL
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AMERICANS OUT OF THAT."**

aftermath of the Wuhan outbreak more closely resembles the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 than either Pearl Harbor or 9/11. What follows will not be a sharp burst of savage conflict, but a global scramble to shape the new order rising from the rubble of old. As with the Wall, the forces that led to the dispute over the Wuhan outbreak were unleashed years before the events that made history. And the change they represent is likely irreversible, no matter who sits in the White House.

Though Joe Biden has on occasion downplayed Beijing's rise as a threat to the U.S., and for sure

country is over. No one with any brains denies that."

That notion has fully settled in here. Sixty-six percent of Americans now have a negative view of China, according to a recent Pew Research poll. At the same time, in China, state-owned media and a government-controlled internet whip up nationalism and anti-Americanism to levels unseen since the U.S. accidentally bombed Beijing's embassy in Belgrade during the Balkan wars in 1999.

The world's two most powerful nations are now competing in every realm possible: militarily, for one, with constant cat-and-mouse games in the South China Sea and cyber warfare. The competition to dominate the key technologies of the 21st century is intensifying, too. This type of rivalry hasn't been seen since the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Thus, a growing number of policymakers, current and former, and China hands old and new, acknowledge the obvious: Cold War 2.0 is here. To the generation of Americans who remember duck-and-cover drills in elementary school at the peak of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the new global struggle will look very different. It will also, many U.S. strategists believe, be much harder for the West to wage successfully. "Another long twilight struggle may be upon us," says former Pentagon China planner Joseph Bosco, "and it may make the last one look easy."

Now, U.S. policymakers are trying to discern what that struggle will look like, and how to win it.



"CALIFORNIA BAD, SHANGHAI GOOD IS NOT A FORMULATION THAT'S GOING TO HOLD UP WELL IN THE POST-COVID ENVIRONMENT"

New-Age War

THE FIRST MAJOR DIFFERENCE IN THE COMING COLD War with Beijing is in the military realm. Beijing spends far less than the U.S. on its military, though its annual rate of spending is fast increasing. According to the Center For Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank, Beijing spent \$50 billion on its military in 2001, the year it joined the World Trade Organization. In 2019 it spent \$240 billion, compared to the U.S.' \$633 billion.

For a few decades at least, the U.S.-China military competition will look vastly different from the

hair-trigger nuclear standoff with Moscow. Instead, China will seek asymmetric advantages, rooted where possible in technology. It has, for example, already developed an arsenal of hypersonic missiles, which fly low and are hard for radar to detect. They are known as "carrier killers" because of their ability to strike U.S. aircraft carriers in the Pacific from long distances. These weapons could be critical in "area denial" operations, as military planners put it. For example, should the day come when Beijing seeks to take Taiwan by force, hypersonics could keep U.S. carriers far from the island nation once a war began.

China's pursuit of preeminence across a wide range of technologies, in areas like quantum computing and artificial intelligence, are central to the economic clash with the U.S. But they also have significant military components. Since the 1990s, when Chinese military planners were stunned by the U.S.' lightning victory in the first Iraq war, they have consistently focused their efforts on developing war-fighting capabilities relevant to their immediate strategic goals—Taiwan is an example—while creating the ability to one day leapfrog U.S. military technologies.

That may be drawing nearer. Quantum computing is an example. In an era in which digital

networks underpin virtually every aspect of war, "quantum is king," says Elsa Kania, a former DOD official who is now a Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security. Take cyber warfare—the ability to protect against an enemy disrupting your own networks, while maintaining the ability to disrupt the adversary's. Quantum networks are far more secure against cyber espionage, and Kania believes China's "future quantum capacity has the potential to leapfrog U.S. cyber capabilities."

That's not the only advantage of quantum technology. Beijing is also exploring the potential for quantum-based radar systems that can defeat stealth

WAR OF THE WORLDS
Counterclockwise from top: Surveillance cameras symbolize China's security apparatus; Uyghurs at prayer in western China; protesters in Toronto in 1999 up in arms against the bombing of China's Belgrade Embassy.



RONMENT

technology, a critical U.S. war-fighting advantage. "These disruptive technologies—quantum communications, quantum computing and potentially quantum radar—may have the potential to undermine cornerstones of U.S. technological dominance in information-age warfare, its sophisticated intelligence apparatus, satellites and secure communications networks and stealth technologies," says Kania. "China's concentrated pursuit of quantum technologies could have much more far-reaching impacts than the asymmetric approach to defense that has characterized its strategic posture thus far." That is a big reason why Pan Jianwei, the father of China's quantum computing research effort, has said the nation's goal is nothing less than "quantum supremacy."

Washington, and its allies in East Asia and Europe, are paying attention. In a just-published book—*The Dragons and the Snakes: How the Rest Learned to Fight the West*—David Kilcullen, a former Australian military officer who served as special adviser to U.S. General David Petraeus in Iraq, writes that "our enemies have caught up or overtaken us in critical technologies, or have expanded their concept of war beyond the narrow boundaries within which our traditional approach can be brought to bear. They have adapted, and unless we too adapt, our decline is only a matter of time." The book is being widely read in U.S. national security circles.

China is not yet a "peer power," as U.S. national defense analysts put it. But the steadily aggressive pursuit of quantum technologies—and a wide array of others that also have dual-use applications—increasingly convince Pentagon planners that Beijing will one day be one. China, says Michael Pillsbury, one of Trump's key informal advisers on relations with Beijing, "is nothing if not patient." The year 2049 will mark the Chinese Communist Party's 100th anniversary of taking power in Beijing. That's the year Chinese propaganda outlets have said will see the completion of China's rise to the dominant power on earth.

An Economic Divorce?

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE emerging geopolitical standoff between Washington and Beijing is obvious: China is economically powerful, and deeply integrated with both the developed and developing worlds. That was never the case with the former Soviet Union, which was largely isolated



SHEN HONG/XINHUA/GETTY

POWER PLAY

China has upped its game militarily; a show of force in Beijing in 2019.



economically, trading only with its east bloc neighbors. China, by contrast, trades with everyone, and it continues to grow richer. It is sophisticated across a wide range of critical technologies, including telecommunications and artificial intelligence. It has set as a national goal—in its so-called Made in China 2025 plan—preeminence not just in quantum computing and AI, but in biotech, advanced telecommunications, green energy and a host of others.

But the U.S. and the rest of the world have problems in the present as well. The pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of locating supply chains for personal protective equipment as well as pharmaceutical supplies in China. That's a significant strategic vulnerability. If China shut the door on exports of medicines and their key ingredients and raw material, U.S. hospitals, military hospitals and clinics would cease to function within months if not days, says Rosemary Gibson, author of a book

