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Sally Geisler Bagshaw
AB, Stanford
ALI, Harvard
The Foreseeable Future

Not even the savviest soothsayers could have predicted everything that happened in 2020. That didn’t stop us from asking Stanford experts on everything from pet ownership to privacy about how our lives will change next.

Whether for essential workers who want to live so close to their jobs that they don’t even have to hop on public transit or for desk jockeys who no longer have to be in the same time zone as their employers, the geographic link between work and home has been irrevocably transformed.

What we lose when we can’t dance, sing or watch theater together—and the kinds of creativity that artists are unleashing instead.

Word Nerd

John McWhorter, PhD ’93, receives kudos and criticisms from left and right alike for his social commentary. But he, like, literally would rather talk and think about linguistics.
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Leroy Sims, ’01, MS ’02, MD ’07, was tasked with keeping COVID-19 away from NBA players, staff and families for three months. The result: nothing but net.

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El Tecolote, a bilingual newspaper in San Francisco’s Mission District, has watched over its community for 50 years.

Digital
NEW AT STANFORDMAG.ORG

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Once, it was all about growing a business.

Here, I grow more colorful things.

Spend your days doing the things you enjoy in gorgeous surroundings. Carmel Valley Manor is the only Life Care community for people age 65+ in Monterey County, and only one of six in all of Northern California. That means there are three levels of health care on site, should you need them, at no additional cost. For information, call Angie Machado, (800) 544-5546 or visit cvmanor.com
Painful Cuts

An article in the September issue discussed Stanford’s decision to eliminate 11 varsity sports.

We are 36 Sports Strong, a group of alumni representing all 36 of Stanford’s varsity teams. Our members have won collegiate, national, world and Olympic championships. We have played professionally in the NFL, MLB, NBA, WNBA, MLS, NWLS and LPGA. Many of us are Stanford Hall-of-Famers. We’ve been proud to represent Stanford throughout our careers.

We were stunned by this decision because we love Stanford and this changes how we view Stanford. We are asking the university to reconsider.

The impact of the cuts is being felt not only by the 4,000 alumni of the 11 teams but also by more than 40,000 alumni of the greater Stanford athletic community.

The decision upends the Stanford experience for 240 current student-athletes and their coaches, who were told they were losing their teams 30 minutes before it was publicly announced. Like us, these athletes chose Stanford for the unique opportunity it offered to be a true scholar-athlete—competing at the highest level while pursuing a world-class education.

This precipitous action was not based on values Stanford Athletics has demonstrated over decades, including our commitment to Title IX and our 25 consecutive Director’s Cup wins—an honor that recognizes the breadth of our athletics programs.

We wish the university had reached out to us in advance of the announcement to discuss its financial challenges and to explore possible solutions. We could have helped. We still can.

Jennifer Azzi, ’90
Mill Valley, California
Adam Keefe, ’92
Pacific Palisades, California

Editor’s note: The above letter was signed by 56 alumni representing all 36 varsity sports. View the complete list of signatories at stanfordmag.org/contents/dialogue-december-2020.

I appreciate the straightforward approach of this article, but it does not touch on some of the root issues of how Stanford cut 11 varsity sports. More detail and more transparency from the athletics department would be beneficial.

Craig Buell, ’05
Broomfield, Colorado

In the article, athletics director Bernard Muir states, “Athletics has generally been

What’s in a Name

Happy to hear my former dept bldg will no longer be named after a man who played a HUGE role in the American eugenics movement. He deserves, as we all do, to be remembered for his whole legacy.

Shantal R. Marshall, MA ’07, PhD ’11

Way to judge someone that lived over a century ago by the morality standards of today (yes, eugenics is bad, but it was a prominent theory at that time). Terrible idea. Without Jordan, Stanford would not exist.

Amanda Pagon, ’97

Thank you for your leading with truth. What comes next is reconciliation.

Andrea Romero, ’09
a self-sustaining entity on our campus, and we are striving to preserve that model in a
time when the university’s budget is under
significant stress.” This is the same argu-
ment used to support cutbacks made by the
United States Postal Service. Neither Stanford
Athletics nor the postal service should be obli-
gated to make a profit or break even.

Doug Haydel, ’65
Stockton, California

It appears that Stanford sees itself primarily
in competition with Big Ten and SEC schools
instead of competing academically with Har-
vard, Yale, Princeton and MIT. Stanford’s 25
varsity teams will compare unfavorably with
Harvard’s 42, Princeton’s 37, Yale’s 35 and
MIT’s 33. Money from Division I athletics mat-
ters, but what about the experience of the
students? I expect more from Stanford.

Ron Scharlack, MS ’68
Newton Highlands, Massachusetts

I always think of rowing my freshman year as a
solid part of my Stanford education. It’s a real
shame the president and the trustees have
taken this step.

Ray Arnaudo, ’69
Mountain View, California

For an institution that is currently touting its
brilliance in economics with its Nobel Prize, we
have failed to use our own brilliant talent
to genuinely look at not only the economics
of these programs but, more important, the
reason varsity sports exist at all at Stanford.

Constance Wright, ’81
Hopkinton, Massachusetts

There are thousands of alumni like me, a
field hockey alumna, who would gladly
give back to their sport to avoid elimination
because that athletic experience had a signif-
icant impact on life beyond Stanford. But we
were never asked. And the assertion by Muir
in an email to Stanford Athletics alumni “that
we exhausted all viable alternatives before
arriving at this extremely painful decision”?
Not true. Not true at all.

Linda De Los Reyes, ’84
Los Gatos, California

It’s the teams I have been part of who still give
me the confidence to face these trying times
without fear; for the power of many greatly
outnumbers the power of one. I learned this
important life lesson from playing field hockey
on the Farm and that fact makes the athletics
department’s decision feel so empty and hollow
under the circumstances. Instead of leaning
into arguably the most incredible network of
individuals to ever walk the planet, they seem
to have made scared decisions in secret. We
are offering our decades of experience to help.
Please engage with us and take it.

Jessica Zutz Hilbert, ’08
Portland, Oregon

The short article was essentially a summary
of the open letter and a repository of official
statements from the athletics department.
You did not challenge, elaborate on, or expand
the conversation about the decision to cut
the sports in any way. A better article would
include a deep dive on the athletics depart-
ment’s financials, an exploration of the impact
on current students, research on responses
from alumni, and references to the broader,
emerging national conversation about the
role of sports on college campuses.

Midori Uehara, ’10
San Francisco, California

Rather than purge collegiate athletics of bias—
against nonrevenue sports, against female
athletes—the athletics department has opted
to perpetuate and propagate bias with its
recent decision. So disheartening.

Anne Pilson
Wilmington, Delaware

Money Talk

In our September issue, we unpacked
Stanford’s endowment.

I kept looking for the paragraph that explained
how the restricted funds were raised. Donors
sometimes have a specific purpose in mind
for their gifts, but more often, they engage in
Dialogue

a dialogue with institutional fundraisers about what the best use of their intended gift may be. As a nonprofit fundraiser, I know that every institution has its priorities. If Stanford’s priorities are to improve the sciences and engineering departments, then some percentage of funds will inevitably move in that direction. If the university values the affordability of undergraduate education, then conversations with donors will more frequently result in scholarships being funded. Restricted funds in an endowment don’t simply emerge as some value-neutral representation of donor gifts. Rather, they are a reflection of what a university and its donors choose to support. If Stanford values affordable tuition and housing for its students, then it needs to make that a priority in its fundraising efforts.

Matthew Scelza, ’94, MA ’95
Valley Village, California

The donors of the billions of dollars in endowment funds have made recipient U.S. universities into rentiers who somehow have to manage a nontrivial share of U.S. firms that the funds are invested in, which are generally not educational enterprises. If the universities are passive, then they cede control to a more concentrated group among the shareholders, maybe following their lead (or maybe not). We don’t understand very well the role of institutional investors in corporate control.

It’s nice to be a rentier. But maybe it would be healthier all around if universities had to work for their money.

Joe Ryan, ’71
Bloomington, Indiana

The article did an excellent job of explaining what the rules are for management of Stanford’s endowment, why the funds are restricted, and the (comparatively) narrow range of options open to the Board of Trustees. Thank you.

Brian Hansen, ’74
Bellingham, Washington

Past Imperfect

In September, four faculty experts on past pandemics and the Great Depression discussed what COVID-19 could mean for our future.

Four Stanford professors consider the present in light of great crises of the past and discover they’ve been right all along, only on reconsideration even more right than they thought possible. For once, I’d like to read an article like this and discover what beliefs the author
changed and why, instead of what beliefs the author feels I need to change.

Kevin Murphy, ’82, MS ’82
Manchester, Missouri

To the Dogs
Our September issue included a photo of Kuma, the Otero resident fellows’ resident kitty (Sotrocitat).

I would like to know the admission standards that allowed Oterocat to get into Stanford. My dog Shoes is at least as intelligent, has a wonderful personality and is of impeccable character. Shoes will come, sit and roll over on command. Does Oterocat do that? I think not. This is blatantly unfair.

Tom Hwang, ’76
Columbus, Ohio

Bon Voyages
A tribute to former Stanford president Donald Kennedy ran in our July issue, and in this issue’s Farewells, we say goodbye to professor of history emeritus Mark Mancall.

Don Kennedy expanded the Stanford overseas programs and surely improved them; however, I believe the late Mark Mancall should be given his due.

Mark became director of the programs in 1973, when student interest was ebbing and the programs were in financial distress. His goals were to improve all the programs by improving the faculty and the curricula, and enabling students to better experience the cultures of the host countries. He successfully achieved these goals. When Mark became the new director, I became the associate director and had a tenure of three years.

The article indicated that the Berlin and Oxford programs were new, which was not the case. The program in Germany was established in 1968 in Beutelsbach, near Stuttgart. It was moved to Berlin in 1975. The British program was established in 1975 at Harlaxton Manor in Lincolnshire and was moved to Cliveden House on the Thames, 30 miles west of London, in 1969. During my tenure, plans were being made to move the program to Oxford.

Don Price, ’53, MBA ’58
Palo Alto, California
What a Difference a Year Makes

We could never have predicted 2020. But that’s not stopping us from taking a run at 2021.

A YEAR AGO, I thought the health topic I’d lament most in 2020 would be wrangling insurance coverage for a spine MRI.

So you should totally trust me that our predictions for 2021 are spot-on.

Fortunately for you, they’re not really our predictions. They’re the predictions of Stanford faculty and alumni who are experts in everything from labor economics to musical theater to face-mask fashion.

In some ways, the pandemic has provided an accelerant into the future, particularly with respect to virtualization. Sometimes it seems as though we’re dwelling in a simulcrum of real life as we attend classes, watch plays and order groceries on small, glowing screens. Some 42 percent of Americans were working from home in May, according to economist professor Nicholas Bloom, and 46 from psychology professor Jeanne Tsai, ‘91, who studies emotion and affect: We’ll learn to use, and pay better attention to, eyes, voice and body language.

We didn’t ask our fortune-tellers to peer too far into the future—just around the bend. After all, last year at this time, COVID-19 had not been named. The largest protest in American history was in 2017. California’s biggest wildfire was half a million acres. And the 2020 U.S. election was 11 months away, but we’re not talking about that right now. As Summer Moore Batte, ‘99, explains in her introduction, “for us—and this story—it’s November 1, 2020.”

As it is quite literally 4:53 p.m. on November 1 and we have to put this issue of STANFORD to bed, I leave you with one final thought:

On our back page, you’ll find an essay about a sea cucumber. It’s a tale of biology lab, a parable about adaptation and a reminder that, no matter what, we organisms are resilient.

Have a safe and happy New Year, and we’ll see you in 2021. ■

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As we’ve navigated this difficult year, one thing that has become clear is that the pandemic affects members of our Stanford community in many different ways. Stanford’s international community, in particular, has faced significant challenges, contending with border closures and travel obstacles alongside new federal regulations that have created additional uncertainty. As we look ahead to a new year, we remain committed to supporting our international community members and their ability to study and work at Stanford.

Stanford’s international students, scholars and staff are important to our university. They contribute to a diverse and inclusive community in which all students have the opportunity to think critically about their own views and deepen their knowledge about our world. They bring unique perspectives to our classrooms and our research teams, enriching the learning environment and helping us find more creative and effective solutions to the world’s problems.

Unfortunately, the immigration landscape has become increasingly challenging for international students and scholars in recent months. We were pleased that the federal government heard the concerns of higher education and reversed its initial decision to require continuing international students to leave the United States if they would not be taking in-person classes this fall due to the pandemic. However, additional federal rule changes—including a proposed rule that would limit the duration of stay for some visa holders to two or four years, rather than the full length of their program, and new rules that would substantially restrict the H-1B visa program—make life uncertain for international students and scholars, and for the many members of our community who rely on their contributions.

In the face of these rule changes, Stanford is working with our national associations and peer institutions to advocate for policies that better support our international community. In October, we joined universities, businesses and research organizations in a court challenge to the H-1B visa changes. H-1B visas bring foreign scientists, medical professionals, artists and others to the United States to work in fields where there are shortages of specialized workers. They greatly benefit the institutions and communities they are a part of, including Stanford. It’s critical that we maintain this vital program.

We also submitted an official comment letter to the Department of Homeland Security about the proposed changes to visa duration rules. The proposal notes concern about safeguarding national security, but we believe that current mechanisms in place for visa oversight are sufficient to address this concern. If allowed to go into effect, these changes would create significant additional hurdles, expense and uncertainty for students and scholars. They would also reinforce the perception of the United States as inhospitable to foreign nationals, to the detriment of Stanford and, ultimately, of our country.

Maintaining international bonds in research and education will be crucial in the years to come because COVID-19 has highlighted what we’ve long known to be true: Our biggest challenges are global. The benefits of international collaboration are clear—from the outset of the pandemic, knowledge from scientists and public health experts in China, South Korea and other countries that had early experience with the virus was crucial to understanding COVID-19. We will need to work with international partners to find solutions to the world’s great challenges, from emerging diseases to climate change to poverty.

Limiting international students and scholars from studying and working in the United States not only harms them—it impedes our ability to educate future leaders, drive discovery and innovation, and fuel economic progress. In the months ahead, we’ll continue to advocate for immigration policies that support our international community and advance the exchange of people and ideas around the world.
Designed to adapt. Ready for your emergency.

We continue serving our community’s adults and children. As one of the most advanced trauma centers in the world, we are uniquely equipped to handle all cases at all times, even in unprecedented circumstances.

No one anticipated COVID-19, but our systems have allowed us to adapt while maintaining the highest standards for safety.

Our new infection control procedures include digital technology for triaging your condition, allowing for separate spaces for COVID-19 patients. Emergency teams use fresh personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as extra air filtering and cleaning methods to sterilize your exam room before and after your visit.

We are ready for your emergency.

stanfordhealthcare.org/emergencyready

Marc and Laura Andreessen Emergency Department
1199 Welch Road • Stanford, CA 94304

Pediatric Emergency Department
900 Quarry Road Extension • Palo Alto, CA 94304

Five years after the project was announced, Escondido Village Graduate Residences (EVGR) opened this fall. The complex, located on the east side of campus, was designed to meet a major university need in the pricey Bay Area: enabling 75 percent of graduate students to live on campus. That is, once it’s fully occupied by grad students. This fall, one building in EVGR was allocated to undergrads with special permission to live on campus, because the modern, apartment-style units meet physical distancing requirements necessitated by the pandemic. As for the amenities that were designed to foster community and interaction—game rooms, music practice rooms, a yoga and dance studio, a makerspace, a pub that will offer brewing classes, and a teaching kitchen—they may not be hubs of activity just yet. But there’s always Frisbee on the lawn.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLYN RAIDER
CONQUEST: a historical novel of Kamehameha the Great
By Bill (William) Fernandez, ’53, ’55
In 1793, Kamehameha the Great continues his unification battles as Kalani seeks the killers who burned his village, killing his wife. He spies for Kamehameha, assists Captain Vancouver, and assumes a priest disguise as the twisted path unfolds. Then a king of Oahu shatters the peace. Hundreds of warriors fall off a cliff to their deaths.

Strategic Compensation and Talent Management
By Jed DeVaro, PhD, ’02
Recruiting and retaining top talent are high priorities for all business managers. This book equips managers to successfully design and manage compensation systems to achieve those goals. Topics include performance pay, promotions, pay negotiation, benefits, regulation and compliance, executive pay and stock options, pay in small businesses, nonprofits, and the public sector, and more.

MAKING GREAT STRATEGY
By Jesper B. Sørensen, PhD ’96 and Glenn R. Caroll, MA ’77, PhD ’82
Making strategy requires undertaking major—often irreversible—decisions aimed at long-term success in an uncertain future. All leaders must formulate a clear course of action, yet many lack confidence in their ability to think systematically about their strategy. Making Great Strategy resolves these challenges with a straightforward, readily applicable framework. https://cup.columbia.edu/book/making-great-strategy/9780231199483

Chasing the Dream
By Dana Andrews, PhD ’75
Where are we going with the ultimate goal of becoming a space-faring civilization? Chasing the Dream details the successes, the pitfalls, and the mismanagement of the US Space Program. Highlighting the accomplishments of scientists and engineers, Dana Andrews, known in the industry for his 50 years of contract work for NASA, USAF, and DARPA, examines the true potential of our space industry. www.retiredrocketdoc.com

Liberal Democracy: Prosperity through Freedom
By Max Meyer, ’91
Never before have so many people been so well off. But prosperity is not a law of nature, it has to be worked for. And it’s a liberal democracy that stands at the forefront, not as a political system but as a set of economical rules, promoting competition which leads to innovation, research and enormous productivity. And, as important, is that people live in freedom with equal opportunities and a functioning government as the foundation for sustainable prosperity.