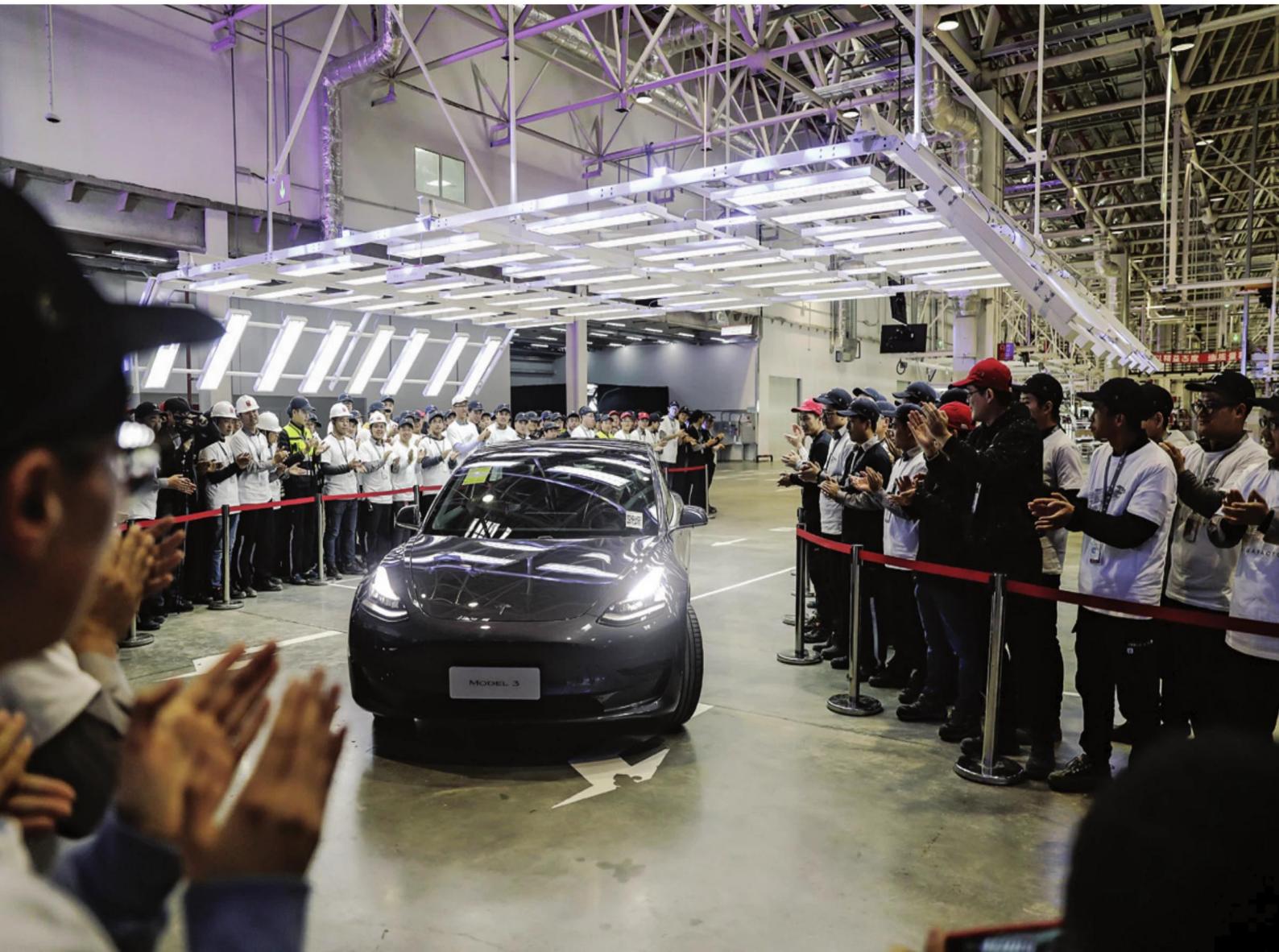
on the subject, *China Rx*. Late last month, Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton introduced legislation mandating that U.S. pharmaceutical companies bring production back from China to the U.S.

China's explicit desire to dominate the industries of the future is bad news for foreign multinational companies that have staked so much on the allure of the China market. If China's steep rise up the technology ladder continues, American and other foreign multinationals are likely to get turfed out of the market entirely. "China 2025 is all about replacing anything that American companies sell of any value, just taking the Americans out of that," says Stewart Paterson, author of *China, Trade and Power, Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*.

Donald Trump's tariffs, and China's public desire to dominate key industries, have pushed American multinational and U.S. policymakers to ask: should the U.S. get an economic divorce from Beijing? And

TECH THEFT?

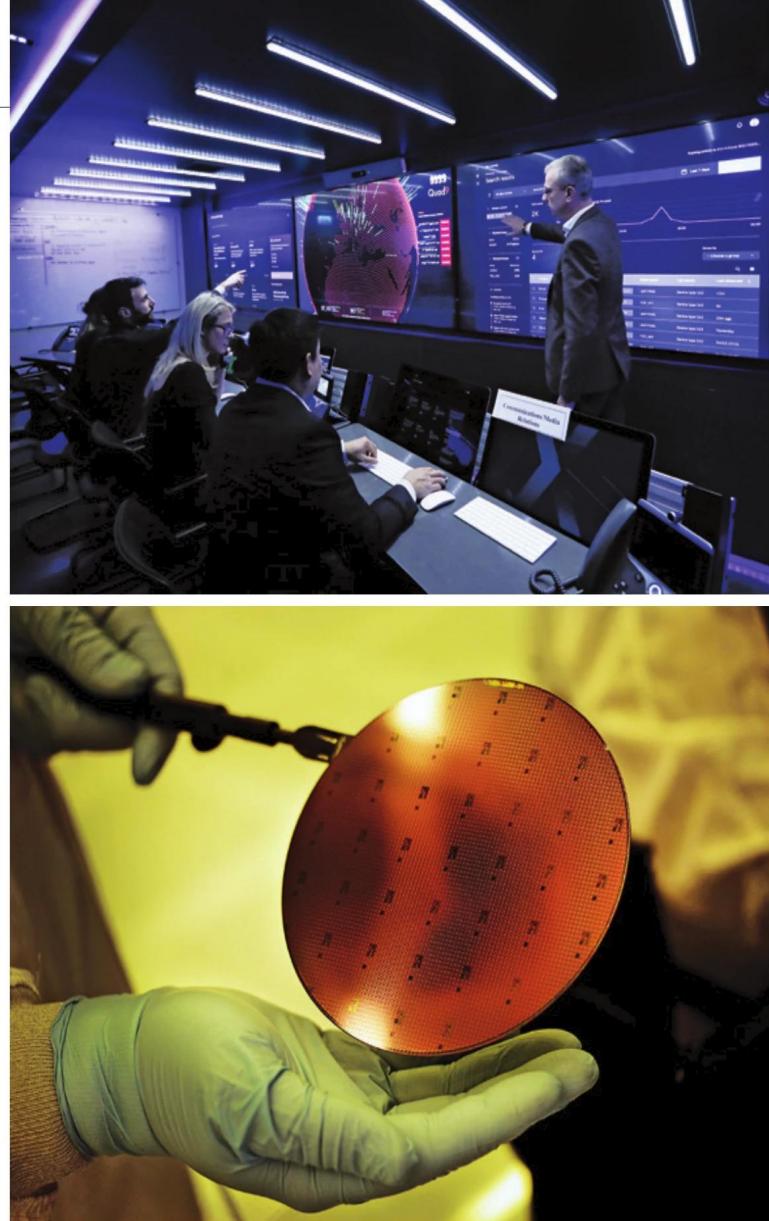
Clockwise from below:
A Tesla fresh off a
Shanghai assembly
line; an IBM "X-Force"
command center in
London; and a RF Micro
Devices semiconducting
wafer in Greensboro,
North Carolina.



if so, what would that look like?

The COVID-19 outbreak and China's response to it has greatly intensified that debate. Trump's trade war had triggered a slow-motion move toward an economic "decoupling," as companies in low-tech, low-margin industries began to move production out of China to avoid tariffs. The textile, footwear and furniture business have all seen significant movement out of China so far. But pre-pandemic, there was no mad rush for the exits and there was no reason to expect one anytime soon. As recently as last October, 66 percent of American companies operating in China surveyed by the American Chamber of Commerce in Beijing said "decoupling" would be impossible, so interlinked are the world's two largest economies.

Things have changed. The number who now believe decoupling is impossible, according to the same survey, has dropped to 44 percent. If reelected, Trump's advisers say, the president will likely pressure other industries beyond pharmaceuticals and medical equipment to bring back production. How he would actually do that is unclear, but aides are looking at the example of Japan. The Japanese legislature recently approved a program in which the government will offer subsidies—up to \$2.25 billion worth—to any company that brings its supply chain back home.



**"DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES—QUANTUM COMMUNICATIONS,
QUANTUM COMPUTING AND POTENTIALLY
QUANTUM RADAR—MAY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO UNDERMINE
CORNERS OF U.S. TECHNOLOGICAL DOMINANCE"**

As negative perceptions of China harden in the U.S., executives are faced with a stark choice: as Paterson puts it, "do you really want to be seen doing business with an adversary?"

The answer isn't that easy. In the U.S., a lot of companies simply do not want to reduce their exposure to China. They spent years—and billions—building up supply lines and are loath to give them up. Consider the semiconductor industry, a critical area in which the U.S. is still technologically more advanced than China. A complete cessation of semiconductor sales to China would mean U.S. firms lose about 18 percent of their global market share—and an estimated 37 percent of overall revenues. That in turn

would likely force reductions in research and development. The U.S. spent \$312 billion on R&D over the last decade, more than double the amount spent by its foreign competitors—and it's that R&D which allows them to stay ahead of competitors.

Paterson argues that the costs of total divorce from China is often overstated. He calculates that about 2 percent of U.S. corporate profits come from sales in the Chinese market, mostly from companies that manufacture there in order to sell there. Corporate profits overall are 10 percent of U.S. GDP. Eliminating the China portion of that "is a rounding error," he says.

But getting companies such as Caterpillar Inc., which operates 30 factories in China and gets 10

percent of its annual revenue from sales there, is an uphill lift. There are scores of companies like Caterpillar, who have no intention of leaving China, even if relations between Washington and Beijing are at new lows. And there are also scores of companies like Starbucks, which operates 42,000 stores across China, or Walmart, whose revenue in the country is more than \$10 billion annually. Those companies don't have critical technology to steal and may be little worry to the U.S. if they continue to operate in China.

But other companies do. Tesla, to take one example, is a company whose advanced technology should be protected at all costs. Which is why some in Washington are scratching their heads at both

That presumes coordination with allies, which has not been a Trump administration strong suit. But that would change under a President Joe Biden. Even before the pandemic, key European and Asian allies were souring on their relations with China. That includes Canada as well. A former senior Canadian official said Ottawa wanted to work with Trump and the Europeans to map out a tougher, united front on trade. The only problem? "You were sanctioning our steel exports on 'national security grounds,'" this official says. "We are a NATO ally, for godssake!"

The opportunity to work more closely to form a united front versus Beijing is something Biden advisers are intent on doing. A reconfigured Trans Pacific Partnership, which Barack Obama pushed, is likely

**"OUR ENEMIES HAVE CAUGHT UP OR OVERTAKEN US
IN CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES ... THEY HAVE ADAPTED,
AND UNLESS WE TOO ADAPT, OUR DECLINE
IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME."**

Elon Musk and the Trump administration. Musk said on May 10th that he was so angry at the shutdown orders in the state of California, he might move the Tesla factory in Fremont to Texas. Meanwhile, he manufactures his cars in Shanghai, which is an obvious target for intellectual property theft and industrial espionage, given that electric vehicles are one of the industries targeted in the China 2025 plan. "California bad, Shanghai good is not a formulation that's going to hold up well in the post-COVID environment," says Paterson.

A smarter U.S. strategy than "divorce" is "economic distancing," says John Lee, a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, a Washington think tank. The goal of U.S. industrial policy should be "ensuring that China is not in a position to dominate key technologies and assume the leading role in dominating supply and value chains for these emerging technologies," he says. Rationing access to large and advanced markets is critical. "It becomes much more challenging [for Beijing] if China's access to markets in the U.S. Europe and East Asia is restricted, and it is denied key inputs from those areas."



the first order of business in a Biden administration—this time more explicitly targeted at excluding Beijing from free trade deals among U.S. allies.

That is, if there is a Biden administration.

What's Next

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW COLD WAR, THE MOVE toward a smart economic distancing, as Hudson's Lee and others call for, will gain momentum. "Washington put too much faith in its power to shape China's trajectory. All sides of the policy debate [in the U.S.] erred," says Kurt Campbell, former assistant secretary of state under Obama. Biden's people are already spreading the word that there will be no return to the laissez faire attitudes that governed Washington's approach to China. The U.S. may also have to overtly subsidize companies in the Made in China 2025 industries that Beijing has targeted.

Beijing had resisted suspending its own industrial subsidies to state-owned industries in the Trump trade negotiations and had shown few signs of backing off from the goals expressed in Made in China 2025. In the wake of the global fury kicked up by the coronavirus, an economic rapprochement appears unthinkable.

Militarily and geopolitically, no matter who wins the next election, the U.S. will work hard to bring India, which has hedged its bets between Washington and Beijing as China rose, more closely into the fold of a "free and open Indo-Pacific," as the Trump administration has called its policy toward Asia. The ability to work more closely with allies, both in East Asia and in Europe, in creating a united front against Beijing has never been stronger. "No one that we talk to is happy," says Rand Corporation's Scott Harold.

What many look for is steadier and clearer public messaging from Washington. As Harold puts it, as the ideological competition with Beijing intensifies, "the defenders of the liberal international order, like-minded democracies, should grow more active in defense of their interests and values."

In the wake of the pandemic, the U.S. is suffering a defeat that should be unthinkable: it is losing the propaganda war, particularly in the developing world. Both internally and abroad, the Chinese Communist party's propaganda outlets, digital and broadcast, are trumpeting Xi Jinping's handling of COVID-19, and contrasting it with the Trump



administration's shambolic efforts to deal with the virus. State media outlets chronicled how badly the U.S. and others have managed the crisis. Their message: Those countries should copy China's model.

As competition between the United States and China grows, the information wars will be critical. In this, the "America First" Trump administration has been mostly AWOL—the President has not been able to rouse himself to support pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong, so desperate was he for a trade deal with Xi Jinping. But, Trump and Biden have some good role models and, thus, there's hope. U.S. presidents have defended the country's values quite well, and steadily, throughout the last Cold War, none more ably than Ronald Reagan, who left office a year before the Berlin Wall came down.

We will see, of course, if the next administration is up for the fight. Washington has at least recognized, as Kurt Campbell observes, that it overvalued its ability to influence China's development" Presumably it won't make that mistake again. Instead, Washington and its allies need to focus more on how to cope effectively with a powerful rival.

The mission: Wage the 21st century's Cold War, while ensuring it never turns hot. ■

NEW DIRECTION
Above: Would a President Joe Biden take a harder line toward China, which hopes to reduce dependence on American firms? Opposite: a Starbucks in Hong Kong and an ingots maker in Wuxi.

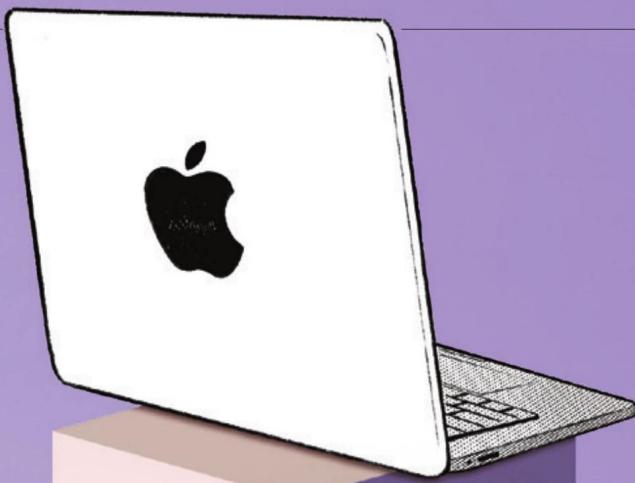


America's Most



Trusted Brands

In these uncertain times, *Newsweek* and BrandSpark® reveal which brands consumers **TRUST** most





Newsweek

→ AS AMERICANS ADAPT TO THE CHALLENGES CREATED by the COVID-19 crisis, their consumer habits and priorities are evolving. Shoppers are looking for greater value and to feel confident about their choices. Trust has never been more important: During times of change, especially with a rapid increase in online buying, shoppers may reconsider what brands they are purchasing, and why. And many shoppers are now buying in categories online for the first time—in an environment where they are faced with a greater choice of products and brands. That means it's a particularly important time to note which brands and products give consumers the highest level of confidence.