Principles of Real Estate Syndication
By Samuel K. Freshman, ’54, JD ’56
A “how to do it” book with definitive easy to understand thinking on real estate syndication theory and practice with excellent examples and illustrations which can be applied to any type of business enterprise including Entertainment, Oil and Gas, Timber, Agricultural, Manufacturing, Restaurant, Venture Capital, Import and Export, and all other kinds of industries.

NEVER BE OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW BETTER: and You Will Succeed in Life and Business
By Samuel K. Freshman, ’54, JD ’56
You may have been scolded as a child, “You are old enough to know better than to do that!” I have wondered, “Are we ever really ‘old enough’? At what age are we ‘old enough’?” Consider the fact that young people often naturally act with more wisdom than we do—until they learn their bad habits from us!

The Smartest Way to SAVE MORE: Making the Most of Your Money
By Samuel K. Freshman, ’54, JD ’56
Offering useful advice to help reign in unnecessary spending, this book will improve your overall financial health. Included are essential “next steps” to save—whenever and wherever—that will increase your savings over time. It sparkles with brilliant, short paragraphs, divulging personal examples in a rare combination of brevity and warmth.
Stanford Authors’ Showcase

A SPECIAL ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT FEATURING BOOKS BY STANFORD ALUMNI

The City of Palaces
By Michael Nava, ‘81

Tells the epic tale of Mexico at the beginning of the 1910 revolution through the eyes of an idealist young doctor and his pious, aristocratic wife. “This tender and unusual love story of two wounded souls caught up in the swelling tide of profound social, political, and cultural changes forms the nucleus of the epic story of an entire nation teetering on the brink of rebellion.” Booklist. Winner of the International Latino Book Award for fiction.

My Centenarian Odyssey
By George Jedenoff, AB ’40, MBA ’42

The unusual life and experiences of an 102-year-old, born in Imperial Russia just prior to the revolution of 1917, and the family's escape from the atrocities of the Bolsheviks, ultimately emigrating to the US where they had to adjust to a new culture and survive the great depression. Valuable lessons in management philosophy and leadership in obtaining improved productivity and employee satisfaction are described.

Eva & Otto: Resistance, Refugees, and Love in the Time of Hitler
By Tom Pfister, ’70, Kathy Pfister and Peter Pfister

Intimate and epic account of two Germans—Eva born Jewish, Otto born Catholic—who resisted Hitler and endured separate internments in Europe, obtained asylum in America, and participated in wartime missions for the OSS. “This story of courage, resourcefulness, and love against all odds is thrilling.” —Tom Brokaw

More Than Watchmen at Daybreak
By Cyrus Curtis Cassells III, ’79

Written at Christ in the Desert Monastery in Abiquiu, New Mexico, this 12-part sequence examines the immense natural beauty of the Benedictine abbey's Chama Valley setting, with its red and saffron-yellow cliffs, and the devotional life and hardy activities of the monks. The title is biblical: “More than watchmen at daybreak, / My soul is longing for the Lord.”—Psalm 130:6

Glimmer
By Richard Alexander, MA ’74

A surrealistic thriller that explores the relationship between science and faith, reality and imagination, chaos and order. Researchers at a semi-secret laboratory in the Santa Cruz Mountains think they may have found a medical cure for the mass killings so frequently occurring in our modern world. However, things turn out not to be what anyone expected! Available on Amazon/Kindle.

Athletes, Celebrities, Personal Moments, The 60s And 70s
By Walt Brown, ’57, Class Poet, KZSU Sports Director, Big Game Gaieties Director

History repeats itself, and that’s what we see today reflecting the fight for women’s rights and racial equality reflected in this book. That is the book’s focus, along with personal moments spent with: Ali, Pele, Jesse Owens, Mays, Musial, Wilt, Jerry Rice, Dan Marino, George C. Scott, Bob Hope, Billie Jean King, “The Game of the Century,” Mickey Rooney, & many more, 22 sports in all...

The Right Start: Build Your Brand to Survive and Thrive in the Corporate World
By David S. Harrison, MS ’80

Build your career to stand head and shoulders above your peers by learning the unwritten rules of the corporate world; that’s The Right Start. This book gives you the insights that you need to build a promotable, effective and unique personal brand while also helping you find that elusive balance between corporate success and a rewarding personal life. www.rightstartbook.com

Love Them to Death: At War with the Devil at Jonestown
By Timothy Stoen, JD ’64

A memoir of my experiences as the attorney, enemy, and postmortem target of James Warren Jones who, on November 18, 1978, in Jonestown, Guyana, unleashed, in the name of love—terror and death. Nine hundred eighteen people would die that day. “The CIA would have to acknowledge,” says Stanford psychology professor Philip Zimbardo, “that Jones succeeded where their MK-Ultra program failed in the ultimate control of the human mind.”

TO ADVERTISE YOUR BOOK IN THE NEXT STANFORD AUTHOR SHOWCASE SECTION, EMAIL VPIPPIN@STANFORD.EDU OR CALL 650-723-0460.
Peter The Great
By Roger Williams '64

With bankruptcy threatening his college, Dr. Peter Grande is forced back into the classroom to teach lowly undergrads, entitled snowflakes all. One day he explodes in anger and the students demand he be fired, but a chance encounter at a professional conference offers him a way to save himself. A satire of entitled academics who work hard at not working, Peter The Great is an enjoyable read for those with a jaundiced view of the current campus environment. Available on Amazon.

Exodus
By Fred Wurlitzer, '60

This work is a comic book of Exodus, the second book of the Bible. It is written in doggerel in the style of Ogden Nash accompanied by colorful illustrations taken free from the Internet. I hope that the book will appeal to children of all ages more than the usual Old Testament Exodus written often in dry language usually unaccompanied by drawings. It and the e-book versions are on Amazon.com.

The COVID-19 Solutions Guide
By Gary Feldman, MS '66, MD '72

COVID-19 has upended life as we knew it. To help you navigate the “new normal,” this guide explores the nature of the challenges we face and, in particular, examines the uses of technology in response to the global pandemic. The COVID-19 Solutions Guide provides tools that assist with the pandemic’s medical, personal, financial, educational and emotional impacts. Visit thecovidguide.com to buy our e-book and subscribe to the monthly newsletter.

5 Kids on Wild Trails
By Margaret Fuller, ’56

This is the story of how Margaret grew up going to grandfather Stanford law professor A.M. Cathcart’s cabin at Fallen Leaf and how with the help of her five young children she wrote the first comprehensive guidebook to any wild area in Idaho. Trails of the Sawtooth and White Cloud Mountains was first published in 1979. To learn more about Margaret and her books and order them go to trailguidebooks.com.

Evidence, Politics, and Education Policy
By Lorraine M. McDonnell, Ph.D. ’75 and M. Stephen Weatherford, Ph.D. ’76

Drawing on the case of the Common Core Standards, this book examines how different types of evidence are used strategically in political debates. Research results, professional judgment, personal experience, stories, and ideology all become advocacy tools in advancing education policy goals.

Sleep is God’s Medicine
By Cheryl Hunter-Marston, ’76

Holistically, proper sleep is crucial to actively maintaining our spiritual, mental, emotional and physical well-being. God created our need for regular sleep, His miraculous therapeutic gift. The Holy Scriptures are not a medical science textbook, yet they speak of medical science with divine insight and accuracy. For the clinician or scientist this book is a light review of the scientific knowledge regarding sleep—Sleep 101 from a different perspective. Available at Bookstore.westbowpress.com/Amazon.

The Knave of Hearts
By Lynn Bahrych, JD, PhD ’69

Immerse yourself in this gentle retold folk tale of true love lost and found, in a magical kingdom where irresistible cuisine triumphs over political conflict. The blend of whimsy and grown-up intrigue, the serious contest for a throne, and the pursuit of culinary brilliance, all combine to create a rollicking story.

Design of Rockets and Space Launch Vehicles
By Don Edberg, PhD ’85

Design of Rockets and Space Launch Vehicles provides enhanced understanding and exposure to practical aspects of design, engineering, manufacturing, and testing. The subject is mature, but the applications are changing and a new generation of engineers and designers are joining the aerospace industry. This book explains "why things are done this way." For more information visit arc.aiaa.org.
Profiting and Protecting from the Greatest Market Threats, Cartel Interventions & Fake Economic News
By David F. Durham, JD '74
Analysis of Market Crashes, of Cartel Interventions, and of Accurate Economic News Sources are the basis for recommendations for Key Assets and Strategies. Deepcaster’s Subscribers profited by 75%, 50%, 110%, 55%, 62%, 53%, 45% and 75% in 2020 alone. Subscribe for one year or more by 01/15/2021 to receive a PDF copy of Deepcaster’s book. Deepcaster.com.

Moms, You Have More POWER Than You Know
By Wisdom B. Fields, GSB ’95
Moms, in particular, feel enormous pressure to lead their kids in the right direction, so when things don’t go to plan—your kids rebel or fail to launch—it can lead to frustration, induce fear and overwhelm. This book will show you how to successfully overcome these parenting challenges by awakening your power within.

THE BIG CIRCLE
By Emilian Cucek, ’69
My book, The Big Circle, is all about Stanford in 1958/59, and how a student from Yugoslavia “survived” the fraternities, lectures and America. So, some 60 years later it could be of interest to the older Stanfordites. Available on Amazon in ebook and paperback.

Which Side of History? How Technology Is Reshaping Democracy and Our Lives
By James P. Steyer, ’78, JD ’83
Common Sense Media CEO and Founder
This groundbreaking anthology examines critical issues surrounding technology and presents a roadmap for constructive change from some of the most influential thought leaders of our time, including Marc Benioff, Michelle Alexander, Sacha Baron Cohen, and many more.

Children's Voices in Politics
By Michael S. Cummings, PhD ’75
Because the world’s adult regimes have failed to address critical problems of our times, youth—children, tweens, teens and young adults—are leading the way on climate change, gun control, racial justice, democratic resistance, & more. Denying them a voice that counts is arbitrary and capricious, not rational or just. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has helped trigger a global youthquake of political activism.

All the Gear, No Idea
By Michèle Harrison, ’86
The author quits her high-flying job, orders an Indian Enfield Bullet motorcycle and goes off for a year on a 17,000 mile circuit of India. She wants adventures, and as a single woman, has plenty of them. Follow her on her travels discovering an unknown world of motorbiking, wanderlust and Indian life. Humorous, well-written, and an endorsement for getting out of your comfort zone. Buy it on Amazon.

Tiny Habits
By BJ Fogg, MA ’95, PhD ’97
When you welcome Tiny Habits into your life, you begin a joyful exploration that leads to better health and happiness. A New York Times best seller, Tiny Habits guides you, step by step, in designing habits and making lasting change by feeling positive emotions. Drawing on his innovative research and personal coaching of 40,000 people, Dr. Fogg gives you the best new insights to change your life. It’s so simple you can start today.

THE BIG CIRCLE
By Emilian Cucek, ’69
My book, The Big Circle, is all about Stanford in 1958/59, and how a student from Yugoslavia “survived” the fraternities, lectures and America. So, some 60 years later it could be of interest to the older Stanfordites. Available on Amazon in ebook and paperback.

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WHO WE ARE

Meet Elora López-Nandam
An evolutionary biologist dives into microscopic marine mysteries.

“People ask me, ‘Do you think that there will be coral reefs in 50 or 100 years?’ I think that the answer is definitely yes, but they’re not going to look the same as they do now.”
TUCKED INTO THE LABYRINTHINE RECESSES of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, among 32 million specimens and cultural artifacts, is the slow loris. Rather, century-old specimens of the petite nocturnal primate from Southeast Asia, with whom Elora López-Nandam became quite acquainted. After spending a summer extracting and decoding their DNA while an undergrad at Columbia, López-Nandam turned her attention to another sluggish creature, the sea cucumber, and the conservation implications of its genetic diversity in the coral reefs near Fiji. Along the way, she decided to devote her life to exploring big questions: how life on Earth has changed over the past 4 billion years, and what roles humans have played in those transformations.

Now a PhD candidate at Stanford in the lab of evolutionary biologist Stephen Palumbi, López-Nandam has spent the past six years in the Marshall Islands, American Samoa and Palau, and at Hopkins Marine Station in Monterey, Calif., analyzing the genetics of coral to determine how they have adapted to major stressors such as mass bleaching events and nuclear bombing. “We have such a poor understanding of basic coral cell biology,” López-Nandam says. “What I’m trying to do is ask really fundamental questions about how these animals grow and how they’re actually operating on the cellular level, in order to piece together why they’re dying now.”

“In 2015, there was a huge bleaching event at a national park in American Samoa, which was unprecedented for this region. Then there was a second one in 2017. After 2015, there was a huge amount of survival in the two species that I had been following. In 2017, I found that one of the species bleached and then recovered within a few months, while the other species bleached and then a bunch of them died.

“We think it has to do with how quickly you can recover metabolically from a stressor—the faster you can bounce back, the readier you’re going to be when the second stressor hits. The species that died after the second stressor had had a much slower recovery time after the first one.

“I have been focusing on somatic mutations in corals. A somatic mutation is a mutation that occurs in any cell of your body that is not your eggs or your sperm and makes the cell different genetically from the rest of [your] cells. These mutations are responsible for, say, cancers or aging. In theory, we say that all the cells of your body are genetically identical. It’s actually a lot more complicated.

“One thing that people had always talked about was the extent to which there are somatic mutations in coral. A coral is an animal that’s clonal; similar to the cells in your body, every little polyp in a coral colony should be genetically identical if mutations never occurred. But mutations do occur in the colony, and scientists had never really looked very thoroughly.

“For most of the research I do on the ocean, I’m actually sitting at the computer. Once I’m done, I love going for a walk on the beach and poking my head into crevices between rocks, and taking photos of dead seals or dead unidentifiable things. I definitely have a photo album of dead things I’ve found at the beach.”
They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but pictures don’t begin to tell the story.

Sift through the layers of history with Stanford scholars.

Stanford TRAVEL/STUDY

alumni.stanford.edu/goto/travelstudy
When Others Go Low, He Goes Lower
Victor Vescovo becomes the first person to reach the bottom of the world’s five oceans.

VICTOR VESCOVO had spent two decades climbing to each continent’s highest point before he decided to take on the world’s lowest. Last year, he became the first person to dive to the deepest points of the earth’s five oceans, in a titanium-hulled submersible he had begun building five years earlier.

“I come from a philosophy, ‘If not me, then who?’ says Vescovo, ’87, who runs his own private-equity firm. He spent 20 years in the Naval Reserve as an intelligence officer. “It seems it’s taking private enterprise and leadership to push us forward scientifically—you see that currently with space [exploration]. I found myself in a position where I could do something like that, and I decided to not just be a bystander.”

During his 10-month Five Deeps Expedition, Vescovo completed the deepest manned dive ever recorded (35,853 feet in the Pacific Ocean), and his excursions to the bottom of the Atlantic, Southern, Indian and Arctic oceans were the first manned dives to those locations. Deployments of the expedition’s robotic landers collected more than 400,000 biological samples, and Vescovo and his team discovered 40 new species and more than 100 undersea cartographic features, some of which they may get to name.

The expedition was filmed for a Discovery Channel documentary, Deep Planet, which is expected to air in the next few months. And Vescovo isn’t finished with underwater journeys. He returned to the Mariana Trench this summer, accompanied by the first women to reach the ocean’s deepest points: 68-year-old former astronaut Kathy Sullivan and 55-year-old mountaineer Vanessa O’Brien.

— Kelley Freund

**THE TICKER**

Why, yes, that was Robert Wilson ringing the doorbell chez Paul Milgrom, MS ’78, PhD ’79, in the wee hours of October 12, to share the news that the pair had won the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences and that the Royal Swedish Academy was trying to call Milgrom. The prize, awarded for the professors’ work on auction theory, capped off a week in which poet Louise Glück, a visiting professor in creative writing, won the Nobel Prize in literature and associate professors Forrest Stuart (sociology) and Monika Schleier-Smith (physics) received MacArthur “genius” grants…. Everyone’s either talking about The Social Dilemma, a Netflix film directed by Jeff Orlowski, ’06, or in it—the Ticker spotted Tristan Harris, ’06, Jeff Seibert, ’08, Bailey Richardson, ’09, Alex Roetter, ’00, MS ’05, Tim Kendall, ’99, MBA ’06, Justin Rosenstein, ’05, Stanford psychiatrist Anna Lembke, MD ’95, Mary Fetter, ’23, and Stanford Internet Observatory research manager Renée DiResta…. Dawn Davis, ’87, who founded the Simon & Schuster imprint 37 Ink to give voice to marginalized storytellers, has been named editor-in-chief at Bon Appétit. She takes over the magazine in the wake of public criticism of the work environment by several Black former staff members, including Ryan Walker-Hartshorn, ’17….

Before Danny Scher, ’73, MBA ’75, became a top concert promoter, he was a Stanford undergrad who programmed Frost Amphitheater. And before that, he was a Palo Alto High School student who invited Thelonious Monk to perform in the Paly auditorium. That 47-minute concert has now been released as an album, Palo Alto.
Mischief Managed

Stately and venerable, this oak tree witnessed antics that were anything but.

**THE COAST LIVE OAK TREE** known as the Gordon Hampton Oak, which stood at the southwest corner of Galvez Street and Campus Drive, right by the Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, was removed this summer after university arborists determined that the base of its trunk was hollow with decay.

The oak was named for **Gordon Hampton,** ‘35, who, on the night of Monday, November 16, 1931, was a nervous freshman tasked with guarding the pyre for the Big Game bonfire against a raid by Cal students intent on burning it before the rally. Some accounts say Hampton was perched in the tree, while others put him under it, but what’s known is that around 3 a.m., Hampton blasted his whistle in warning just as the intruders attacked. “All hell broke loose as Encina Hall Frosh spilled out, engaging the enemy in fierce combat, with their bare hands pulling [Cal’s] fire brands off the pyre, and thereby successfully defending the bonfire and saving the day (night),” reads the bronze plaque that was dedicated at the base of the tree in 1997.

Tuesday dawned. The *Stanford Daily* reported the details of the fracas with relish (“Only two boards were ignited, and they were soon extinguished”), and duly cataloged the injuries: “Thomas Collins, broken nose; Alfred Abrahamsen, cuts and bruises; James Mullen, injured eye; Harry Coty, face wounds; and Samuel Barclay, cuts and bruises.” The towering pile of railroad ties still had to be guarded until the rally, and tensions were high. Rumor had it that Cal students put the odds at 2:1 that they’d succeed in lighting the bonfire early. The freshman guards were told “to avoid the use of weapons in the event of another affair, but should it become necessary, to give the opponents everything they asked for,” the *Daily* reported, and extra security measures were taken. “All roads leading to the pyre will be watched constantly, and special wires have been installed from the field to Marvie Kahn’s room where he will be warned immediately if anything is sighted during the night.”

The *Daily* noted that the high jinks, while juvenile, provided “great material from which to weave tales for one’s grandchildren.” And so the rest of the story goes something like this: The guards, amply provisioned with doughnuts, sandwiches and coffee, succeeded in protecting the pyre until the rally. Cal won Big Game 6–0 that year, ending a seven-year Cardinal winning streak. Gordon Hampton went on to become an attorney and a philanthropist; his children—Roger Hampton, ’69, Katharine “Kit” Hampton Shenk, ’70, and Wesley Hampton, ’73—and grandchildren grew up hearing the story of that damp November night. And 89 years after the events that led to its naming, the Hampton Oak was rendered into 24,000 pounds of logs and 8,000 pounds of wood chips to be distributed around the Stanford campus and foothills, where they will support and protect another kind of campus wildlife. ■
All Right Now

NATURAL NAMESakes
A curious set of species shares the Stanford moniker.

YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THE TREE—you may have even been the Tree—but what do you know about the stanfordianus spider, limpet or bee? These critters earned their Cardinal credentials after Stanford researchers discovered them either on university-owned land or far afield. We think you’ll be as delighted as we were to make their acquaintance—and as relieved that our unofficial mascot is not a dancing mollusk.

**Coprinus stanfordianus**
An inky cap mushroom that, to the best of our knowledge, was first and last spotted in 1904.

**Lottia stanfordiana**
(aka Collisella stanfordiana, aka Acmaea stanfordiana)
This sea snail belongs to the order of true limpets, which sounds like one of those secret societies you hear about at other universities.

**Dasya pedicellata var. stanfordiana**
In 1976, phytochemists studied the potential antibiotic properties of this red seaweed.

**Anthophora bomboides stanfordiana**
(AKA digger bee, false bumblebee)
A mistress of deception. The female of this species looks a lot like her cousin the bumblebee, but don’t be fooled: The docile Miss Diggy lives alone, rather than in a nest, and is unlikely to sting. She takes a keen interest in construction, tunneling into sandstone bluffs and using collected fresh water and pollen to make a home for herself and provide nutrients for the eggs that she’ll soon lay. The males look less like bumblebees, with paler coloring and opalescent eyes.

**Arctostaphylos stanfordiana**
(AKA Stanford’s manzanita)
A xeriscape looker. California natives can look weedy, but Stanford’s manzanita sports attractive mahogany bark, with clusters of pink-to-white flowers and shiny red and brown berries. It’s loved not only for its evergreen good looks but also for its fire resistance and drought tolerance.

**Nidularia stanfordiana**
This fungus thrives on rotting wood; its fruiting body looks like a tiny bird nest packed with miniature eggs.

**Lupinus densiflorus var. stanfordianus**
A whitewhorl lupine, it was found in the Stanford Foothills at least once, in 1905, and scarcely mentioned afterward.

**Phylloxera stanfordiana**
This plant louse feasts on the leaves and roots of vines. Its cousin lives in 19th-century ignominy for its role in the Great French Wine Blight.

**Eriococcus stanfordianus**
Otherwise unremarkable scale insect.

**Neochthonius stanfordianus**
A cave-dwelling pseudoscorpion, it doesn’t bite or sting humans. It has pincers but lacks the nightmare-inducing curved stinger of a true scorpion.

**Aptostichus stanfordianus**
(AKA Stanford Hills trapdoor spider)
The introvert arachnid. This spider’s burrow is lined with silk and capped off with a hinged lid, also made of silk—a structurally sound choice, as spider silk is stronger than steel. When an insect ambles by, the ever-watchful A. stanfordianus pops open the lid, nabs the unlucky bug, and then retreats just as quickly to enjoy its meal in peace.

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The bubble was holding. Through the first two months of the NBA’s astonishingly complex and expensive restart to the 2019–20 season at Disney World in Orlando, Fla., the league’s unprecedented social, sports and epidemiological experiment seemed to be working. The strict quarantines, the daily tests and health checks, the electronic checkpoints, the endless cleaning and sterilization, the mask wearing and hand washing—all the procedures that NBA vice president and events medical director Leroy Sims, ’01, MS ’02, MD ’07, and his colleagues had labored over for months and that hundreds of players, coaches, reporters, staff and resort workers complied with daily—had kept COVID-19 at bay. As the regular season ended and playoffs began, no player or other resident of the NBA campus had tested positive for the coronavirus, even as the pandemic raged across the state.

But as the end of August approached, a new and potentially troublesome variable loomed: little kids. The NBA had agreed to allow player guests—four per player, restricted largely to family—inside the bubble after the first round of playoffs. How well would the bio-fortress hold then? “It’s one thing to ask adults to get tested every day, wear masks and follow strict social distancing guidelines for the common good,” says Sims. “But a 5-year-old?”

The grade-school set’s tolerance for nasal swabs was just one of scores of questions keeping Sims up at night—that is, when he wasn’t already pulling an overnight shift as an emergency medicine doctor at Mills-Peninsula Medical Center in Burlingame, Calif. A Chicago native who loved the field of medicine as a kid and ran track at Stanford, Sims found himself juggling two high-adrenaline jobs, including the orchestration of a novel medical endeavor that his boss at the NBA, Jeannette Neyses, likens to “running a bunch of sprints, every day.”

“Work in this bubble is harder than working in the ER because I’m so prepared for the ER,” said Sims in early September. He spent six weeks in the bubble early in the summer, flew back to California to his wife and two young daughters for three weeks—and six ER shifts—and then returned to Orlando to finish out the season. “There is no playbook for the bubble.”

Before COVID, Sims oversaw the operations of all things medical at NBA events worldwide, from the annual All-Star Game to a Global Game in Paris to an NBA Africa Game in Johannesburg. The bubble was a hybrid beast—both an event and the end of a season that was put on pause for four months due to the pandemic. In effect, it was an event of such long duration—from the restart in early July to the crowning of the Lakers as champions in mid-October—that, in addition to sourcing MRI machines and sussing out which local hospitals could provide private entry, Sims had to think about all the off-court medical needs people would normally handle themselves. What if one of the 1,500 or so bubble residents suddenly needed an ophthalmologist? Or had chest pains?

Then there was the matter of a global pandemic to repel. Before players arrived for the restart, Sims and his NBA colleagues spent months consulting with specialists in everything from mathematics to infectious disease to industrial hygiene. They talked with the NFL, the NHL, Major League Baseball, various European soccer leagues, the Fédération Internationale de Basketball and the Australian Football League. They wrestled with questions such as: What
type of test should we do and how often? How do we do that without taking resources from the local community? (The NBA, in conjunction with BioReference Labs, provided free testing in the Orlando area.) How do we most reasonably limit the biggest COVID risk factor—exposure to other people—while playing basketball? “I know a lot of people give us kudos: The NBA is showing people how to do it in the bubble,” says Sims. “But the NBA didn’t sit in the room and come up with this de novo. We really did our homework and consulted folks.”

The resulting 113-page medical protocol spells out what would have happened if someone had tested positive (isolation housing and further testing) and is rife with rules and restrictions: no visits to teammates’ rooms, no caddies in golf, no doubles in table tennis. No reusing a deck of cards. No interaction with the outside world. (In July, Richaun Holmes of the Sacramento Kings inadvertently crossed the bubble border to grab a delivery of chicken wings and paid for his indiscretion with 10 extra days in quarantine.) COVID tests—three shallow swabs of the throat and one swab of each nostril—were mandatory daily, as were temperature and oxygen saturation readings and symptom checks that were uploaded into wearable devices that tracked bubble denizens’ health and accordingly granted or denied them access to entrances around the campus.

Unforeseen scenarios kept popping up. In one nine-day stretch, nine people had dental emergencies; six required root canals. Recognizing that the dental resources he had lined up were insufficient for the demand, Sims engaged a mobile dental unit to move into the bubble for the duration. “Leroy is really good at dealing with uncertainty,” says his wife, Melissa Enriquez Sims, MD ’07. “You know how people play chess and they think seven moves ahead? Leroy has to think seven moves ahead with multiple branches of scenarios. Say his team is making a policy and then the CDC changes something completely. Or the players association says that...
Growing up in East Garfield Park, Sims was primed for the world of high-stakes medicine. "I wanted to be in it," he says. "I loved watching reruns of Emergency! The exterior of which was, incidentally, in the opening shot of his beloved Emergency! series—Sims returned to Stanford in 2010 as a fellow in its sports medicine program. As a fellow and for three years as a junior faculty member in orthopedic surgery, Sims served as the team physician for Stanford football, women's soccer, women's tennis, wrestling, rowing, and track and field. His work for the Cardinal led to gigs as a team physician for the Golden State Warriors and for USA Track and Field, and, ultimately, to his current job with the NBA. "Stanford has always given me opportunities and connected me with the right people," says Sims. "It has always been a tailwind behind anything I am doing."

You know how people play chess and they think seven moves ahead? Leroy has to think seven moves ahead with multiple branches of scenarios."

While updating job descriptions recently, Neyses was struck by how much Sims's role has evolved during the pandemic. "We've created a unicorn," she says. "Those are job descriptions that are sometimes viewed as standards no one could meet. But, boy, has he met them—and then some. Wrong sport analogy here, but he keeps stepping up to the plate and hitting it out of the park."

"I wanted to be in it"

Sims was primed for the world of high-stakes medicine. Growing up in East Garfield Park, a west Chicago neighborhood where gun violence was common, he spent a lot of time wandering the halls of Northwestern Memorial Hospital, one of the places his mother, Claudia, worked as a nursing aide. He loved everything about the hospital scene, especially the rush he got watching reruns of Emergency! "I loved the ambulances tearing down streets, running red lights," he says. "I wasn't one of those people to shy away from blood. I was the rubbernecker. I wanted to be in it."

In his Head Start class, he declared his career goal: EMT. Then, when he was 8, he became riveted by a news report about Ben Carson, the young Black neurosurgeon who led the first successful separation of twins conjoined at the back of the head. Sims had found his role model. He, too, would be a young Black neurosurgeon.

After his ninth-grade year, Sims had a chance to attend summer school at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, where he was introduced to air travel, the music of John Coltrane, World Cup fútbol and the concept of jet lag (his roommate was from Taiwan). "I realized how narrow my world was," he says. He liked the Exeter experience so much that he spent his last two years of high school there. While many of his classmates were aiming for Harvard, he had a different plan. As a 9-year-old, he had flipped through the 1988 "best colleges" issue of U.S. News & World Report and discovered pictures of palm trees and students with their chests painted red at a Stanford football game. "I thought, that looks like a place I want to be," says Sims, who still has the magazine.

Turning down opportunities to play basketball at the University of Chicago, Emory and Washington University in St. Louis, Sims said yes to Stanford, where he walked on to the track team that would win the NCAA title in 2000, his junior year. (He still owns the school record in the 55-meter dash—an event that's no longer contested.) His ambition to be a neurosurgeon was fueled when, as a sophomore, he asked to shadow Gary Heit, MD '91, a Black neurosurgeon then working at Stanford Hospital, as Heit implanted a deep brain stimulator into a Parkinson's patient.

While doing a neurosurgery research project midway through med school, Sims got a taste of how all-consuming the specialty could be. He took a mentor's advice and made a spreadsheet with the specialties he was interested in on one axis and the things that were important to him—marriage, kids, travel—on the other. "Neurosurgery hit all my professional goals and none of my personal ones," says Sims.

Sports medicine was next on his list. He knew he could get there through a residency in emergency medicine, his early passion. "I always wanted to be that guy who could take care of anyone, anytime," he says. After three years treating gunshot and stab wounds, heart attacks and car-accident injuries at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center—the exterior of which was, incidentally, in the opening shot of his beloved Emergency! series—Sims returned to Stanford in 2010 as a fellow in its sports medicine program. As a fellow and for three years as a junior faculty member in orthopedic surgery, Sims served as the team physician for Stanford football, women's soccer, women's tennis, wrestling, rowing, and track and field. His work for the Cardinal led to gigs as a team physician for the Golden State Warriors and for USA Track and Field, and, ultimately, to his current job with the NBA. "Stanford has always given me opportunities and connected me with the right people," says Sims. "It has always been a tailwind behind anything I am doing."

From mentored to mentor

Overlaying the NBA bubble enterprise was the Black Lives Matter movement, the league's embrace and promotion of which was fundamental to the players agreeing to restart the season in July—and to return to the court in August after a three-day strike to protest the shooting of a Black man, Jacob Blake, by a white police officer in Kenosha, Wis. The BLM movement is deeply personal for Sims. "When I walk down the street
people don’t see Stanford, they don’t see NBA, they don’t see doctor,” he says. “They see just another Black guy, and that puts me at the same level of risk as Jacob Blake. So I have this same level of stress and anxiety about being in society. I see a cop in the rearview, my palms get sweaty.”

Sims can’t control how police or people on the street perceive him. But he’s determined that certain people do see Stanford and NBA and doctor when they look at him: all the Black kids at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boys and Girls Club he frequented in his youth. “Coming out of the West Side of Chicago and having the successes that I’ve had, it’s mandatory that I reach back and encourage those kids,” he says.

To that end, he joined the board for the Boys and Girls Club of America as a Midwest trustee in 2017, and visits the old club when work duties take him to Chicago. He hopes some kids there will draw inspiration from his journey, and from his presence. “There’s power in seeing someone who looks like you doing something that excites you,” says Sims. Especially, perhaps, when that person is doing something that has never been done before.

One week into September, players’ guests had arrived in the bubble—bringing the welcome sound of children’s laughter—but COVID had not. The NBA’s successful experiment came at such an enormous cost—the league spent around $180 million, according to a New York Times article—that it would be difficult to replicate elsewhere. Indeed, the league itself is unlikely to bubble next season. As it discusses returning games to teams’ home courts, Sims is helping develop arena and health and safety protocols. And there is now data that didn’t exist before. Says professor of medicine Dean Winslow, an infectious-disease specialist who served as an NBA consultant, “What Leroy and his NBA colleagues have done proves that, if you do take appropriate precautions, we can defeat this virus. Not flatten the curve, but basically bring the curve to zero, which is really what they did.”

Says Sims: “Now we have a playbook.”

KELLI ANDERSON, ‘84, is a writer in Sonoma, Calif. Email her at stanford.magazine@stanford.edu.
By the People, for the People

A bilingual newspaper chronicles the Mission District’s transformations.

ORAJE, SANGRE, REVOLUCIÓN.

Those were the kinds of names Juan Gonzales was hearing for new independent papers—“really militant sounding,” he says, “and the papers reflected that.” In the summer of 1970, he met with a group of volunteer journalists to come up with a name for the bilingual newspaper he planned to start in San Francisco’s Mission District. “I stayed clear of any radical-sounding name so that people could pick up the paper and accept it on its own merits,” he recalls. After hours of brainstorming, someone finally said, “El Tecolote,” one of several words for “owl” in Mexico, though unlike búho—traditionally used in Spanish—tecolote derives from Nahuatl, an Indigenous language. Gonzales, MA ’77, liked the evocation of a wise protector as well as the word’s familiarity: All-night pharmacies and redeye flights were sometimes called tecolotes, for the owl’s nocturnal behavior. Given the all-nighters soon to be pulled for the paper’s sake, the name fit.

Half a century later, the small biweekly paper is still keeping watch. With a staff of five paid employees, an ever-rotating cast of volunteers and college interns, and a print distribution of 10,000, El Tecolote continues to serve Latino residents in the Mission and throughout the Bay Area, providing journalism that at times advocates for their needs, at others connects them with news from different Latino communities, and occasionally launches investigations that have exposed injustice. In August 2020, the paper celebrated its 50th anniversary, having survived repeated economic upheaval, San Francisco’s transformation into a tech hub and the Mission District’s gentrification: no small achievement in a time of flagging local journalism, with more than 2,000 American newspapers—one in five—having closed in the past 15 years.

El Tecolote’s origin story begins in Stockton, the first inland seaport in California, a bustling, diverse and segregated city in which Gonzales recalls distinct neighborhoods for well-off whites, poor whites, Filipinos, Blacks and Chicanos. His father, Socorro, a World War II veteran who fought in Normandy, worked in a lumber mill, and his mother, Sarah, sold tickets at a movie theater and took shifts in the canneries. Though on occasion Gonzales had been called racial epithets, he’d tolerated the insults and moved on, but the cost of discrimination became clear in 1965, late in his senior year of high school, when his white classmates began talking about college acceptance letters. “They were telling me, ‘I heard from Stanford.’ ‘I just heard from UC Berkeley.’” Like them, he’d excelled at school, scoring into advanced classes. After learning that the college-track counselor had told the other students to apply, Gonzales met with him. Surprised by his interest, the counselor said the deadlines had passed and suggested community college. “That was,”
Gonzales remembers, “a wake-up call.”