Newsweek has partnered with BrandSpark International, a leading international research firm, to present the results from the most extensive trust study in the country, the BrandSpark® American Trust Study. Over 18,000 Americans voted for the brands they trust the most in 175 categories, including food & beverage, health, beauty, household, pet, home goods, and tech. These exclusive awards are bestowed each year to help consumers shop with confidence and to highlight brands that are the leaders in their categories. The following is the list of brands that Americans count on to deliver on their promises:

BABY & KIDS

BABY BOTTLE

Dr. Brown's
Handi-Craft Company

BABY FOOD

Gerber
Nestlé

BABY FORMULA

Enfamil
Mead Johnson
& Company

BABY LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Dreft
Procter & Gamble

BABY LOTION

Johnson's Baby
Johnson & Johnson

BABY MONITOR

VTech
VTech Holdings

BABY PROBIOTICS

Culturelle
i-Health

BABY WASH / SHAMPOO

Johnson's Baby
Johnson & Johnson

BABY WIPES

Huggies
Kimberly-Clark

BREAST PUMP

Medela
Medela

CHILDREN'S COLORING

Crayola
Crayola

CHILDREN'S THERMOMETER

Braun
Helen of Troy

CHILDREN'S TOOTHBRUSH

Colgate
Colgate-Palmolive

CHILDREN'S TOOTHPASTE

Crest
Procter & Gamble

CHILDREN'S VITAMINS

Flintstones
Bayer

COLIC RELIEF

Little Remedies
Prestige Consumer
Healthcare

DIAPER PAIL

Diaper Genie by Playtex
Edgewell

DIAPERS

Pampers
Procter & Gamble

INFANT/TODDLER CAR SEAT

Graco
Newell Brands

INFANT LEARNING TOYS

Fisher-Price
Mattel

NATURAL BABY PRODUCTS

The Honest Company
The Honest Company

NURSING PADS

Lansinoh
Lansinoh Laboratories

ORGANIC BABY SNACKS

Gerber
Nestlé

PREGNANCY TEST

First Response
Church & Dwight

STROLLER

Graco
Newell Brands

TODDLER LEARNING TOYS

Fisher-Price
Mattel

TRAINING PANTS

Huggies Pull-Ups
Kimberly-Clark

FOOD & BEVERAGE

ARTISAN FLATBREAD

Stonefire
Stonefire

BAKING PRODUCTS

Gold Medal
General Mills

BETTER-FOR-YOU FROZEN MEALS

Lean Cuisine
Nestlé

BUTTER

Land O'Lakes
Land O'Lakes

CAKE MIX

Betty Crocker
General Mills

CANNED TUNA

StarKist
StarKist

CHOCOLATE

Hershey's
The Hershey Company

COFFEE

Folgers
The J.M. Smucker
Company

COOKING OIL SPRAY

Pam
Conagra Brands

CREAM CHEESE

Philadelphia
Kraft Heinz

EGGS

Eggland's Best
Eggland's Best

FROZEN PIZZA

DiGiorno
Nestlé

FROZEN POTATO PRODUCTS

Ore-Ida
Kraft Heinz

* indicates a tie in the category

→ For the complete list, go to Newsweek.com/brandspark-winners-2020

ICELANDIC YOGURT
Siggi's The Icelandic Milk and Skyr Corporation
INSTANT RICE
Minute Rice Riviana Foods
JAM
Smucker's The J.M. Smucker Company
JERKY
Jack Link's Jack Link's
MAYONNAISE
Hellmann's Unilever
NATURAL PEANUT BUTTER
Jif The J.M. Smucker Company

NON-DAIRY MILK ALTERNATIVE
Silk Danone
OATMEAL
Quaker PepsiCo
ORGANIC MAC & CHEESE
Annie's General Mills
PASTA
Barilla Barilla
PLANT-BASED MEAT SUBSTITUTE
MorningStar Farms Kellogg
POPCORN
Orville Redenbacher's Conagra Brands

PREMIUM COFFEE
Starbucks Starbucks
SAUSAGES
Jimmy Dean Tyson Foods
SOUR CREAM
Daisy Daisy Brand
TEA
Lipton Unilever
VEGAN FOOD
MorningStar Farms Kellogg
WHITE BREAD
Wonder Flowers Foods

HEALTH & BEAUTY

ALLERGY RELIEF*

Benadryl
Johnson & Johnson

Claritin

Bayer

Zyrtac

Johnson & Johnson

ANTI-AGING SKIN CARE PRODUCTS

Olay
Procter & Gamble

BLADDER LEAKAGE PROTECTION

Poise
Kimberly-Clark

BODY LOTION

Jergens
KAO

BODY WASH

Dove
Unilever

COLD SORE REMEDY

Abreva
GlaxoSmithKline

CONTACT LENS SOLUTION

Bausch + Lomb
Bausch + Lomb

COUGH DROPS/LOZENGES

Halls
Mondelez

DENTURE ADHESIVE

Fixodent
Procter & Gamble

DENTURE CLEANSER

Polident
GlaxoSmithKline

ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH

Oral-B
Procter & Gamble

FIBER SUPPLEMENT

Metamucil
Procter & Gamble

MICELLAR WATER

Garnier
L'Oréal

MOUTHWASH

Listerine
Johnson & Johnson →

FOUNDATION

Covergirl
Coty

HAIR REGROWTH PRODUCTS

Rogaine
Johnson & Johnson

HAIR REMOVAL

Nair
Church & Dwight

HAIR ROOT TOUCH-UP

Clairol
Coty

LAXATIVE

Dulcolax
Chattem

LINERS/PADS

Always
Procter & Gamble

LIP COLOR

Revlon
Revlon

LUXURY SKIN CARE PRODUCTS OVER \$50*

Estée Lauder
Estée Lauder

Lancôme

L'Oréal

MASCARA

Maybelline
L'Oréal

MEN'S ANTIPERSPIRANT/DEODORANT

Old Spice
Procter & Gamble

MEN'S SHAVING

Gillette
Procter & Gamble

MICELLAR WATER

Garnier
L'Oréal

MOUTHWASH

Listerine
Johnson & Johnson →





Newsweek

NAIL POLISH*

OPI
Coty

Sally Hansen
Coty

NASAL SPRAY

Flonase
GlaxoSmithKline

NATURAL COSMETICS*

bareMinerals
Shiseido

Burt's Bees
Clorox

NATURAL DEODORANT

Tom's of Maine
Colgate-Palmolive

NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS*

Aveeno
Johnson & Johnson

Burt's Bees
Clorox

Neutrogena
Johnson & Johnson

PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENTS

Culturelle
i-Health

SENSITIVE SKIN CARE PRODUCTS

Aveeno
Johnson & Johnson

SENSITIVE TOOTHPASTE

Sensodyne
GlaxoSmithKline

SHAMPOO & CONDITIONER

Suave
Unilever

SHAMPOO & CONDITIONER FOR COLORED HAIR

Pantene
Procter & Gamble

SUNSCREEN

Coppertone
Beiersdorf

TAMPONS

Tampax
Procter & Gamble

TEETH WHITENING

Crest
Procter & Gamble

UPSET STOMACH RELIEF

Pepto-Bismol
Procter & Gamble

WOMEN'S DEODORANT/ANTIPERSPIRANT

Secret
Procter & Gamble

WOMEN'S HAIR COLOR

L'Oréal
L'Oréal

WOMEN'S SHAVING

Gillette Venus
Procter & Gamble

HOUSEHOLD & HOME GOODS

AIR FRESHENER

Febreze
Procter & Gamble

ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER

Lysol
Reckitt Benckiser

BATHROOM TISSUE/TOILET PAPER

Charmin
Procter & Gamble

DISH SOAP

Dawn
Procter & Gamble

DISHWASHER CLEANER

Cascade
Procter & Gamble

DISHWASHER DETERGENT

Cascade
Procter & Gamble

DOG TREATS

Milk-Bone
The J.M. Smucker Company

DRYER SHEETS

Bounce
Procter & Gamble

FABRIC SOFTENER

Downy
Procter & Gamble

FACIAL TISSUES

Kleenex
Kimberly-Clark

FLEA & TICK PREVENTION

Frontline
Boehringer Ingelheim

FLOOR CLEANER*

Mr. Clean
Procter & Gamble

Pine-Sol
Clorox

Swiffer
Procter & Gamble

FOOD STORAGE BAGS

Ziploc
S.C. Johnson & Son

FOOD STORAGE CONTAINERS*

Rubbermaid
Newell Brands

Ziploc
S.C. Johnson & Son

GARBAGE BAGS

Hefty
Reynolds Consumer Products

HAND SOAP

Softsoap
Colgate-Palmolive

INSECT CONTROL

Raid
S.C. Johnson & Son

INSECT REPELLANT

OFF!
S.C. Johnson & Son

LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Tide
Procter & Gamble

LAUNDRY SCENT BOOSTER (IN-WASH)

Downy
Procter & Gamble

LAUNDRY STAIN REMOVER

Shout
S.C. Johnson & Son

LAUNDRY WRINKLE PROTECTION

Downy
Procter & Gamble



KEY	CATEGORY
Brand	Manufacturer



MULTI-PURPOSE DISINFECTING CLEANER

Lysol
Reckitt Benckiser

PAPER TOWELS

Bounty
Procter & Gamble

AIR FRYER

Ninja
SharkNinja

BARBECUE

Weber
Weber-Stephen
Products

CLOTHES IRON

Black + Decker
Black + Decker

COOKWARE

Calphalon
Newell Brands

DISHWASHER

Whirlpool
Whirlpool

DRINK CARBONATION SYSTEM

SodaStream
SodaStream

ELECTRIC FACIAL CLEANSING DEVICE

Clarisonic
L'Oréal

ELECTRIC FAN

Lasko
Lasko Products

ELECTRIC HAIR STRAIGHTENER

Conair
Conair

ESPRESSO MAKER*

Keurig
Keurig

NESPRESSO

Nestlé

FAUCET

Moen
Moen

HAIR CURLING IRON

Conair
Conair

HAIR DRYER

Conair
Conair

HUMIDIFIER

Vicks
Helen of Troy

LUGGAGE

Samsonite
Samsonite

MATTRESS-IN-A-BOX

Purple
Purple Innovation

SINGLE SERVE COFFEE MAKER

Keurig
Keurig

SLOW COOKER

Crock-Pot
Newell Brands

SPACE HEATER

Lasko
Lasko Products

SPRING MATTRESS

Serta
SertaSimmons
Bedding

VACUUM*

Bissell
Bissell

DYSON

Dyson

SHARK

SharkNinja

WASHER/DRYER*

Maytag
Whirlpool

WHIRLPOOL

Whirlpool

TECHNOLOGY

4K TELEVISION

Samsung
Samsung

CHROMEBOOK*

Google
Google

HP

Hewlett-Packard

DASH CAMERA

Garmin
Garmin

DIGITAL CAMERA

Canon
Canon

GAMING LAPTOP*

Alienware
Dell

DELL

Dell

HEADPHONES

Sony
Sony Corporation
of America

HOME THEATRE

Sony
Sony Corporation
of America

LAPTOP OVER \$1000

Apple
Apple

LAPTOP UNDER \$1000

HP
Hewlett-Packard

PHONE CASE

OtterBox
Otter Products

PORTABLE SPEAKER

Bose
Bose

SMART DOORBELL

Ring
Amazon

SMART HOME MONITORING/CAMERAS

Ring
Amazon

SMART LIGHTING

Philips
Signify

SMART LOCK

Schlage
Schlage

SMART THERMOSTAT

Google Nest
Google

SOUND BAR*

Bose
Bose

SAMSUNG

Samsung

SONY

Sony Corporation
of America

VIRUS PROTECTION

Norton
NortonLifeLock

WEARABLE FITNESS TRACKER

Fitbit
Fitbit

AFFORDABLE GROCERY STORE

NATIONAL

ALDI
ALDI

WALMART

Walmart

MIDWEST

ALDI
ALDI

NORTHEAST

ALDI
ALDI

SOUTHWEST

WALMART
Walmart

WEST

WALMART
Walmart

BOOKS

Escapist Summer Reads

20 fiction and nonfiction books
that will make you want to
lose yourself in their pages



MALTE MUELLER/GETTY TOP RIGHT: STEVEN FERDMAN/GETTY

"JUST SHOWING OUR VALUE"
Ramy Youssef's Hulu series returns » P.48



A WE ALL NEED A LITTLE ESCAPISM THESE DAYS—WHETHER you're socially distancing on the beach or holed up in your apartment—and nothing provides that better than the pages of a good book. This summer's reads includes deeply satisfying page turners, from legal thrillers to tales of Nigerian family life and trivia about a favorite game show to a look at intimacy in the Arab world. The *Newsweek* staff has chosen some of the best of this season's fiction and nonfiction available for your e-reader or through contactless delivery that should keep your mind far away from viruses all the way through Labor Day.

—Juliana Pignataro

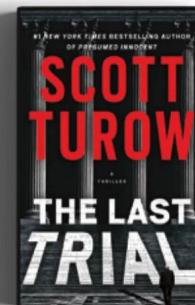
Fiction



Night. Sleep. Death. The Stars.

By Joyce Carol
Oates (June)
ECCO | \$35

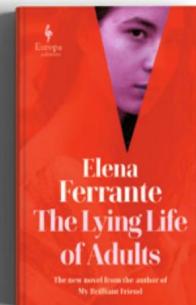
The death of John Earle McLaren after an altercation with the police brings together his children, who cope in varied ways in this timely, enveloping story of an American family.



The Last Trial By Scott Turow (May)

GRAND CENTRAL
PUBLISHING | \$29

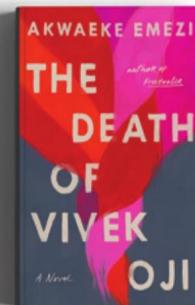
Eighty-five-year-old renowned defense lawyer Sandy Stern has one more trial in him. So when his close friend, a Nobel Prize-winning doctor, is accused of fraud and murder, how can he say no?



The Lying Life of Adults By Elena Ferrante (September)

EUROPA EDITIONS | \$26

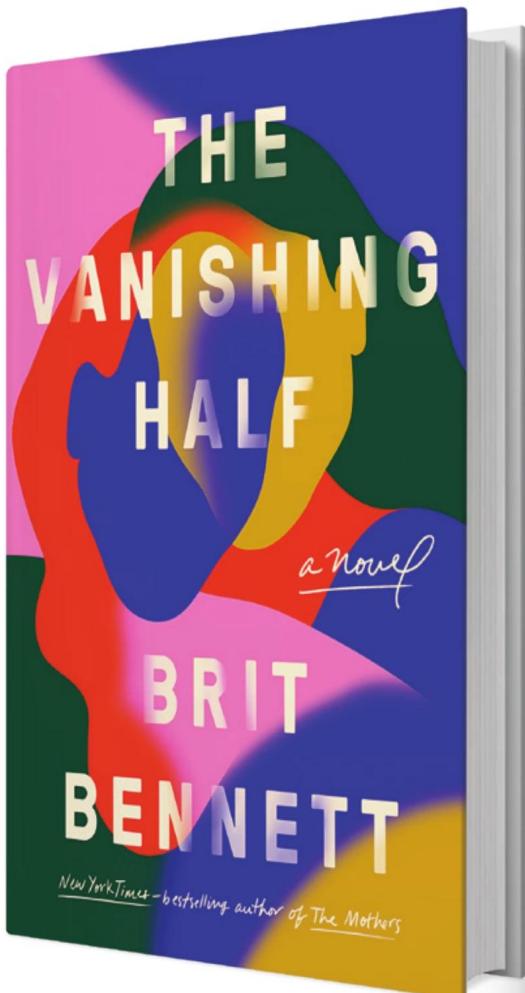
Translated from the Italian by Ann Goldstein, Ferrante makes Naples come alive in her latest literary feat, which follows Giovanna as she tries to find the truth in her versions of both herself and the world.



The Death of Vivek Oji By Akwaeke Emezi (August)

RIVERHEAD BOOKS | \$27

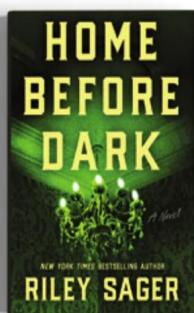
A mother finds her son's body lying at her doorstep. So begins this story set in Nigeria, bursting with otherworldly characters and culminating in a deep exploration of family, friendship and loss.