The degree to which racial bias could derail his ambitions was suddenly apparent. Later, when he heard that the counselor had helped students find summer jobs, he returned to the man’s office, only to be told that jobs in local stores were all taken and he should consider working in the fields. Each day that summer, he walked to a row of buses at 2 a.m. and rode out to pick peaches and apricots, thin beets or harvest onions.

In community college, having previously written for the high school paper, Gonzales gravitated to journalism. He served as the editor of the college paper for two semesters before transferring to San Francisco State in 1967. The next year, the students there went on strike, demanding that the university create ethnic studies departments and hire faculty of color. “The Central Valley was very conservative,” he says, “but at State, a light bulb was lit. I was exposed to a lot of different ideas, different movements, different concerns and a very diverse population. I guess you could say I grew up.” By then, Gonzales was the university paper’s photo editor, and as he photographed strikers, a Latino student asked what he planned to do with journalism. “What do you mean?” Gonzales said. “I’m going to work for the New York Times or for Life—amazing stuff like that.” The student replied that the community could use his skills. “That got me thinking that serving the community is important,” Gonzales recalls.

As the idea for a newspaper created for and by his community took hold, Gonzales was gaining prominence in the journalism department. When the university established its College of Ethnic Studies, its professors asked him to write the curriculum for a course on the ways the media represented Latinos while failing to document their experiences. Then they invited him to teach it. With the ink barely dry on his diploma, Gonzales accepted, and over the course of the semester he and his students discussed the possibility of launching a paper for Latino voices.

To reach the Mission’s diverse readership, Gonzales made El Tecolote bilingual, with every
As Gonzales was launching El Tecolote, Stanford recruited him as a student for its master’s in journalism. The program’s emphasis on the social sciences made a deep impression on him. “I learned the impact of media on people’s behavior,” he says. “That helped me in my teaching over the years.” At the suggestion of Félix Gutiérrez, MA ’72, PhD ’76, Gonzales and Mario Evangelista, Gr. ’72, began investigating Pacific Telephone and Telegraph’s lack of bilingual services for emergency calls. “We learned that ambulance service people, the fire department and the police said they needed to be on the scene within five minutes, and our studies showed it took more than five minutes [for monolingual Spanish speakers] just to let them know the problem.” Published in El Tecolote, the story was picked up by larger papers and led to bilingual 911 services.

More stories followed in the community’s defense: the absence of interpreters at San Francisco General Hospital resulting in a pregnant Latina woman not getting care and losing her child (the exposé prompted the hospital to hire interpreters); police harassment of lowrider drivers (the paper explained that they weren’t criminals but hardworking people whose hobby was designing beautiful cars, which they showed to the public on weekend nights in the Mission); and the arrest of conga drummers in parks (the paper argued that conga was part of the district’s cultural heritage; among the youths defended were Raul Rekow, later the longtime conguero of Carlos Santana, and John Santos, now a seven-time Grammy-nominated percussionist). El Tecolote also published Latino poets and fiction writers while welcoming fledgling journalists. Among those who cut their teeth there were Roberto Lovato, whose 2005 investigation for Salon on migrant worker exploitation featured in a congressional investigation; Héctor Tobar, a Los Angeles Times correspondent and now an internationally acclaimed author; and Juan Felipe Herrera, MA ’80, the 21st United States Poet Laureate.
Eva Martinez, an early volunteer and now the paper’s archivist, met Gonzales at San Francisco State, in “the heady days of the student strike,” she says. “Many of us were the first in our family to go to college. One thing that I think influenced all of us at that time was the tenet of serving the people.” Yet even as the paper did so, it connected readers to the larger Latino community. “The pages are filled with news from Latino communities across the nation, Puerto Rico, Latin America and the Caribbean,” Martinez says. Most notable was its attitude toward gay rights. “There was a lot of homophobia in the Latino community,” she recalls, “and it became one of the first local papers to cover gay Latino issues.”

If El Tecolote has thrived when so many small papers have failed, it’s not only because of its mission to serve the people but also because of Gonzales himself—“a volunteer recruiter extraordinaire,” Martinez calls him. His aptitude for building community as well as the trench coat and dark glasses he wore earned him the nickname the Godfather. Simultaneously, he has been a skilled delegator. “One thing I’ve always noticed about Juan is his willingness to hand over his creation to people,” Martinez says. “I’ve never seen an ounce of ‘founder’s mentality’ in him. He truly stands behind his goal of creating a pipeline to the journalism profession and understands that the best way is by letting people take charge.” Though Gonzales has had many roles at the paper—editor, reporter, photographer, page designer, ad salesperson, newspaper distributor and spokesperson—he has delegated the position of editor-in-chief to others for the past 20 years.

Dawn García, MLA ’08, director of Stanford’s John S. Knight Journalism Fellowships, began volunteering and mentoring at El Tecolote in the 1980s, when she was already established as a journalist at the San Francisco Chronicle. “For those of us who had been in newsrooms where there was a lot of hierarchy,” she recalls, “El Tecolote was very collaborative. Juan was always seeking everyone’s opinions. Being in that newsroom felt very empowering.” Until then, she had been hesitant to approach editors with stories about Latinos for fear of being pigeonholed. “I realized I could be an advocate for coverage of communities not receiving as much coverage as they should.”

Increasingly, El Tecolote contends with the Mission’s gentrification. In 2015, a study found that 8,000 Latinos had left the Mission over the previous 10 years. During this time, El Tecolote has documented the neighborhood’s change, telling the story of a demolished mural or landmark to preserve a record for future scholarship. Alexis Terrazas, who took over as editor-in-chief in 2014, has used social media to keep displaced residents engaged. Recently, he has focused on encouraging participation in the census, especially given the hesitancy of undocumented members of the community. “I’ve met with journalists and editors of other publications who’ve said that we can’t tell people to fill out the census, but our roots are advocacy journalism,” Terrazas says. “I’ve seen how other publications will parachute into a community to do a story and then leave and write up a piece that isn’t accessible to that same community.”

“I’ve seen how other publications will parachute into a community to do a story and then leave and write up a piece that isn’t accessible to that same community.” El Tecolote’s recent educational campaign describes how the census helps determine the resources allocated to communities, from schools to urban gardens. Since 2000, El Tecolote has had a permanent home in the Mission, in the offices of Acción Latina, an umbrella nonprofit created in 1987. Gonzales, now 73, is on its board and still recruits volunteers. Alongside the paper’s 50th anniversary, he celebrated as many years of teaching, currently at City College of San Francisco, and is now developing a co-op to sustain independent media. “I still write,” Gonzales says, “and I mentor anyone who needs mentoring.” In many ways, he has spent his life doing for others what his high school counselor didn’t do for him.

As for El Tecolote, it continues building on a legacy that, in its own way, has translated the courage, blood and revolution of the 1960s into a sustainable vision for community and change.

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Making predictions about 2021 seems downright foolhardy. We did it anyway.

BE HONEST, you’ve wanted to dump 2020 like a flaming pile of your quarantine puppy’s excrement since April. As we slog through this infernal period in various states of pandemic lockdown—a restive baseline augmented by the stress of social inequities, economic uncertainty, an unprecedented fire season, a shortage of hurricane names, remote schooling that chomps every last megabit of internet in the house, and our TV streaming backlogs dwindling to ration levels—we can’t be blamed for hoping that the stroke of midnight on December 31 somehow magically makes things right.

But we don’t know whether 2021 will be better than the year we’ve just endured. In fact, Reader of the Near Future, you already know things we don’t about 2021. Those things are not on this list. For us—and for this story—it’s November 1, 2020. Even so, we know that next year will be different. The pandemic is accelerating changes in our lives. In some cases, we’ve found we actually like things better the new way. In other cases, well—like our COVID-cushioned waistlines—things just ain’t ever going back to the way they were before. So we set out to investigate what 2021 has in store, and we focused on what each of us always cares about most: our own navels. We asked (from the home workspaces we’re so fortunate to have, in unwashed sweatpants, while mostly domesticated animals or somewhat feral children climbed across our keyboards) faculty and alumni soothsayers how our work, our homes and our play will be different in 2021.

We’ll be right about some of these. We’ll be wrong about others. After all, if there’s one thing 2020 has taught us, it’s that none of us can really predict what will happen next.

—Summer Moore Batte, ’99
YOU WON’T GO BACK TO THE SAME OLD OFFICE. IF YOU GO BACK AT ALL.

IN JUNE, Andrew Sonta defended his dissertation on how to maximize the energy efficiency of office buildings while minimizing the distance between employees in an effort to increase their productivity. Not long into the public portion of his Zoom presentation, an audience member weighed in with what, in the middle of a global pandemic, was an obvious question: How did this research apply to the current situation, in which people were supposed to keep away from one another to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Sonta, a PhD candidate in civil and environmental engineering, had been considering that question. After all, everything about his dissertation assumed a world that no longer existed. Hardly anyone was in the office anymore. And when people finally did start to return to office buildings, Sonta knew managers wouldn’t be terribly preoccupied with orchestrating potentially serendipitous interactions at the coffee machine or minimizing the amount due on an electric bill.

“It was pretty obvious during the presentation that some of the things I was talking about might not be something we care about during a pandemic,” recalls Sonta, MS ’17. “Which was unfortunate.”

But, in another way, exciting.

“Everyone was thinking about how this can be adjusted or applied to our current times,” he says.

The pandemic upended Sonta’s dissertation; it also upended the lives of millions of Americans in some of the most basic ways we orient ourselves in the world: where we work, where we live and how we balance those realities. In April, a month after President Trump declared a national emergency due to the pandemic, total civilian unemployment reached a dizzying 15 percent. Many of the people lucky enough to keep their jobs no longer actually went to work. Instead, they logged in remotely from kitchen tables and back patios and dresser tops even as they juggled childcare or elder care, oversaw school lessons, and endured that annoying thing their dog/cat/bird/neighbor/spouse does that they never noticed before because they weren’t at home.

Everything changed. Many of us are now afraid to take mass transit. And a lot of us bought bicycles. We still can’t eat in restaurants everywhere, but we can dine alfresco from a folding chair in what used to be a parking spot.

Some of these changes will turn out to be temporary. But others are here to stay—and not just because they help prevent the spread of this or future viruses. Companies aren’t likely to send everyone back to the office all the time if allowing employees to work from home maintains productivity while enabling employers to save money on real estate. After the shower-curtain and plexiglass dividers come down, clean air—from opened windows or revamped HVAC systems—will still be a good thing to strive for. And now that we’ve all heard how a Zoom meeting can echo through a room, that long-sought-after open floor plan in your dream home may no longer be worth seeking.

What will work and home look like in 2021? Think way more flexible schedules. Think movable walls and office furniture that allow for socially distanced collaboration. Think homes designed around the needs of working parents and virtual students. In short, think different. Like Sonta had to.

The Workplace

Whether we walk, take a bus or subway, or drive to our jobs, most Americans can rattle off our average daily travel times without any calculations at all. We know when to walk out the door of our house or apartment, where to stand on the train platform, or when to change lanes as we approach our exit. But for many people who are
Shelter-in-place television has been a window onto pre-pandemic times—even superhero movies make us nostalgic for normalcy. Now studios are catching up, starting with reality TV such as Love in the Time of Corona and a quarantine season of The Bachelorette.

“There are several pandemic-themed movies, documentaries, TV episodes and series in various stages of development and production,” says Sylvia Jones, ’93, writer and co-producer at Starz. Streaming services are also developing content for the whole (cooped-up) family, says Charlotte Koh, ’95, head of digital media at Hello Sunshine. And escapism is in demand: Though productions require sanitation, distancing and contact tracing, many shows will “treat the world as if the coronavirus was never a thing,” Jones says. “We’ve also been living through a time of racial reckoning and social unrest,” she adds. “I’ve been approached by several producers who are looking to develop shows with a socially conscious bent.”

—Deni Ellis Béchard

now working from home indefinitely, all that knowledge is moot, as is, conceivably, the need to live in a certain place just because of the commute.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, just 2 percent of the U.S. labor force worked from home full time in 2017–18. In May 2020, that number was 42 percent, according to research by Stanford economics professor Nicholas Bloom.

Bloom predicts the option to work from home will continue post-pandemic partly because the stigma associated with the practice—a belief that workers are less productive in their personal spaces—is now gone. And it’s gone, he says, because working from home, well, works. Bloom’s 2014 study of Ctrip, a 16,000-employee Chinese travel agency, demonstrated a 13 percent increase in productivity among employees randomly assigned to work from home. Also, attrition was lower and job satisfaction was higher in that group. Once the at-home workers were told they could choose whether to stay at home or return to the office, productivity among remote workers increased by 22 percent from the norm, as those who felt lonely or ineffective returned to the office and those who performed well at home chose to stay there.

“The Ctrip study turned out to be years ahead of its time by accident,” Bloom says. “At the time, we obviously never foresaw the pandemic, but now the findings are both very relevant and important.”

Based on his research, Bloom has ideas about what normal, nonpandemic work-from-home routines should look like. First, working from home should be optional and flexible. Only about a quarter of the 2,500 respondents in Bloom’s May survey wanted to work from home five days a week, and 20 percent would prefer never to work from home. Second, working from home should be part time, with WFH days used for independent assignments that require concentration and office days planned around collaborative meetings or projects. Finally, Bloom recommends that working from home be a privilege, not an entitlement, with regular performance reviews for the benefit of employers and employees alike (Bloom’s 2014 study found that promotion rates for WFH personnel were reduced by half during the experiment, perhaps demonstrating the axiom “out of sight, out of mind”).

When people do start to return to the office, their workspaces will be different, according to Kimari Phillips, MA ’96, a senior research analyst at sustainable design firm LPA. Phillips says her firm will be using one of its offices as a prototype to try out more collaborative spaces, flexible layouts with movable furniture and walls, and desks—used by different individuals on different days—that all face one direction, to minimize the risk of virus transmission.

Not surprisingly, air quality has been a major focus as well. Phillips says her firm’s clients are more interested than ever in natural ventilation and outdoor meeting spaces. “There’s something to be said for windows that open,” she says. “We know that daylight in general is important to our health and sleep cycles, and a lot of offices were leaning toward that. Now, it’s super important to have fresh air.”

Hanns Lee, ’91, agrees. He heads up the Office of Innovation at Hines, a real estate investment company with $144 billion in assets under management in 25 countries. In April, his firm announced a collaboration with the Mayo Clinic and two other organizations to study how the design and operation of workspaces—including air filtration strategies and surface hygiene protocols—can help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. There was already a movement
toward optimizing indoor carbon dioxide and humidity levels, which can affect cognitive performance, stress levels and sleep patterns. Because scientists believe the novel coronavirus transmits more readily in dry air, that variable has taken on new significance.

Still, because of the success of the work-from-home approach, Lee acknowledges that not all workers will come back even when the threat of the virus no longer looms. “We do see more of a bifurcated world going forward,” he says. “The best workplace environments foster culture and promote brand and facilitate mentorship and collaboration. Those places will draw people back. But commodity office space that is nothing more than a functional place to print and make phone calls will struggle.”

Of course, many workers never went into an office to begin with and don’t have the option of working from home full time now.

Diana Reddy, ’03, MA ’03, who worked as a staff attorney at the California Teachers Association and now studies work law, social stratification and inequality as a doctoral student at UC Berkeley, says the disparities in how people have experienced the pandemic have been striking.

“Because we’re white-collar workers, [the shutdown] made things better in some ways,” she says of herself and her husband, noting that they were both at home to care for their newborn child. “But we really quickly became aware of the ways in which our lives were being subsidized by people whose lives were, at the very least, riskier,” she adds, citing the grocery and takeout delivery workers who helped them feed their family during that time.

Improvements to ventilation and sanitation practices stand to benefit all employees, whether they work at a desk or not. But mitigating the risks of in-person jobs such as those in factories, hospitals, schools and homes remains an issue. Some of the solutions developed during the pandemic could stick. For instance, hospitals and health-care providers have limited elective procedures, used telehealth technology, and divided personnel into teams that alternate working from home and being on-site to lessen potential transmission. At a minimum, expect telemedicine services to proliferate (see No. 13).

In some cases, unions have assumed the monumental task of securing protections for people who can’t work remotely. After facing pressure from Transport Workers Union Local 100, which represents more than 40,000 workers in New York City, the Metropolitan Transit Authority began providing masks to its frontline workers on March 27. And while airlines are temporarily blocking middle seats and reducing in-flight services to minimize contact between flight attendants and passengers, the Association of Flight Attendants has gone as far as to call for a ban on leisure travel.

Reddy notes that all workers—white-collar, blue-collar and everything in between—should be at the table when more permanent policies are put in place. “We need all interests to be represented as we make these big decisions that completely restructure our society,” she says.

The Home

Where people work has always played a major role in determining where and how they live, and it wasn’t long into the pandemic before pundits started sounding the death knell for cities and urban living. The doomsday predictions were based in part on the rise in working from home—“If Workers Opt Out, Star Cities May Dim,” read the print headline of one New York Times article in July—but also on largely unfounded worries about the health risks of living in proximity to other households. (A June study in the Journal of the American Planning Association found that, after controlling for several factors, denser counties had lower COVID-19 death rates—likely because of social distancing interventions and better access to health care.)