The Vanishing Half

By Brit Bennett (June) RIVERHEAD BOOKS | \$27

Two twin sisters grow up in a small black community in the South but embark on dramatically different journeys. While one raises her daughter in that same small town, the other creates a life as a white woman, and not even those closest to her know the truth.

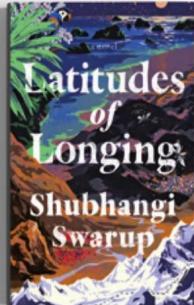


Home Before Dark

By Riley Sager (June)

DUTTON | \$27

King of thrillers, Sager returns with a pulse-pounding, goosebump-inducing tale of a woman who goes back to her childhood home—and the setting of a true horror story written by her father.



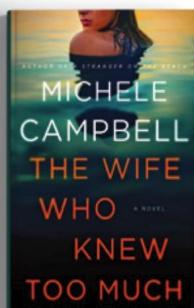
Latitudes of Longing

By Shubhangi

Swarup (May)

ONE WORLD | \$27

With lyrical intensity and stunningly vibrant characters, debut author Swarup takes us on a mesmerizing journey across India, giving voice to varied and magical entities ranging from a yeti to the ghost of an evaporated ocean.

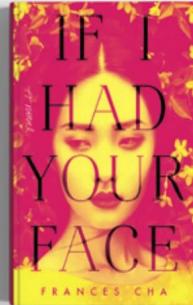


The Wife Who Knew Too Much

By Michele Campbell (July)

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS | \$27.99

Set in the wealthy Hamptons, when handsome Connor Ford comes back into his ex-girlfriend's life after marrying a rich, older woman who has since died, he seems too good to be true—and he might just be. Taut, unpredictable and sensual, Campbell's writing provides the perfect escape.

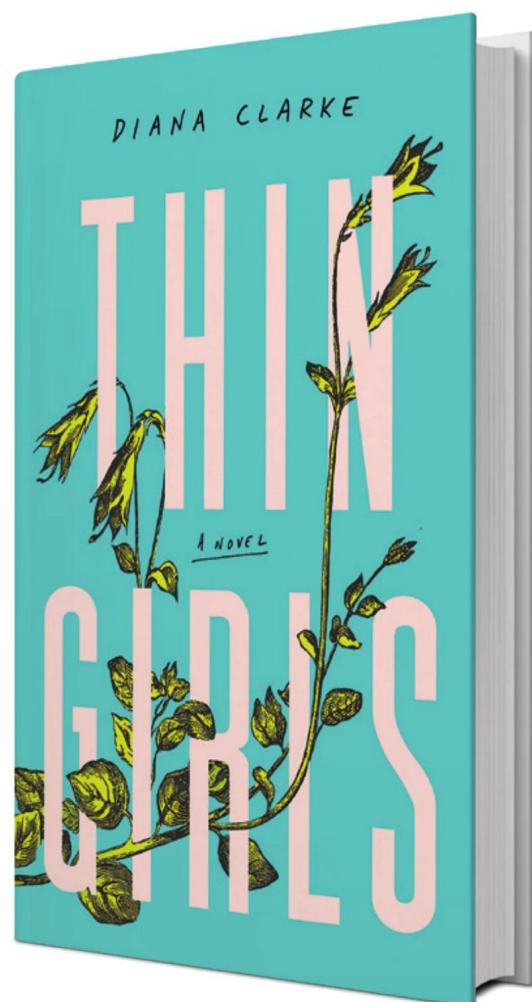


If I Had Your Face

By Francis Cha (April)

BALLANTINE BOOKS | \$27

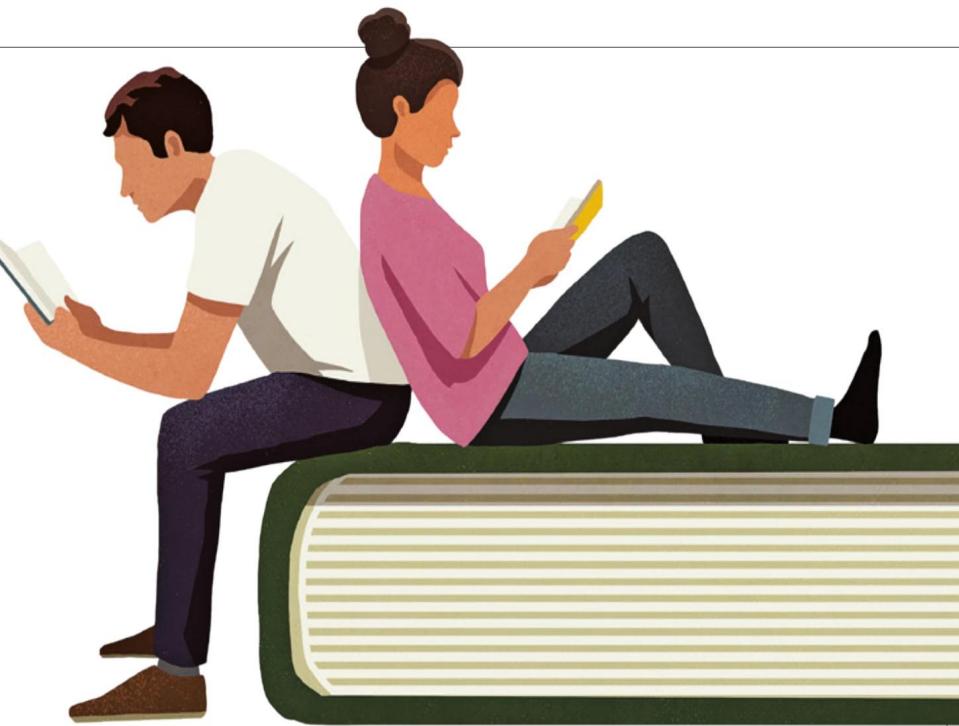
Four young women attempt to navigate life in ruthlessly competitive, high-stakes South Korea, where beauty is currency and brutal social hierarchies reign.



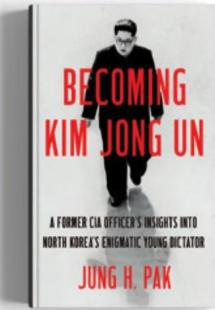
Thin Girls

By Diana Clarke (June) HARPER | \$27.99

Twins Rose and Lily are as bonded as two sisters can be. But when Rose stops eating, Lily begins to consume whatever Rose won't. Their paths weave, diverging and converging as each young woman makes a life for herself in this dramatic and compelling debut.



Nonfiction

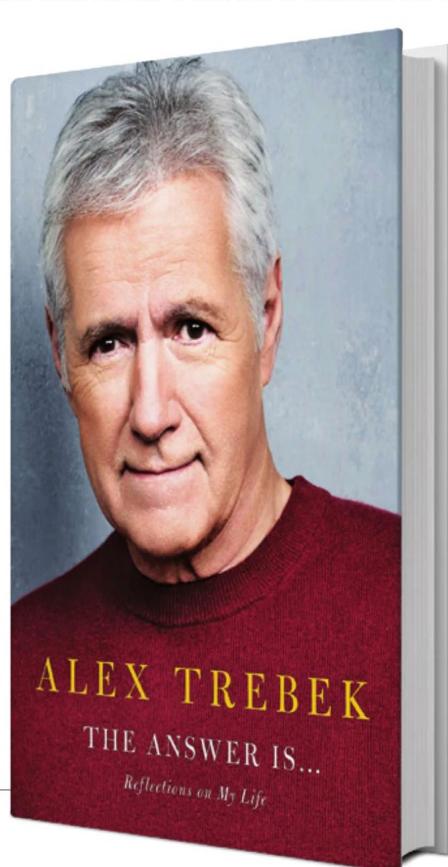


Becoming Kim Jong Un: A Former CIA Officer's Insights into North Korea's Enigmatic Young Dictator

By Jung H. Pak (April)

BALLANTINE BOOKS | \$28

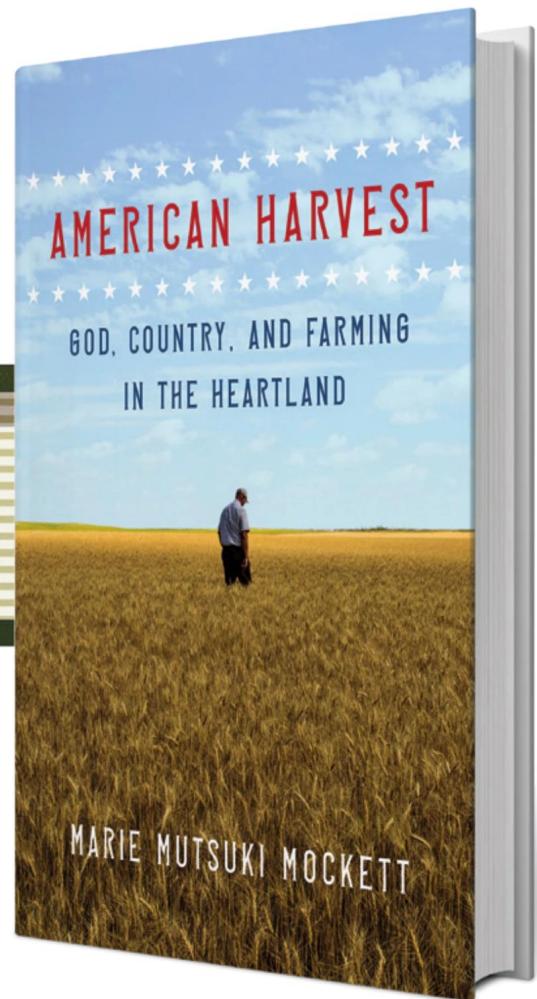
There's hardly a better time to read what could be the most definitive account of North Korea's supreme leader. Former CIA-officer Pak shrewdly sheds light on the world's most recognizable mysterious leader, his life and what's really going on behind the curtain.



The Answer Is....: Reflections on My Life

By Alex Trebek (July) SIMON & SCHUSTER | \$25

Jeopardy! fans rejoice! National-treasure Trebek gives us a long-awaited compilation of the best sort of trivia: the kind about his life.

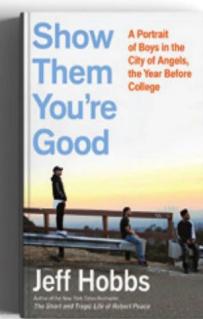


American Harvest: God, Country, and Farming in the Heartland

By Marie Mutsuki Mockett (April)

GRAYWOLF PRESS | \$28

Mockett returns to her father's native Nebraska farm to follow a group of evangelical wheat harvesters, learning about their long-established faith and what it's like to make a life as a farmer in 21st-century America.



Show Them You're Good: A Portrait of Boys in the City of Angels the Year Before College

By Jeff Hobbs (August)

SCRIBNER | \$28

An intimate look at four boys' different experiences of what it means to come of age as an American male and their post-high school options.



Reaganland: America's Right Turn 1976–1980

By Rick Perlstein (August) SIMON & SCHUSTER | \$40

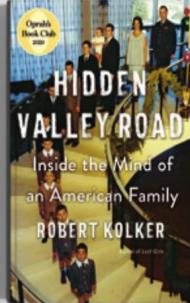
Historian and journalist Perlstein explores the lasting legacy of President Ronald Reagan and how the conservative movement has endured and impacted American politics.



Empty: A Memoir

By Susan Burton (June) RANDOM HOUSE | \$27

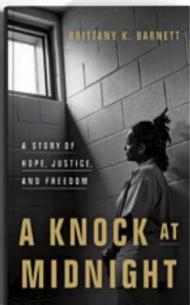
With raw, extraordinary honesty, Burton, an editor at the podcast *This American Life*, lays bare the story of the cycle of binge eating and starving that dominated much of her life.



Hidden Valley Road: Inside the Mind of an American Family

By Robert Kolker (April) DOUBLEDAY | \$29.95

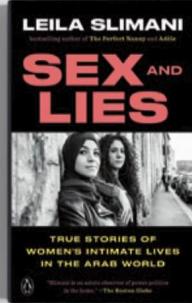
The Galvin family was one of the first to be studied by the National Institutes of Health after six of the family's 12 children were diagnosed with schizophrenia. With profound empathy, Kolker tells the family's story, and how they affected our understanding of the disease to this day.



A Knock at Midnight: A Story of Hope, Justice, and Freedom

By Brittany K. Barnett (September) CROWN | \$28

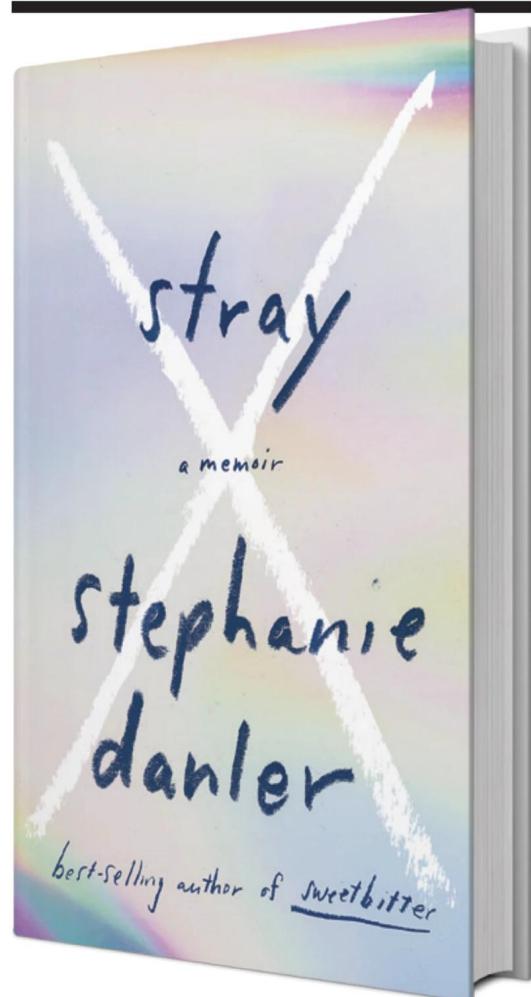
Lawyer Barnett's life was changed when she encountered a single black mother serving a life sentence without parole for a first-time drug offense. She goes head-to-head with seemingly insurmountable injustices in a story at once personal and expansive.



Sex and Lies: True Stories of Women's Intimate Lives in the Arab World

By Leila Slimani (July) PENGUIN BOOKS | \$17

Slimani's searing nonfiction debut unearths the deepest and most intimate secrets of a group of women in a culture where sexual autonomy is punished by law.



Stray: A Memoir

By Stephanie Danler (May) KNOPF | \$25.95

The bestselling author of *Sweetbitter* is back—this time with the true story of her own life. Danler reckons with past trauma as she works to understand the past and look toward the future. **N**

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01 Paletas
Mexico

These frozen pops are reminiscent of your favorite popsicles, but with natural ingredients. Paleterías specializing in just these treats are super popular around Mexico and have started popping up in other countries, too. They come in flavors from aguacate—yes, avocado!—to orange and piña colada.



UNCHARTED

World's Finest Frozen Treats

And just like that, it's almost summer! While many plans may be postponed or canceled due to COVID-19, some traditions will remain. One of summer's most comforting rituals? Cooling off with an ice-cold dessert on a hot day. While the ice-cream cone might be an iconic American summer staple, around the world people will be cracking open the freezer to find their favorite sweet snack as the days lengthen and the temperatures rise. From granitas in Sicily to paletas in Mexico, see how folks from different cultures treat themselves.—*Alexandra Schonfeld*

**02** Cholados
Colombia

Colombia's version of a slushy combines crushed ice, fruit syrups, fresh fruit and sweetened condensed milk and are often finished off with fun toppings such as whipped cream, shaved coconut and maraschino cherries. These refreshing beverages mix textures from the crunchy, crushed iced to the creamy, sweet condensed milk.