Experts agree the long-term appeal of cities isn’t going anywhere, but there is evidence that more people are interested in leaving cities now, either because they’re afraid of getting sick, they’re tired of sheltering in place in small spaces, or they were going to move to the suburbs eventually and just decided to do so sooner. According to a New York Times investigation, mail forwarding requests from New York City in March and April were more than double the average, with 60 percent of the requests directing mail out of the city, including to upstate New York and eastern Long Island addresses, but also to states such as Florida, Texas and California.

Those requests may turn out to be short term, but recent data from the National
Association of Home Builders suggests that some lasting changes are underway. The organization’s monthly confidence index, which rates market conditions for the sale of new homes, was at a 35-year high in August due to “a noticeable suburban shift in housing demand,” according to the group’s chief economist.

Home design preferences are changing too, according to Danielle Dy Buncio, ’04, co-founder and chief executive officer of VIATechnik, a design and construction modeling firm. She says she’s talked to real estate developers who previously had a hard time selling homes with separate dens. “That was their least popular product,” she says. “And now they suspect it will be their largest demand. With more people working from home at least some of the time, it’s super desirable to have that stand-alone workspace.”

For those without a dedicated office at home, it’s important to establish a sense of separation between work and life, according to Casey Lindberg, MA ’07, PhD ’10, who is part of the research team at design firm HKS. When the pandemic started, HKS began regularly surveying employees in the United States and London about what it was like to work from home. They found that people’s satisfaction was closely correlated with the amount of physical separation between their work space and the rest of their home. Kitchens, dining rooms and living rooms received lower ratings than dedicated studies.

“What those spaces are missing are physical thresholds,” Lindberg says. Without them, “people have a harder time keeping their work life from impeding their home life and the other way around.” Fixes can be physical (walls or doors) or visual (changes in paint color or floor covering). But they can also be behavioral: only doing work in one particular spot in the home and sticking to a set schedule.

Lindberg is lucky enough to have a home office, but he still sets boundaries. If he has a social call during work hours, he walks into another room. “The little things are really important,” he says.

For the millions of people who have lost their jobs or are at risk of losing their home or apartment, however, those little things are just that: little. Stanford assistant professor of sociology Jackelyn Hwang, ’07, was researching Bay Area gentrification and housing stability when the pandemic hit. Knowing the virus spreads in close quarters, she and a co-author decided to examine the issue of overcrowding as well. In a blog post for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, they described how moves to more crowded living conditions have been increasing since 2009 for everyone except the most financially well-off. That’s a health risk at present.

“Low-wage workers are losing their jobs, and people are at home more,” she says. That means close contact with housemates or family members for months on end.

Cries have always exposed the fault lines in our society: In 2019, Hwang published a paper showing that the Great Recession exacerbated inequality in predominantly Black neighborhoods. She found that homes in such neighborhoods were more likely to be bought by corporations, which were more likely than owner-occupants to flip—or resell—the properties and to have maintenance violations against them. All of those conditions contribute to neighborhood instability.

Hwang worries about the housing-related damage—including underemployment, unemployment and declines in home ownership—the COVID-19 pandemic could inflict in communities of color. “I’ve been thinking a lot about how this is going to hurt people—particularly Black Americans—because we know all of the racial disparities that happened with the last recession,” she says. “I’m happy to see there were all these moratoriums passed to put holds on evictions, but there are time limits, and no one really knows what’s going to happen after that.”

In some communities, though, the pandemic may actually lead to more opportunities for affordable housing, according to David Butler, ’96, managing partner of Argosy Real Estate Partners in San Francisco.

Hotel brands have long unloaded dated properties—often extended-stay residences with studio-apartment-style rooms—to investors interested in converting the spaces into affordable housing. With travel and tourism rates low, hotels are even more eager to sell off such properties, and developers are gobbling them up.

“It is very difficult to create new workforce housing development projects in expensive markets where they are needed the most,” Butler explains, citing municipal fees, high construction costs and the lower rents on affordable housing, all of which make it hard for investors to realize a sufficient return. “That’s why an extended-stay hotel conversion strategy could be a positive.”

Some of those urban “slow streets”—temporary bike lanes, pedestrian zones and parking-space dining areas—might become permanent. “This has given us an opportunity to experiment with the use of our public spaces for more than just cars,” says Erin Perdu, ’95, director of community planning and economic development for the design firm WSB. “It’s given cities a safe space to say, ‘We’re going to try this out,’ and it’s been really positive.”

Meanwhile, political polarization will subside, somewhat, slowly. In his 2019 book Why Cities Lose, political science professor Jonathan Rodden explored the urban-rural political divide in the United States and other countries. He says people migrating to the suburbs and rural areas because of the pandemic may accelerate a slow-moving process that is already underway. “The trend toward suburban areas becoming more heterogenous is likely to continue, and, in some cases, this might even push it further,” Rodden says. —Rebecca Beyer
There’s seemingly no end to the ways in which our work and home lives have been altered by the events of the past year. And future changes are looking equally abundant.

Interestingly, office buildings provide a helpful lens for viewing the peculiar problem of the pandemic. Usually, when people leave a building for an emergency all at once, it’s because of a natural disaster like an earthquake or a hurricane. Once the building is deemed to be structurally sound, workers can return. But the buildings people fled all around the world in 2020 weren’t dangerous.

“That’s what’s odd about this paradigm,” says Rishee Jain, an assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering who serves as Sonta’s advisor. “Usually, the building is the problem: You repair it, and people come back. In this case, the people are the problem.”

After Sonta’s dissertation defense, he, PhD student Thomas Dougherty and Jain—all part of the Stanford Urban Informatics Lab, which Jain directs—decided to apply what Sonta had learned about optimizing people’s time in the office together to the challenge of how to keep them apart.

For their research, Sonta, Dougherty and Jain used pre-pandemic data on energy use they’d collected from workstation sensors in a Stanford office building. The data, which serves as a proxy for human activity, allowed them to model how different ways of bringing back 50 percent of the building’s occupants would affect energy use and social interactions. Compared with bringing back half of workers randomly, the team suggested an approach for optimizing which employees should return in order to increase meaningful peer connections. Then they used the data to decide where the returners should sit, dispersing them across the building strategically to reduce their likelihood of running into each other in the halls or the kitchen or the restroom. They were able to reduce such overlap by 38 percent (thus improving social distancing) while increasing energy usage by only 1 percent.

The paper that resulted from the team’s preliminary research is short—only four pages. But the work that went into the paper, and the flexibility of thinking and willingness to adapt that the paper required, are hopeful reminders. People may be the problem, yes. It’s easy to see—in a world confronting so many crises at once—that we often are. But it’s also true that we’re the source for solutions.

Sonta learned that lesson early in his time at Stanford. When he first came to the engineering program, he focused on how the physical design of buildings affected energy use. But now he understands that the people inside the buildings are just as important, no matter what is being measured. That’s why he wasn’t daunted when, after presenting his dissertation, the immediate reaction from his peers and advisers was: Congratulations, but let’s get back to work.

“Like a lot of people doing research, I didn’t know exactly how what I was working on would manifest itself later—I didn’t have a conceptual grasp of what a new virus could do to our world,” he says. “I’m looking forward to reframing our research to this big area of conversation.”

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**How We Move Forward**

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**You Won’t Sit Shoulder-to-Shoulder in an Opera House. But Performers Are Nothing if Not Creative.**

There are certain things we simply cannot do now, and won’t be able to do for some time. Gather in large groups. Be indoors, in close quarters, with strangers. Be talked to or sung at—all those aerosols!—by someone not wearing a mask.

All of which explains why the performing arts have been so hard hit by the pandemic. Robert Poole, ’15, an actor who’d just earned his Equity card—a performer’s ticket to a living wage—was in Florida with a children’s theater company when the tour abruptly shut down in mid-March. Sanjay Saverimuttu, ’12, a dancer and choreographer with the Louisville Ballet, finally got back to work in the fall, rehearsing for his company’s digital season by dancing in his assigned 10-foot square while wearing a mask. Stephen Sano, MA ’91, DMA ’94, a professor in the department of music, oversees two choirs, both on hiatus. His chamber chorale gathers remotely for workshops and guest speakers. He’s not sure when or how his 200-member symphonic chorus will meet again.
A Brookings Institution study found that nationwide, 1.4 million jobs in the creative arts disappeared in the first three months of the pandemic. In New York, the nation’s cultural capital, Broadway will be dark at least through spring. The Metropolitan Opera has announced it won’t return until September. On some days, even those distant goals can feel aspirational.

“I worry that we’re going to lose a generation of artists who look at the jobs disappearing and say, ‘Maybe I should go into computer programming,’” says Jeremy Desmon, ’97, a musical theater book writer and lyricist. Theater artists are freelancers, and that means most of them haven’t had income since March. Producing organizations, meanwhile, reliant on ticket sales and donor contributions, are seeing their budgets collapse. “It’s just awful across the board,” says Carey Perloff, ’80, who until 2018 ran San Francisco’s American Conservatory Theater. “As hard as it is to try to run an organization right now, the people we should all be feeling unbelievable empathy for are the artists who are unemployed for the foreseeable future and losing their health care.”

At the same time, the racial justice movement that convulsed the country this summer also rocked the performing arts. Groups such as We See You, White American Theater have called for the proudly progressive theater establishment to reflect its espoused beliefs in the makeup of its leadership and the audiences it cultivates.

“We are actually really good at building out diversity on our stages,” says A-lan Holt, ’11, a filmmaker and playwright who
You may be itching to return to concerts, ball games or even that annual industry conference. But TechCrunch senior writer Anthony Ha, ’05, says virtual event attendance is here to stay. “Expect many events to take more of a hybrid form,” Ha says, “so that people who can’t or won’t attend in person can still be involved.” Just please remember to take yourself off mute before you start your toast to the happy couple.

—S.B.
the performances lack everything else that makes theater a wonderfully collaborative art: sets and lights, interaction and movement, an audience reacting together.

“There’s a law of physics that you can’t get around,” says Michael Rau, a professor of theater and performance studies and a director who works in theater and digital media. “You can’t have that instantaneous audience feedback that you’re used to.”

Rau is co-teaching a class called Video and Audio Technology for Live Theater in the Age of COVID with electrical engineering professor Tsachi Weissman, computer science professor Keith Winstein and CS graduate student Sadjad Fouladi, MS ’20. Students are working to build better software for distributed performance, with the goal of mounting a live performance over the internet during winter quarter. They’re working on latency. They’re working on technology to replicate eye contact, so you can tell who is talking to whom. They’re working on better green screens. They’re looking at ways to recognize the presence of the audience.

But even if they can make virtual theater more like regular theater, it’s only a stopgap.

“Artists are hungry, smart, restless people who want to express themselves by making work,” Perloff says. And they want to work live. Desmon is writing shows for when shows are mounted again. Saverimuttu is thrilled to be dancing again, for digital recordings, yes, but with live partners in shared spaces. Sano works with choirs using JackTrip, software developed by Stanford music professor Chris Chafe, DMA ’83, for low-latency, high-quality musical collaboration via the internet. It’s the state of the art, but it’s still not good enough for public performances. Nothing is.

Ultimately, performers will take the stage again when it’s safe enough for people to want to be in the audience. “When we come back, it’s going to be a massive consumer confidence exercise,” says Sammi Cannold, ’16, a theater and film director who recently spent two months in South Korea researching the successful opening of musical theater there. Big shows like Cats and Phantom of the Opera have been up and running in Seoul for months, thanks to a careful regimen of cleaning, mask-wearing and temperature checks. “We are going to need to convince people that it’s safe to go to the theater.”

Eventually, audiences will return. And when they do, they’ll be ready for something new.

“I think the future is bright,” says Holt. “It looks very different, but I’m optimistic about where this will take us. We’ve been craving connection and thinking about returning to one another physically. And I think artists and art allow that in ways other spaces don’t.”

—Jesse Oxfeld, ’98
Shelters have been cleaned out and many breeders have long waiting lists. The whole thing makes for a pet lover’s quandary: Add to the 1.1 million pups imported annually or, you know, get a hamster? “Cats and exotic pets will fill part of the gap, but low-income pet ownership is threatened,” says Mark Cushing, ’75, founder of the Animal Policy Group and author of Pet Nation. —A.T.

Cleaning your hands 10 times a day? Make that 20. No, 30. Many of us have turned to hygiene as one of our primary lines of defense against COVID-19—right as science is increasingly showing that excessive sanitation may harm our gut microbiome and weaken our immune systems. “It is conceivable, though just a hypothesis at this point, that increased sanitation will further change our industrialized microbiota, increase inflammatory state, and make us either more prone to inflammatory diseases or more likely to have a severe response to viral infection,” says Justin Sonnenburg, a Stanford associate professor of microbiology and immunology. “But most important during this pandemic is to not let our guard down with respect to hygiene, but rather to think of ways we can safely compensate for an increasingly sanitized existence.” The solution: safe exposure to microbes in our environments—fermented foods such as yogurt, kimchi and kombucha, as well as microbial exposure in nature, gardening and owning a dog. —D.B.

Forget the handbag. The accessories of the future are haute couture face covers. “We offer face masks from many of our top brands to coordinate with or accentuate the rest of our customers’ looks,” says Jen Davis Daft, ’99, divisional merchandise manager of apparel at Shopbop. As for our fashion below the chin, “‘Zoom tops’ are in right now!” Daft says. So is casualwear—comfort chez vous will likely dominate the season. —D.B.
It didn’t take long for social scientists to notice: In the United States, more women than men lost jobs in the early stages of the pandemic, and they have regained them at a slower rate. Black women, Latinas, mothers, young women, women with disabilities, and women in the service, retail and childcare industries are disproportionately affected.

The so-called shecession “has the potential to substantially roll back that progress we’ve made in terms of gender equality over the last couple of decades,” says Stanford sociology professor Shelley Correll, MA ’96, PhD ’01.

Women are coded as caregivers, says Stanford sociologist Marianne Cooper, which means not only did they lose jobs in everything from hospitality to home care, but they’re also facing potential employer bias when their toddlers pop up on Zoom, as well as unsustainable low levels of childcare and educational support, which drive some of them out of the labor force. “Women up and down the class ladder are getting hammered, but in somewhat different ways,” she says.

Correll points out that this is not simply a collection of individual hardships: “A large part of the productivity in this country comes from employed mothers,” she says. “That directly affects our GDP.”

For the women who are “able to stick, somehow or other, in the labor market,” Correll sees one potential bright spot. “People are seeing that we can do work differently,” she says. “We have also had a wide-open window into one another’s lives. And if we can harness that lesson, I do think workplaces have the ability to be a bit more empathetic and to know that [employees] are not just workers; they’re people with lives. We’re changing workplace culture.” —Elizabeth Lindqwister, ’21
2021 will be a great year for readers. English professor and Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Adam Johnson says many publishers held back books this fall. (Something about election reporting taking up a lot of news space.) “But the floodgates will open come January,” he says. And for those who just can’t get enough of the end of the world, apocalypse fiction will continue trending. Johnson believes the popularity of that genre has more to do with “climate change and the steady march of ecological disaster than the pandemic.” —S.B.

As natural disasters continue to interrupt business as usual, the framework we laid for remote learning during the pandemic will reveal an upside. “All of those difficulties that we experienced earlier have produced some ways of connecting and learning that are really, really valuable right now,” Linda Darling-Hammond, president of the California Board of Education and professor of education emerita, told the New York Times in a September story about Northern California students logging in to class even after their school building had burned to the ground. —C.F.

The casual kissing of yesterday’s hookup culture? Might as well be unprotected sex with a stranger. “I’m hearing from people who are having conversations about all the contact tracing [that they’re doing with prospective partners] before deciding whether or not to kiss,” says Amber Quiñones. “It feels almost like the 1940s or ’50s, where everyone is far more chaste and if you’re ‘going steady’ with someone, that’s when you kiss them.” Isolated by the pandemic, Quiñones and Makshya Tolbert, both ’15, created OKCovid as a video-first blind-dating experiment—setting up 120 people in their first round—to “balance the effects of internalized racism and systemic racism in dating apps,” says Quiñones. During lockdown, she and her single friends “were clinging to dating on apps as a way to stay human,” she recalls. “But as a Black woman myself, I felt like I was wasting my time.” If the pandemic has a silver lining, Quiñones says, it’s that there seems to be far more intentionality in how people now date. Even formerly serial daters are committing. “I think people realize there’s no game to be played,” she says. As for whether a vaccine could usher in a period of libidinal abandon, she doubts it. Rather, Quiñones imagines post-pandemic dating resembling reopening phases. “Everyone will have their own individual reopening sexually,” she says. —D.B.

Reading faces is especially important when encountering a new person, says Jeanne Tsai, ’91, professor of psychology and the director of Stanford’s Culture and Emotion Lab. “If you see somebody for the first time and they’re smiling at you, you know to proceed and continue talking, and if they don’t smile at you, or they look away, then you go the other direction.” Now that mask-wearing has rendered our grins opaque, will we master different social cues? “Maybe one consequence will be that it forces you to look at the eyes and listen to the voice and look at the whole body,” Tsai says. “Maybe it forces you to be more open and think, ‘Maybe I need to just assume this person has good intentions.’” —C.F.
Contact tracing—identification of people exposed to an infected individual—becomes increasingly challenging as caseloads rise. Enter the Bluetooth handshake, the only handshake that doesn’t make us queasy. This “greeting” forms the basis for COVID-19 tracing apps: Spend 15 minutes within the range of someone else’s smartphone and you’ll get notified if they test positive over the next two weeks. But doesn’t this make us queasy after all? “Some governments track phones and issue quarantine orders if you’re exposed,” says Jason Wang, a Stanford associate professor of pediatrics. “In the United States, there’s a lot of distrust. People certainly don’t want to get visited by police.” Albert Gidari, the consulting director of privacy at the Stanford Center for Internet and Society, does see potential solutions. “An exposure-notification application like the Google-Apple decentralized approach is both privacy protective and effective in letting people know they have been exposed to someone who has the virus without letting the government or third parties know you were exposed,” he says. “If people think they are going to be deported, lose a job or be disadvantaged in the future based on the data collected, then all these efforts will be for naught.” And enough people have to have enough trust to opt in. “The more comprehensive the coverage,” says Gidari, “the greater the effect on stemming the spread of the disease.” —D.B.

According to the World Economic Forum, Americans purchased $29.4 billion in video games between January and September, a 23 percent increase from 2019. And 75 percent of households include at least one gamer. Though the most committed will still buy their favorite gaming consoles, TechCrunch senior writer Anthony Ha, ’05, says our increasingly powerful phones and tablets, as well as the launch of cloud gaming services from Google, Microsoft and Amazon, mean anyone will be able to play 2021’s most popular titles anytime, anywhere. We’re looking at you, guy hiding in the pantry playing Animal Crossing: New Horizons. —S.B.

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Even before a pandemic disrupted the SAT/ACT test-taking plans of an entire cohort of high school students, a growing number of colleges and universities were adopting test-optional admissions policies. COVID-19 may prove to be the tipping point that nudges more schools in that direction. “We all know that the tests are sort of a proxy for privilege,” says Elise Maar, MA ’93, associate director of college counseling at Portola Valley’s Woodside Priory School. “We’re in this point in time where finally we’re having sustained conversations about equity, and with the pandemic, any college that was hesitant to go test-optional is having to this year. I think that once they see that they will get just as strong of a class as before, they’ll realize that the scores were really just one little data point.” —C.F.
It's like, you know

He was like, it's ok

This is, like, the only way

It was, like, her!

It literally made my head explode

I literally just died

y.
IN Genesis 11, the earth was “of one language and of one speech” before the Tower of Babel; in the life of John McWhorter, no language but English existed before an encounter with Shirley, a girl with brown eyes and burgundy overalls. He’d endured neither great flood nor generations of wandering. It was 1970. He was 5, taking a piano lesson with his childhood crush on the day his lifelong passion for language was sparked. “She walked out,” he recalls, “and started talking to her parents in this other language. And I asked my mother, ‘What are they doing?’ and she said, ‘They’re speaking another language.’” His mother asked Shirley’s which one it was and then told him, “Hebrew.” On the ride home, McWhorter cried. “I was in tears that she could do something I couldn’t,” he says, but he was also overwhelmed by competing emotions: excitement that other languages existed and distress at being cut off from the girl of his dreams. This is where the biblical allusion falters: After Babel, the speech of humans is confounded as they are scattered upon the earth in the story of their own separateness and fall from grace; for McWhorter, the fall, the babble, the vast confounding of dialects and tongues is precisely where his grace begins.

In the half-century since that revelation, McWhorter, PhD ’93, has published in biblical proportions—20 books and counting, not to mention a deluge of articles. Some books came in quick succession. (“I practically wrote one with the left hand and one with the right hand,” he says of two recent oeuvres.) A self-professed “language nerd,” he delves into linguistic oddities, penning reams of etymological analysis with humor and intellectual pugnacity. And in the process of defending the legitimacy of Black English—a dialect he can’t speak though his parents did—he has become a controversial commentator on race, refusing to join any one camp while championing views held dear by the left and by the right. A professor of linguistics first at Cornell, then UC Berkeley and now Columbia, he spent nearly a decade writing for a Republican think tank yet calls himself “a cranky liberal Democrat.” His career upends the portrait of the moderate as a humdrum, fence-sitting mix of liberal and conservative. Rather, McWhorter is fierce and unapologetic in his views and inspires the question: What is it like to be a Black moderate in America’s culture of partisan extremes?
McWhorter grew up in Mount Airy, a middle-class Philadelphia neighborhood often recognized as one of America’s first successfully integrated communities. In the 1950s and 1960s, its residents banded together to resist the forces driving segregation elsewhere: redlining, panic selling and blockbusting—a tactic in which building developers and real estate agents stoke racial fears to persuade white homeowners to sell at low prices.

“It was a Black existence,” McWhorter recalls, “where financial struggle had nothing to do with anything, and I did not have interracial conflicts.” He attended integrated Quaker and Montessori schools, and his parents worked at Temple University while completing degrees there: John Hamilton McWhorter IV, an administrator, earned his BA, and Schelysture Ann Gordon, a social work instructor, finished her PhD. “The main thing that I got from my upbringing,” McWhorter says, “is that, to me, the middle-class Black person was ordinary.”

It was during this period that Shirley spoke those fateful Hebrew words and the structure of McWhorter's existence irreversibly shifted. At school, he learned that a rabbi taught Hebrew classes in the late afternoons, and he scratched a note on the blackboard, asking how he could learn it too. The rabbi left him a paper printed with the Yiddish alphabet. (Years later, McWhorter would frame it.) At home, he found a dictionary with an appendix containing thousands of words translated into French, Spanish, Italian, German, Swedish and Yiddish, and he used it to render “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” in each language. “There’s only so much you can do when you’re 7 or 8,” he says.

The next sign that he had “the sickness”—his term for his language obsession—was when, at school, he harassed his Spanish instructor into teaching him the past tense. “I’m, like, 9,” he recalls, “and I had a sense that if we’re really going to say anything, we have to be able to refer to things that happened before.” He also searched libraries for self-teaching language books and practiced translating his thoughts in the shower. (“I look back,” he says, “and I realize that that was not normal.”) By the time he was 11, he owned the Living Language Course on Spanish, a four-record set whose 40 lessons he repeatedly worked his way through.

That year, his family moved across the Delaware River to Lawnside, N.J., a bedroom community of Philadelphia that, established by abolitionists in 1840, was the first self-governing Black municipality north of the Mason-Dixon Line. He recalls the suburban “almost mansions” and, as in Mount Airy, a feeling of safety. “It’s not every Black person in the ’70s and ’80s who grew up in that kind of neighborhood—not *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* rich, nothing like that, but just very *Leave It to Beaver* and every single face is Black.”

Despite McWhorter’s love of words, his schoolwork was largely perfunctory; he prioritized his obsessions, which included memorizing types of cars, the body’s organs, the presidents and first ladies, dinosaurs (still an obsession) and, of course, languages (in middle school, he attempted to make a family tree for every language in the world). “It’s becoming unfashionable to say Asperger’s,” McWhorter points out, “but I would definitely be on that spectrum.”

After finishing 10th grade, he attended Simon’s Rock College, received an associate’s
degree, and transferred to Rutgers, where he completed a bachelor’s in French by the time he was 20. He then moved to New York City to sate an obsession with Broadway musicals and try out American studies by doing a master’s at NYU. All the while, his “sickness” grew. “If somebody I’m close to speaks another language,” he says, “I want that language. I feel like if I don’t have any command of that language, then I am missing a part of them.” Over the years, various girlfriends would whet his appetite for German, Russian and Japanese, but in New York, straphanging and reading, he remained unsure of his direction. “Obviously I’m a professor,” he recalls thinking. “What else would I be? And so the question is, what am I going to get a PhD in? What can I get really good recommendations for and excel at, and I thought, by default, that’s language, but it’s not literature. It’s this thing called linguistics, which I didn’t really know much about.”

Before Stanford, McWhorter hadn’t forged deep bonds with alma maters, having attended each of them briefly. “Stanford was really where I went to college,” he says. Unlike most grad students, he lived on campus for the full five years and befriended undergraduates, who weren’t much younger. “I was a very young 22, and I was not experienced with the ways of the world,” he says. “The campus was my home.” He began doing theater, playing piano for stage productions, and formed a tight-knit artistic community. He recalls that period as an awakening that made him into an academic and a performer, not only in theater but also when he taught as a TA. “I never knew this, but I had a talent for public speaking. I think it’s the combination of a casual speaking style and having a kind of a pompous professorial voice.” (Addressing McWhorter’s performative skills, Geoffrey Pullum, professor emeritus of linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, says, “He is a terrific stage performer and a fantastic teacher. I remember Larry Hyman saying to me that he had, in his capacity as chair of the department of linguistics at Berkeley, observed John teaching a large class, and he had never in his life seen anyone with such a talent at it.”)

For his dissertation, McWhorter focused on Saramaccan, a creole whose 58,000 speakers live in Suriname and are largely descended from escaped enslaved peoples. At the time, a debate raged within linguistics as to whether a universal grammar existed—an idea put forth by MIT linguist Noam Chomsky—and whether new languages such as Saramaccan could spontaneously arise: “a fascinating notion,” McWhorter says, “that our genetic imprint for language could express directly in this language that arose just 300 years ago.” After linguistic analysis of Saramaccan, however, McWhorter concluded that it was largely derived from two African languages, Fongbe and Kikongo, as well as English and Portuguese.

In the years since his PhD, McWhorter has rendered linguistics accessible to a broad public. Steven Pinker, a Harvard professor of psychology and himself the author of several books on language, describes him as “America’s foremost popular explainer and commentator on language.” And if McWhorter’s work has a through line, it might be language’s constant evolution. “One of the hardest notions for a human being to shake is that a language is something that is, when it is actually something always becoming. They tell you a word is a thing, when it’s actually something going on,” he writes in Words on the Move: Why English Won’t—and Can’t—Sit Still (Like, Literally). “Yet, in real time, a word’s going on often feels more like it’s going off—as in off the rails. Rather marvelous, then, is that precisely the kinds of things that sound so disorderly, so inadvertent, so ‘wrong,’ are precisely how Latin became French.”

His playful analyses convey language’s vitality and ludic transformations, as with the little word like—“so much more than some isolated thing clinically described in a dictionary with a definition,” he writes. “Think of a cold, limp, slimy squid splayed wet on a cutting board, its lifeless tentacles dribbling in coils, about to be sliced into calamari rings—in comparison to the brutally fleet, remorseless, dynamic creatures squid are when alive underwater.” Appraising like’s many uses—among them hesitation (“Like, wow!”), hedge (“This is, like, the only way”), counter expectation (“It was, like, her!”) and quotative marker (“He was like, ‘It’s OK.”)—he concludes that like strictly defined as a preposition “is wet on a cutting board.”

To those who bemoan language change, McWhorter points out that meat once referred to food, flesh to meat, loaf to bread, bread to small pieces of food, wort to vegetables and apple to fruit in general. He also tackles literally (the bête noire of many old-school grammarians and a source of outrage when dictionaries gave it a second, nonliteral definition in 2013). McWhorter points out that today’s speakers aren’t to blame, since literally was also the bête noire of writers Ambrose Bierce and H.W. Fowler in the early 1900s. McWhorter then examines literally from so many angles over so many pages that the thought of him breathing air outside a library would seem outlandish to anyone who didn’t know that his obsession with language began when he was 5. Even so, his argument is easy reading and a possible course of treatment for apoplectic hard-liners hoping to manage their blood pressure in face of the masses vociferously enjoying literally in all its linguistic plasticity. In fact, his explanation is so pleasurable that paraphrasing it would constitute a spoiler (not a common concern when describing a book on linguistics). Suffice it to say that literally, by indicating the speaker’s sincerity as much as the factuality of what is spoken, has become a contronym (a word with opposite meanings) and, in its evolution, totally has precedents in English.

Such questions of legitimate usage also arise in McWhorter’s writings on Black English, though here his story gets more contentious, reminding us of the many ways language can divide us.

McWhorter made his foray onto the public stage in December 1996, when the Oakland school board passed a resolution mandating some instruction in Black English both to support its legitimacy as a language and to help teach Standard English. Their goal was to improve academic performance while making the district eligible for more bilingual-education funds. The popular response was largely negative, with commentators denying that Black English was a language and calling it a mix of slang and grammatically incorrect English.

As a Black linguistics professor then at Berkeley, McWhorter was well positioned to weigh in. He publicly argued that Black English wasn’t bad English but rather a dialect of English, a position he later elaborated in his 2000 book, Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America. “The things that look sloppy in Black English,” he writes, “only look that way because we cannot help seeing them as developments from standard English, when in fact they developed alongside and separately from standard English, making Black English one of hundreds of the world’s variations upon not standard English, but the now extinct ancestor of all Englishes.”
McWhorter reprised this argument in 2017, with Talking Back, Talking Black: Truths About America's Lingua Franca, in which he writes that “Black English must be introduced via a collection of ways in which it is more complex than Standard English, not less.” As an example, he cites the phrase, “I ain’t got no food up in my house,” referring to the up as an intimacy marker. “In this instance, up signifies that the place you’re in is familiar and comfortable.”

Another feature of Black English’s complexity is the ways it conveys counterexpectation with done, as in “You done grewed up.” He goes on to say that “a sentence with done is always something about something the speaker finds somewhat surprising, contrary to what was expected.”

And yet, for McWhorter, Black English has been a source of discomfort. In “Thick of Tongue,” a 2016 Guernica essay, he shares his uncertainty as to why he never learned to speak it (though he understands it well): “I’m tempted to say that as an inveterate nerd I identified more with the teachers and students at the private schools I attended, who were mostly white. But plenty of middle-class black kids—of whom, by the 1970s, there were more every year—went to school with whites and played at home with blacks and emerged sounding like home, not school.” Though his parents’ not having much contact with their families of origin might have been a factor, Black English was nonetheless a constant presence. “I grew up with it in my ears,” he says. “I was never under the impression that Black English was wrong.”

In the larger American society, he points out, not being able to speak Standard English presents a greater problem. “It’s harder to get an apartment,” he says. “It’s harder to get or to keep a job. You’re considered dumb by many people.” And yet his struggle has been that some Black people are put off by his voice. “It can sound chilly. It sounds white. There are a lot of people—and I completely get why—who think you started out being bidialectal like them but then that you switched yourself into only talking the ‘white’ way because you like white people better—you think you’re better than Black people.”

Age, though, has softened perceptions of how he speaks. “A woman can get teased for sounding like she’s white,” he says, “but for a man it’s more of a social sin. You’re not quite masculine. You’re not tough. But the older I get, the less of a problem it is because I’m beginning to be processed as professorial, as an older gent.”

McWhorter himself is quick to distance himself from Republican orthodoxy. “I’m not a right-winger,” he says. Rather, he believes that each idea should be evaluated on its own merits and not because of its affiliation with any ideological camp. American political theorist Mark Satin, in his 2004 book, Radical Middle: The Politics We Need Now, describes the “radical middle” as “politics that combines the best of the left and the right” and satisfies “a hunger for an idea that some Black people are put off by his voice. “It can sound chilly. It sounds white. There are a lot of people—and I completely get why—who think you started out being bidialectal like them but then that you switched yourself into only talking the ‘white’ way because you like white people better—you think you’re better than Black people.”
for a politics that expresses us as we really are—practical and visionary, mature and imaginative, sensible and creative, all at once.” Satin goes on to describe McWhorter’s views as “an arguably radical middle perspective.” As for calling himself “a cranky liberal Democrat,” McWhorter says, “I will take issue with things that don’t seem to make logical sense to me even if they go against the orthodoxy of the side that I consider myself to formally belong to.”

On July 7, 2020, McWhorter joined 153 prominent artists and intellectuals, including Margaret Atwood, Salman Rushdie, Cornel West, Malcolm Gladwell and Gloria Steinem, in speaking out in favor of dialogue. Together, they signed “A Letter on Justice and Open Debate,” which ran in Harper’s and read, in part, “The free exchange of information and ideas, the lifeblood of a liberal society, is daily becoming more constricted. While we have come to expect this on the radical right, censoriousness is also spreading more widely in our culture: an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty.” Twenty days later, speaking to the New York Times, McWhorter said that he’d recently heard from more than 100 professors and graduate students, most of whom he described as being left of center, who feared suffering professionally if they aroused the ire of the far left. Addressing how McWhorter has himself come under fire, Pinker, another of the letter’s co-signers, says, “The fact that he is an independent thinker and a rejecter of all ideologies, doctrines, dogmas and party lines has led to occasional labeling as a political conservative, but this is lazy pigeonholing and utterly inaccurate.”

McWhorter attributes his views on race to his upbringing. “I was one of that fortunate post-civil rights middle class,” he says. “I found that around 1990, when I was in grad school, around the time of the Rodney King riots, an educated Black person was expected to sound a note of despair and alarm, as if the mid-’60s hadn’t really happened and America still remained a racist cesspool.” Wanting to understand these perceptions, he spent time speaking to people and doing research. “I know now,” he says, “that the keystone of the feeling many Black people have that racism remains a central problem in their lives is the police—is abuse at the hands of the cops. I hate to say that in the 1990s, I didn’t know that to the extent that I should have because that had nothing to do with Mount Airy. You had no contact with the police.”

While McWhorter holds that his views in Losing the Race haven’t changed, he is now careful to acknowledge racism and abuse by the police in his work and public discourse. “I have more of a sensitivity now than I did 25 years ago,” he says. And he strongly believes that racism does exist and that stopping such policies as the war on drugs—while legalizing drugs—would transform Black communities within a decade. “We need to completely recognize what the function of the cops is in society,” he says. “Not only would it get fewer Black people murdered by the cops, but it would get fewer white people murdered by the cops, and, more to the point, it would mean that the cops would not be in a position to harass and make life miserable for Black people for supposed violations of the peace and the war on drugs.”

During the George Floyd protests, McWhorter’s linguistic and political commentary converged to find a point of agreement with the left. True to his view of language not as “something that is” but as “something always becoming,” he penned an essay in the Atlantic in favor of revising the definition of racism to include societal racial disparities such as unequal access to health care or supermarkets, “because it is indisputable that racial disparities stem from bias-infused barriers.” He reminds us that a word’s meaning lies in its use and that the more complex definition is “shared by legions of people, especially educated ones, across our nation.”