03 Spaghetti Eis
Germany

Originally made by pressing vanilla ice cream through a Spätzle machine, this ice-cream dish made to look like a bowl of spaghetti can be made with any pasta maker. After making the "noodles," just add strawberry sauce and coconut flakes for look-alike tomato sauce and shredded cheese.

**04** Granitas
Sicily

A crushed-ice drink flavored with sweetened fruit syrups—the most traditional flavors are lemon and black mulberry—granitas originated in Sicily, but became so popular that many other countries now have their own take. For the full Sicilian experience, enjoy yours with a fresh roll of brioche.





05 Booza

— Syria

Booza, the Arabic word for “ice cream,” is very different from American ice cream, with an elastic texture and stretchy consistency thickened by salep and mastic gum. Traditionally, it is topped with a layer of pistachios to add crunch and a nutty flavor.



09 Tempura Fried Ice Cream

— Japan

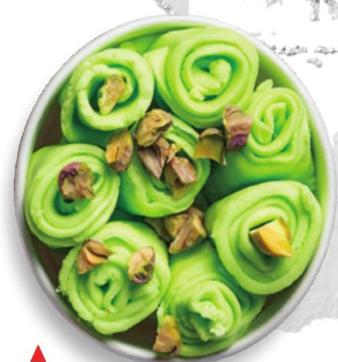
There's some debate about where fried ice cream originated. Nevertheless, Japan has its own special take—ice cream fried with tempura batter, for an extra-thin and crispy breading. While tempura is usually saved for vegetables or fish, this sweet alternative is a tasty way to finish off any meal.



08 Cendol

— Malaysia

Difficult to find outside of Southeast Asia, cendol is a sought-after treat within the region. This Malaysian original is made with shaved ice, pandan jelly and topped off with coconut milk and palm sugar.



07 I Tim Pad

— Thailand

Rolled ice cream has taken the dessert world by storm, becoming a trendy way to consume ice cream. It has been made in Thailand for the last decade by pouring a milk base onto a frozen pan, adding mix-ins to create a flat sheet of unique ice cream and then rolled up and enjoyed.



06 Falooda

— India

This frozen dessert drink is a combination of ice cream or crushed ice, rose syrup, vermicelli noodles, basil seeds and pistachios. Often thought to be an adapted version of Iranian desserts, falooda has been well-loved in India for centuries, and variations of it can be found around Asia.

PARTING SHOT

Ramy Youssef

WHEN YOUR NAME IS IN THE TITLE OF YOUR SHOW, IT'S FAIR TO ASSUME IT'S AT least semi-autobiographical. Not so, says Ramy Youssef, the 29-year-old creator, writer and star of *Ramy*, the Hulu comedy series returning for its second season on May 29. "What I really tried to do with this character was imagine my life with a less communicative family and what would I look like without an artistic outlet and a vision of what I wanted to do." Youssef's vision paid off; the actor won a Golden Globe for his performance in 2019. "My mom has it," Youssef says about the award, adding that winning it was a huge commercial for the show. "It was just the best advertising we could have gotten for people to see what is otherwise like a small show." Based on Youssef's stand-up, *Ramy* follows the spiritual journey of a young man torn between his Muslim faith and the modern realities of his millennial peers. But right now, the biggest thing Youssef is grappling with is his inability to do stand-up because of the coronavirus pandemic. "I definitely miss it. It's hard to beat regardless of any success in the onscreen space."



"I'm more interested in just showing our value."

What can we expect from the second season of *Ramy*?

We really get into a lot of fun things between [my character] and this new character, played by Mahershala Ali. That dynamic is something I'm really pumped for people to see.

Why do you think it's so important to tell stories of the immigrant experience right now?

What I'm more interested in seeing is an immigrant family deal with problems of their own making and people who are messy and complicated because it humanizes them. I don't really want to talk about the debate as to why we should be respected or valued, I'm more interested in just showing our value.

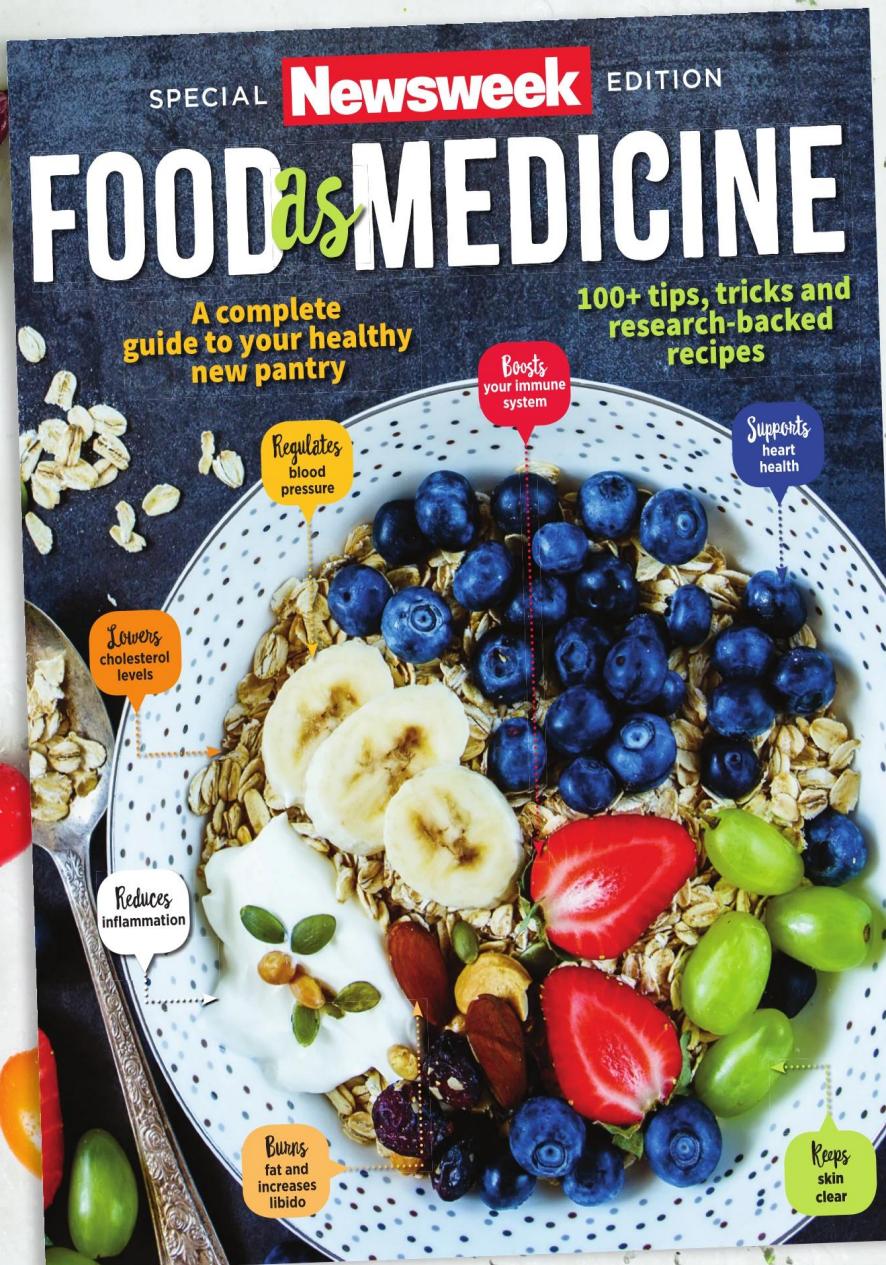
Why was it important to make your character a person of faith?

Because I don't see it. Everyone's wrestling with the idea of that higher self and how to be it. I wanted to show these small moments that I think are super-specific to this Arab Muslim dude in New Jersey.

Do you think you benefit more from being on a streaming platform rather than a network?

This show only exists because of streaming. Before streaming, you had to be a huge touring comic—they've got to see how your special goes, they've got to do all these things. Streaming completely fucks with the format and in the best way because they get to take a risk. —H. Alan Scott

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