**AFTER** the Manhattan Institute, McWhorter found his way to a professorship at Columbia, a fortuitous move in no way part of a career strategy. “None of this was planned,” he says. “I’m in some ways a very feckless, immature person who somehow always lands on his feet. You should definitely know that, because I have a pompous, careful way of speaking that makes it sound like I planned my life the way I speak. I did not. I just have a weird way of talking.”

Rather, he was thinking that he loved his languages. “I want to share with the public that which fascinates me,” he says, which he does by teaching linguistics at Columbia and writing books. “And I have a fundamental desire to make my case,” he adds. “I’m like a person who likes to fight, except it’s not with my hands. It’s with my brain. Instead of going to a bar and punching somebody, I wish to make an argument in a way that it’s impregnable.”

Engaging with racial issues feels more like a duty, and in each of his obsessions, he tries to see the Black angle. “I am committed to trying to make the world better,” he says, but when he wakes up, he isn’t thinking about race. “I’m thinking about Estonian. I’m thinking about some ancient comic strip. I’ll maybe be thinking about race issues three hours later. At heart, I’m a geek.”

He now lives in Jackson Heights, and since Spanish is so commonly spoken there, he recently ordered a record player online so that his 8-year-old daughter—the older of two—can share the experience of how he learned with the Living Language record set as a child. Meanwhile, he is finishing writing Nine Nasty Words, a book about profanity, slated to be published in May 2021, and is teaching himself Mandarin. “If I didn’t have my daily dose of Mandarin,” he says, “that would feel like not having one of my feet. It’s an illness, and it’s written about—how some of us have an irrational desire to learn foreign languages, and not necessarily in order to get in touch with the culture but just out of our fascination with there being these other codes that you can speak and read. I am definitely one of those people.”

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Long-Lost and Found

GABRIELLE GLASER STUMBLED serendipitously onto the adoption tale at the core of her nonfiction narrative American Baby. She was reporting on a severely ill cantor in Portland, Ore., David Rosenberg, who was receiving a kidney donation from a friend. Rosenberg’s hope was that his birth mother would see the resulting article and reach out to him.

In this deeply and sensitively reported book, Glaser details both David’s story and the saga of the young woman, Margaret Erle, who was bullied into surrendering him for adoption. Margaret, who subsequently married David’s father and had three more children, never stopped thinking about her lost child and longing to see him again.

The New York City–based (now defunct) Jewish adoption agency responsible for Margaret’s ordeal, Louise Wise Services, will be familiar to viewers of the documentary Three Identical Strangers, about triplets adopted into separate homes for the sake of an ethically questionable nature-nurture study. But Glaser makes clear the agency was just part of a much larger problem—a midcentury adoption-industrial complex that, for a price, supplied infertile couples with children by shaming unmarried women into relinquishing them.

It’s a sobering reminder of the enormous social stigma that, as recently as the early 1960s, was attached to pregnancy outside marriage. With her parents’ acquiescence, Margaret was shunted into a maternity home, submitted to a brutal birth regimen, and harassed, under threat of juvenile detention, into signing her child away.

The Louise Wise agency’s sins were manifold. It lied to David’s loving adoptive parents, both of whom were Holocaust survivors, about Margaret’s reasons for surrendering her son. And it failed to pass on any of the family medical history that Margaret dutifully relayed over the years—with potentially fatal consequences.

Glaser relates Margaret and David’s story with intimacy and sympathy. And she interweaves it with what she calls “an important chapter of American social and cultural history hiding in plain sight.” Rife with fraud and abuse, midcentury closed adoptions, in Glaser’s telling, bore little resemblance to the feel-good popular conception of the practice.

Some of Glaser’s ire is directed at the convention of sealing birth records, which made it difficult—sometimes impossible—for birth parents and adoptive children to reconnect later in life. It took a DNA test to finally reunite David and Margaret.

American Baby packs a double punch: Its account of adoption abuses will fill readers with righteous rage. And its tale of a single bittersweet, belated reunion will move them to tears.

“She hadn’t spoken a word about her missing son in years. She’d spent 17 years looking for him in crowds, wondering if boys with dimpled chins might be him . . .

American Baby: A Mother, a Child, and the Shadow History of Adoption,
Gabrielle Glaser, ’86, MA ’86, Viking.
We Recommend
Thinking Back, Looking Forward

Pet Nation: The Love Affair That Changed America
Mark Cushing, ’75, Avery. An animal policy expert explains the rapid cultural and social changes that restyled our four-legged friends as family members.

Transcendent Kingdom: A Novel
Yaa Gyasi, ’11, Knopf. After her athlete brother dies from an overdose and her mother spirals into depression, a Stanford neuroscientist is driven to find the science behind what makes humans so fragile and fallible.

Money: The True Story of a Made-Up Thing
Jacob Goldstein, ’95, Hachette. Sure, money changes everything, but the concepts of currency and banking continue to evolve, as they have throughout history, says this co-host of NPR’s Planet Money.

Scratched: A Memoir of Perfectionism
Elizabeth Tallent, Harper. The author, an English professor at Stanford, unravels her deep-seated fear of failure, which kept her from publishing for two decades but also readied her to recognize a soft landing place.

Elway: A Relentless Life
Jason Cole, ’84, Hachette. Just in time for gift-giving, this well-sourced biography of former Cardinal and Denver Broncos great John Elway, ’83, is a playbook for leaders in the making.

Transcendent Kingdom: A Novel

Money: The True Story of a Made-Up Thing

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Disease-Detection Pioneer

A researcher who studied human health on the molecular level, Sam Gambhir is credited with founding modern medicine’s approach to early disease detection, and his work continues to guide precision diagnostics and inspire a new generation of scientists.

Sanjiv “Sam” Gambhir, the Virginia and D.K. Ludwig Professor of Cancer Research and the chair of radiology at the Stanford School of Medicine, died July 18 of cancer. He was 57.

Gambhir also directed the School of Medicine’s Canary Center for Cancer Early Detection, the Precision Health and Integrated Diagnostics Center, and the Molecular Imaging Program. In those leadership roles, he developed and advanced the science of detecting reporter genes using positron emission tomography. At the molecular level, the genes can signal encroaching illness, allowing early intervention and improving the odds of successful outcomes. In a 2012 TEDx Talk, Gambhir referred to reporter genes as “molecular spies.”

In the talk and throughout his work, Gambhir’s concern for patients was unwavering. He showed a photo of a man at his dying wife’s bedside and said, “This gentleman... is asking, ‘Why was this cancer not caught earlier?’” Gambhir said that question was “something I’ve focused my life on for about 30 years now.” He concluded by saying, “If all goes well, I’ll focus on it for another 50 years, to solve it.”

Gambhir was born in India and raised in Arizona. He studied medical science and biostatistics at UCLA, and joined the faculty there. He came to Stanford in 2003, and last year helped establish the Innovative Medicine Accelerator to turn promising lab ideas into tangible clinical progress.

On the day before his death, Gambhir was awarded the Dean’s Medal, the School of Medicine’s highest honor. It was a tribute, wrote a colleague, Professor Joseph Wu, to his revolutionary contributions to biomedicine and human health.

A mentor to more than 150 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, Gambhir was praised at his memorial service by one of his own mentors, UCLA professor Harvey Herschman. Introducing Gambhir to cellular and molecular biology, he said, was like opening the floodgates of a dam. “While you’re standing downstream,” Herschman said, “the best thing to do is enjoy the torrent as it flows over you and around you and just watch the flowers that grow around the new water flow.”

Gambhir was predeceased by his son, Milan, who died of cancer at age 16. He is survived by his wife, Aruna; parents, Sharda and Raj; and sister.

—John Roemer
private practice. He was a passionate world traveler, visiting six continents and more than 85 countries. He was predeceased by his first wife, Vlasta. Survivors: his wife of 65 years, Patricia; children, Leslie Malzbaud, Jacque Schnack Curtis, ’79, Randall, Marjorie, Cynthia Lee and Carolyn; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

1940s

Elizabeth Griffin Hampson, ’43 (political science), of San Francisco, May 29, at 97. She campaigned against sororities on campus. She raised her family in Massachusetts, California, Oregon and Paris, an experience that gave her a lasting love for all things French. She remained an avid reader, crossword puzzler and debater of current events. She was predeceased by her husband, Alfred, ’43. Survivors: her children, Cuyler Kidney, Griffin, Dirk, Brooks and Blair; eight grandchildren; and sister, Frederick Eugene Weybret, and sister.

1950s

Joanne Louise Stenstrom Collins, ’50 (sociology), of San Rafael, Calif., July 26, at 92. She was a member of Delta Chi. In World War II, he was the engineering officer on a Navy LST. He was a winner and publisher of the award-winning Lodl News-Sentinel for more than 50 years and was named Publisher of the Year by the California Press Association in 1985. He also enjoyed fishing, skiing and leading horse pack trips to the Sierras. He was predeceased by his wife of 62 years, Alcyon. Survivors: his children, John and Marylee; and two great-grandchildren.

Clara Campbell Crawford, ’49 (art), of Santa Barbara, Calif., June 10, at 93. She pursued a master’s degree in art at the University of Missouri and continued to draw, paint and sculpt primarily figurative works. She was also a fan of contemporary architecture and collector of mid-century furniture. She was predeceased by her son, Bill. Survivors: her husband of 71 years, Bill; daughters, Sherae, Crawford Wolfe, ’74, and Susan Crawford Goggins; her grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren; and sister, Louise Marjorie Aniker Steiner, ’49, of San Francisco, August 6, at 92. She was a volunteer for a variety of organizations and institutions. She enjoyed tennis and visits to Lake Tahoe and Palm Springs, but most of all loved spending time with her family. She was predeceased by her husband of 65 years, Albert, and son Keith. Survivors: her children Linda Schuman, ’72, and Mark; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Boris Theodore Subbotin, ’49, MS ’50, Engr. ’52 (electrical engineering), of Tarzana, Calif., August 26, at 93. He was head parser at Roble Hall. After earning a graduate degree at MIT, he returned to California and enjoyed a long career in aerospace engineering, primarily with Hughes Aircraft. He also enjoyed importing wine, gourmet cooking, foreign cars, backpacking with his family and bicycle rides throughout Europe. He was predeceased by his wife, Barbara Joy Soehnlein. ’50. Survivors: his children, Kyra, ’78, and Mark.

1960s

Joanne Stenstrom Collins, ’50 (sociology), of San Rafael, Calif., May 26, at 92. An avid gardener, she was known as the “Rose Lady” for the vibrant array of blooms she planted, and she pioneered drip irrigation in her region. She also enjoyed hiking the trails of Lake Lagunitas, Mount Tam, Lake Tahoe and Europe. Survivors: her husband of 69 years, Don, ’50; children, Scott, Heidi, Hodes and Sam; and four grandchildren.

Floyd Allen Frederickson, ‘50 (undergraduate law), LLB ’51, of Lake Oswego, Ore., November 20, 2018, at 91. He served in the Army. He was a member of the Oregon Bar Association for more than 50 years and argued a case before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1964. He was active in the Swede-Finn Historical Society and also enjoyed skiing, golf, poker games and spending time along the Oregon Coast. He was predeceased by his wife of 54 years, Marlene. Survivors: his children, Karen Emerson and Kent; and four grandchildren.

Barry H. Sterling, ’50 (undergraduate law), JD ’52, of Sebastopol, Calif., July 26, at 90. He passed away at Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa Medical Center after a long illness. Survivors: his wife, Florence, ’50; children, Thomas and Robert; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Richard M. Weismann, ’53 (political science), MBA ’59, of Carmel, Calif., July 12, at 88, of Parkinson’s disease. He was a member of Delta Tau
Delta and student body president. After a year of business school, he served in the Marine Corps before returning to complete his degree. He spent his career in the office products industry and retired as vice president of Avery Dennison. He was predeceased by his son, Douglas.

Survivors: his wife of 59 years, Joyce; daughter, Jane Hand; and three grandchildren.

Ole Rudolf Holst, '54, PhD '62 (political science), of Salt Lake City, July 2, at 86, of lymphoma. He was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma and the soccer team. He was a decorated and widely published scholar of international affairs and American foreign policy who taught at Stanford, the U. of British Columbia and Duke. He was also an avid runner and completed 43 marathons. He was predeceased by his wife, Ann, and son, Eric.

Survivors: his daughter, Maja; two grandchildren; and brother, Kal, '56, MA '58, PhD '61.

John Daniel Mullen, '54 (psychology), of Bodega Bay, Calif., June 15, at 84, of Alzheimer's disease. He was on the track team. He spent his career at Pacific Bell, including two years of active duty in the Navy. He was the director of his community's fire board and enjoyed sailboat racing and attending performances of the San Francisco Symphony, as well as the ballet and opera. He was predeceased by his son, Terence. Survivors: his wife of 65 years, Lorraine; daughters, Kathleen Dylin and Shari Tucker; and two grandchildren.

C. Grant Spaeth, '54 (history), of Los Altos, July 28, at 88, of complications of Parkinson's disease. He was a member of Beta Theta Pi and the '53 NCAA championship golf team. He earned his JD from Harvard, then returned to Palo Alto, where he practiced law and served on the city council. Later he was deputy secretary in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and president of the United States Golf Association. He was predeceased by his first wife, Judy (Bolender, '53). Survivors: his wife, Lori; children, Charlie and Shelly; stepson, Steven Travis; and sister.

Lois Lee Sunnergren Ciapponi, '55 (nursing), of Palo Alto, January 13, 2019, at 86. She spent her career as a nurse at Stanford Children's Hospital. She was an avid square and ballroom dancer, a skilled seamstress and a talented chef. Survivors: her husband, Dick; sons, David and Steven; and two grandchildren.

Nancy Jane Laverty Harris, '55 (social science/social thought), of Seattle. She was an accomplished photographer, a skilled cook and an avid collector of Native American art. She was especially fascinated by marine biology, and as an adept and certified scuba diver, enjoyed close encounters with humpback whales and whale sharks. Survivors: her husband, Ham, '55, daughter, Cindy; and grandson.

Dorothy Roberta Taylor Miller, '55 (nursing), of Fair Oaks, Calif., July 2, at 87. She spent her career in the medical field and served in many capacities in her congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She remained close to many of her nursing school classmates and especially enjoyed the time she spent with her children and grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert, and son Douglas.

Survivors: her children David, Sarah Walton and Robert; nine grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Audrey Elaine Bostad Lary, '56 (art), of Frederick, Md., July 30, at 86. She enjoyed making fabric-based art and nature-inspired crafts. In her 60s, she took up track and field and set American and world age-group records, including eight still-unbeaten records. She was named USATF master field athlete of the year three times. She was predeceased by her husband, Ralph, son Debra Hallen and Ralph III; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Jane Leonard Helm Maddock, '56 (English), of Salt Lake City, at 85, of COVID-19. After earning a master's degree from the U. of Virginia in education and a PhD in English from the U. of Utah, she taught for 17 years at the U. of Montana Western. She was director of the American Studies program and was instrumental in establishing the honors program. Montana Western's most prestigious service award was named in her honor. Survivors: her former spouse, Robert, '56.

Robert Louis Santos, '56, of Santa Rosa, Calif., June 20, at 85, of cancer. He earned his degree in dentistry from UCSF, then entered the Army and trained in oral surgery. He returned to UCSF to teach pediatric dentistry and was in private practice in the Bay Area. He also served on the state Dental Board of Examiners and was a president of Richmond, Calif., Rotary. He was predeceased by his first wife, of 37 years, Mary Lou. Survivors: his wife of 25 years, Julia; children, Lori, Lisa and Paul; and three grandchildren.

Bruce Bosworth Willatts, '56 (communication), of Laguna Beach, Calif., April 7, at 85, of metastatic cancer. He was a member of Navy ROTC and served in the Marine Corps. After earning a master's degree from Union Theological Seminary and a PhD in psychology from the Graduate Theological Union, he taught psychology and religion at Dominican U. in San Rafael, Calif. In a second career, he helped run the family business, the Laguna Riviera Beach Resort. He was also president of Laguna Beach Rotary. Survivors: his wife, Diane; children, Amy, Andy and Dave, '86; seven grandchildren; and former wife, Marilyn (Beck), '59.

William H. “Bill” Crookston, '57 (economics), of Ventura, Calif., July 25, at 84. He was president of the World Economic Forum. He earned bachelor degrees from USC and a doctoral degree from Claremont Graduate School. He owned two manufacturing and marketing businesses, was widely active as a consultant, and lectured on marketing, management and entrepreneurship at USC and campuses of the California State University system. He also held leadership roles in numerous service organizations and Episcopal congregations. Survivors: his wife, Kathleen; five children; and 10 grandchildren.

Kay Hamilton Miller, '57 (international relations), of Palo Alto, June 2, at 84, of cancer. She was a member of Cap and Gown. She worked for TSI, a company that made reading instruments for the blind, and also for the Women's Action Center. Miller was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma and the soccer team. She earned her master's degree from Union Theological Seminary, JD '69, of Hillsborough, Calif., December 30, 2019, at 83. She worked in retail before returning to Stanford to earn a law degree. She practiced with Hannah and Brophy in San Francisco and in San Jose. In retirement, she enjoyed traveling within the United States and abroad. She was predeceased by her husband, Gary.

Peter B. Mansfield, '58 (history), of Seattle, June 23, at 83, of leukemia. He was on the basketball team. He earned his MD at Harvard and studied the effects of electrical stimulation on the heart at the National Heart Institute. He was later chief of surgery at Seattle Children's Hospital and director of the heart center at Providence Hospita in Seattle. He was an avid fly fisherman. Survivors: his wife of 57 years, Jackie; children, Todd, Brock, MBA '95, and Sally Mansfield Martin, '94; six grandchildren; and brother, Richard, '56, JD '58.

Carol Martha Whetstone Spencer, '58 (English), of Hamilton, Mont., February 11, at 83. She was in the Gaieties. She had four careers, first as a United Airlines flight attendant, then as a librarian with the Dallas Public Library, next as a college admissions counselor at Santa Catalina School for Girls in Monterey, Calif., and finally as a real estate agent in Carmel-by-the-Sea. In retirement, she loved her log home in Montana, morning Bible studies and spending time with her family. Survivors: her husband of 57 years, Nick; children, Lisa, Nick Jr. and Alex; grandchildren; and sister, Lois Whetstone Abraham, '55.

Wally Wheeler Henry, '59 (economics), MBA '63, of Pasadena, Calif., August 1, at 82. He was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon and the soccer team. After serving in the Navy and then earning his MBA, he went to work for the family roofing products business and helped turn it into a nationwide brand. In 1985, he founded the Henry Wine Group to promote small and family-owned producers. He believed made the world's best wines. He was also instrumental in the formation of the Los Angeles Opera and many of the city's other fine arts institutions. Survivors: his wife, Carol (Fagan, '61, MA '62); children, Will, '88, Katie Henry Gray, '90, MBA '00; and Mike, and nine grandchildren, including Marguerite Gray, '21.

1960s

Phil Alden Stohr, '60 (political science), of Sacramento, Calif., July 17, at 82. He was a member of Kappa Alpha and in the second group of students to graduate Stanford's overseas program in Beutelsbach.

He returned to Germany while pursuing his LLB from UC Berkeley to research Germany's legal aid at the University of Heidelberg. He spent his legal career at Downey Brand Seymour and Rothwe. His avocation was landscape photography, practiced on numerous travels and camping trips. His other passion was classical music, and he delighted in the musical talents of his grandchildren.

Survivors: his wife, Jan Cave; sons, Mark and Brad; and two grandchildren.

James Frank Cowart, '61 (education), of Carnation, Wash., July 3, at 82, of constrictive pericardi- tis. He was on the baseball team. Soon after he started teaching physical education, he began adapting games and constructing equipment so that physically disabled students could participate. He provided a major initial impetus for the field of adapted physical education and published widely on the topic. In retirement, he volunteered with Wheels for the World as a mechanic, delivering and fitting wheelchairs for the impoverished. Survivors: his wife of 57 years, Ann; children, Karen and Jim; and four grandchildren, including Christina Smith, '16.

Theodore William “Ted” Graham, '61 (undergraduate), of San Jose, Calif., October 3, 2019, at 80, of complications from diabetes. He began his legal career in San Diego with Luce, Forward, Hamilton and Scripps, and he later joined other firms, including Dewey & LeBoeuf.
and Paul Hastings. He played an active role in municipal government, but his favorite activities were hunting and fishing on the Bighorn River in Montana and hiking in the Bitterroot Mountains. Survivors: his sons, Todd and Philip; and grandson.

Burton N. Kendall, ’62 (physics), of San Francisco, June 22, at 79, after a struggle with ALS. He earned his PhD in high energy particle physics from Brown U. After teaching at UC Santa Barbara, he returned to the Bay Area and worked for a series of technology companies, ultimately retiring from Qualcomm in 2015. In retirement, he enjoyed traveling widely, attending the symphony, and volunteering with the Exploratorium and the California Academy of Sciences. Survivors: his wife of 41 years, Sally Towse; children, James, Anne Arl and Sam; and three grandchildren.

Harry H. “Skip” Lawrence, ’62 (biology), of Carmichael, Calif., March 18, at 80. He was a member of the baseball team and Sigma Chi. He earned his dental degree from UCSF and began his dental career in the Army. After his military service, he practiced for 32 years in Sacramento. He served in leadership and board roles for Rotary, the California Automobile Museum, Sacramento Blood Source Board and Sacramento County Health Council. He was predeceased by his daughter, Kelly. Survivors: his wife, Cookie.

Everett Kennedy “Ken” Weedon Jr., ’62 (English), of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., November 23, 2019, at 78. He earned his PhD at Cornell and then taught English at Vassar for more than four decades until retiring in 2011. He was a member of the Dutchess County branch of Literacy Volunteers of America and a volunteer with the Mid-Hudson Valley AIDS Task Force.

Roger Eugene Garriott, ’66 (electrical engineering), of Fountain Valley, Calif., May 16, at 76. He earned his MBA from Brigham Young U., then worked for several corporations before starting his own business. He enjoyed camping, working with his hands and in the yard, and spending time with his family. Survivors: his wife, Diane; children, Michelle Jordan, Jonathan, Melissa Smith and David.

Kent Reed Douglass, ’67 (psychology), of Denver, August 29, at 75, of Lewy body dementia. He was a member of Alpha Delta Phi. He earned his JD from the U. of Colorado. After serving in the Army, he passed the Montana state bar exam and built a log home in Paradise Valley to be close to mountains, hiking and fly-fishing. He retired from Swandal, Douglass & Gilbert in 2001. He was also a director of the Park County Economic Development Corp. and served as a vestry member, lay reader and lay eucharistic minister in his Episcopal congregation. Survivors: his wife, Elizabeth; daughters, Jennifer and Anne; two grandchildren; and brother.

William Avery “Bill” Thompson, ’68 (psychology), of Economic Beach, Calif., June 21, at 73, of Alzheimer’s disease. He was a member of Alpha Delta Phi. For more than 35 years, he was rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, then the first bishop of the Diocese of Western Anglicans. He was also a licensed pilot, played the banjo and mandolin, and ran in the Catalina trail marathon 29 times. Survivors: his wife, Claudia; children, Matthew, ’94, Christopher and Betsy; and sister.

1970s

Richard Wellington “Jack” Lasater II, ’70 (political science), of Los Angeles, August 19, at 71, of multiple myeloma. He was a member of Phi Delta Tau Delta, the football team and a three-time national champion rugby team. He earned his JD from UC Hastings and practiced business law, specializing in transactional and securities law. He was also an avid fly fisherman, quail hunter, and golfer and enjoyed spending time at his family cabin in the Sierras. Survivors: his wife of 36 years, Patty; children, Maura Gegenwarth, Nick, Molly and Kate Orr; mother, Mary; five granddaughters; and three siblings.

Suzanne Esther Rich Davidovac, ’71 (nursing), of Temecula, Calif., April 20, at 72, of Erdheim-Chester disease. After working in the ICU at Stanford Hospital and in public health in San Diego, she earned a master’s degree in teaching and taught high school in Illinois and England, where she lived with her family for 14 years. She was an advocate of global human rights, a climate control proponent and an active member of Daughters of the American Revolution. Survivors: her husband, Bogoljub, MS ’71, MBA ’73; and sons, Paul and Nicholas. “She would laugh,” he said laughing in a 2013 interview for the Stanford Historical Society Oral History Program. “So I was hoisted on the petard of my own cleverness.”

1980s

Nathan Alan Harris, ’72 (biology), of West Boylston, Mass., May 24, at 70, in a cycling accident. He earned his MD from Mount Sinai School of Medicine and then a master’s degree in public health from UCLA. He ran a private practice treating allergy patients for more than 30 years. He loved travel that involved trekking, rafting and mountain ascents, exploring New England with his cycling group and competing in the Falmouth Road Race, where he was an annual age-group contender. Survivors: his wife of 44 years, Diane Lebel.

Paul Gerard Crowley, ’73 (humanities), of Redwood City, August 7, at 68, of cancer. He earned an MA from Columbia in the philosophy of religion and then his PhD in theology from the Graduate Theological Union. He entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1986 and was ordained a priest in 1992. He retired in June from his position as professor of religious studies at Santa Clara U. His research focused on systematic theology, and he was editor in chief of the journal Theological Studies.

1990s

Rebecca Beyer
Survivors: his wife of 40 years, Barbara; children, Korin O’Brien, Kendel, Aaron Glendenning and Philip; five grandchildren; and three siblings.

**George Anthony Viants**, ‘79, MS ‘81 (electrical engineering), of Sunnyvale, Calif., July 5, at 62, of coronary heart disease. He worked as a computer software engineer at Microsoft and other technology companies in Silicon Valley. He enjoyed playing golf, exercise, supporting local sports teams and visits to the local library. Survivors: his brother.

1980s

**Lee Ellen Esbenshade**, ‘83 (English), of Missoula, Mont., June 18, 2019, at 58, of cancer. She was a member of the marching band. She earned her MFA in creative writing from the U. of Montana and worked as a teacher, typesetter and editor. She enjoyed travel, many styles of dance, and hiking, camping, backpacking and experiencing all the natural wonders of Montana. Survivors: her partner, Buell Whitehead; former husband, Ray Shackleton; children, Aidan Shackleton and Shae Shackleton; parents, Richard ‘50, and Nancy; and four siblings, including Anne, ‘88, and Rick, ‘93, MA ‘93.

**Joseph Michael Herzog**, ‘83 (biology), of Kailua, Hawaii, April 13, at 58, of metastatic prostate cancer. He was a member of Alpha Delta Phi and the marching band. He earned his veterinary degree from the U. of Wisconsin and practiced in California and Hawaii. He was always eager to treat any animal in need of help, no matter how exotic, and he worked on call for the Santa Barbara and San Francisco zoos. He was also an avid cyclist, singer, and student of Hawaiian language and culture. Survivors: his wife, Brenda Machosky; mother, Rose Marie Farthing; father, Ernest Herzog; and brother.

**Sean McKanna Mitchell**, ‘84 (engineering), of Bellevue, Wash., August 23, at 57, of glioblastoma. He sang bass in the Fleet Street Singers and returned to complete his degree after serving four years in the Marine Corps. He worked as a software developer at Microsoft until 1998. He then pursued his passions for acting and singing in community theater productions and was a volunteer computer science teacher in local schools. Survivors: his wife of 29 years, Elizabeth; children, Grace, Grant and August; mother, Carol; six; sister; and brother, George, ‘99.

2000s

**Irene May-Ling Hutchins**, ‘05 (psychology), of Palm Springs, Calif., May 26, at 37. She paused her studies to pursue professional ballet dancing and was rewarded with a national championship. After graduating from Stanford, she went on to earn her MD from UC Davis and held a fellowship in hematology and oncology at Scripps MD Anderson Cancer Center. She was a doctor at Desert Regional Hospital in Palm Springs and was the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s 2018 Woman of the Year. Survivors: her parents, Richard and Margaret.

**BUSINESS**

**Ray Simpson Stewart**, MBA ‘51, of Palo Alto, August 1, at 93, of lymphoma. He served in the Navy. He spent his career with a series of technology and consumer electronics companies during Silicon Valley’s founding years. Later in life he became an avid marathoner, and he was part of a 4 x 800-meter relay team whose national age group record still stands. He was predeceased by his second wife, Norma Pappas. Survivors: his children, Sandra MacPhail, Claire Kostic, Sharon, Kim and David; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and brother.

**Winton Gray Peach**, MBA ’57, of Palo Alto, August 12, at 89. He paused work on his business degree for active duty in the Army. After graduation, he worked for Del Monte in San Francisco and then McKinsey in Melbourne, Australia. After returning to the U.S., he was president and CEO of Manning’s and later founded and led Food Dimensions. He was an enthusiastic collector of contemporary glass art. He was predeceased by his daughter, Leslie. Survivors: his wife, Barbara; sons, Bruce and Christopher; six grandchildren; and great-grandson.

**Cecil Bell Holman**, MBA ’58, of Los Angeles, June 20, at 90, of dementia. He was a naval aviator in the Korean War. He spent his career in the aerospace industry with companies supporting the manned space program and defense contracts. He loved gardening, bird hunting, playing tennis and spending time outdoors. Survivors: his wife of 66 years, Cynthia; children, C. Holman Csemak, ’78, PhD ‘91, Lisa Holman Vellequette, ’80, and Marcy, ’82; five grandchildren; and brother.

**William George “Bill” Gaede Jr.,** MBA ’59, of San Francisco, at 86. After Army service and completing his MBA, he joined Touche Ross & Co. (now Deloitte and Touche), where he was a member of the management committee and board of governors, a partner in charge and then associate managing partner overseeing capital markets services. He also served on municipal, arts and institutional boards in San Francisco. Survivors: his children, Heidi Driscoll, Kristina Grace and Bill; seven grandchildren; and sister.

**Donald Arthur Phillips**, MBA ’59, of Granite Bay, Calif., July 1, at 96. He served in the Navy during World War II. After graduation, he was assistant dean of the Graduate School of Business for 10 years. He later developed apartment complexes in Monterey, Calif., and spent 50 years developing and researching cross-cultural psychology. She served as an undergraduate academic adviser and elementary school teacher. At Stanford, she published numerous books and articles, including a widely cited comparison of the education systems of the U.S. and Japan. She was predeceased by her husband, Don Blinco.

**Cecil Bell Holman**, MBA ’58, of San Francisco, at 86. After Army service and completing his MBA, he joined Touche Ross & Co. (now Deloitte and Touche), where he was a member of the management committee and board of governors, a partner in charge and then associate managing partner overseeing capital markets services. He also served on municipal, arts and institutional boards in San Francisco. Survivors: his children, Heidi Driscoll, Kristina Grace and Bill; seven grandchildren; and sister.

**Alfred Bertram Barsten**, MBA ’60, of Nevada City, Calif., June 19, at 89, of Alzheimer’s disease. He served in the Navy during the Korean War. He spent his finance career with IBM in Saratoga, Calif., and then joined the department of defense. He was predeceased by his son Donald Jr. Survivors: his brother.

**Kim and David; nine grandchildren; and three siblings.

**Priscilla Mary Anne Nisan Blinco**, PhD ’72, of Palo Alto, August 3, at 92. She was a teacher and principal in the San Francisco Unified School District for 20 years and a senior researcher at SRI International for 10 years. In retirement, she was a violinist for small chamber music groups, including Fiume de Musica and the Channing House Trio. She was predeceased by her husband, Wally. Survivors: her stepchildren, Lee, Timothy and Wendy; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and great-granddaughter.

**Mary Angeline Anastole Kiki Wilcox**, PhD ’80, PhD ’87 (education), MA ’88 (linguistics), of Tiburon, Calif., April 28, at 85. She worked as a flight attendant and elementary school teacher. At Stanford, she served as an undergraduate academic adviser and researched cross-cultural psychology. She published numerous books and articles, including a widely cited comparison of the education systems of the U.S. and Japan. She was predeceased by her husband, Don Blinco.

**Kathryn Anne Davis**, PhD ’89, of Carmichael, Calif., August 16, at 70. She taught at the U. of Delaware, and then joined the department of second language studies at the U. of Hawaii at Manoa and directed the Center for Second Language Research. She received two Fulbright fellowships. Her scholarship focused on the sociopolitics of language policies and their impact on the rights of linguistic minorities. She was an advocate for critical and collaborative language policy that would be led by members of minority communities. Survivors: her five siblings.

**Victor Kuo**, MA ’98 (sociology), PhD ’99 (education), of Shoreline, Wash., June 18, at 49. He was executive director of institutional effectiveness at Seattle Colleges, a community college system of 45,000 students. He also worked as a senior consultant with FSG Social Impact Advisors, an evaluation officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and a research associate at the David & Lucile Packard Foundation. He then founded VK Global Advising and led projects in strategic planning, evaluation and organizational development. He strove to ground his humanity and care for others in the Bible and his testimony of Jesus. Survivors: his wife, Annie; daughter, Vivian; parents, Moses and Mary; and sister. 

Oregon U., where he taught for 55 years and helped establish the Paul Jensen Arctic Museum on campus. He also enjoyed playing handball and golf. Survivors: his wife, Sylvia.

**Jennifer Shannon Arndt Anderson**, MA ’52, of Palo Alto, August 9, 2017, at 89. She taught eighth grade in Sunnyvale, Calif., spent a year in Geneva, then returned to Palo Alto and worked at Variate Associates. She taught pottery to disabled adults for the Palo Alto Department of Education for 22 years. She also enjoyed gardening and caring for animals. Survivors: her husband of 65 years, Weston, ’50, MS ’53, PhD ’55; children, Lucy Jacob and Joel; three grandchildren; and great-grandson.

**Lucy Jacob and Joel; three grandchildren; and great-granddaughter.

**Mary Angeline Anastole Kiki Wilcox**, PhD ’72, of Palo Alto, August 3, at 92. She was a teacher and principal in the San Francisco Unified School District for 20 years and a senior researcher at SRI International for 10 years. In retirement, she was a violinist for small chamber music groups, including Fiume de Musica and the Channing House Trio. She was predeceased by her husband, Wally. Survivors: her stepchildren, Lee, Timothy and Wendy; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and great-granddaughter.

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ENGINEERING
William Kirk “Bill” English, MS ’62 (electrical engineering), of San Rafael, Calif., July 26, at 91, of respiratory failure. After a career in the Navy, he worked at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) and then Xerox’s Palo Alto Research Center (PARC). With Douglas Engelbart, he helped create the computer as we know it today, including the first computer mouse, and he did early work on graphical user interfaces, hypertext, video conferencing and computer networking. Survivors: his second wife, Roberta; sons, Aaron and John; stepdaughter, Patricia; and granddaughter.

Howard Robert Ross, MS ’66 (mechanical engineering), of Denver, April 21, at 90. He served in the Navy. After work at SRI and General Electric, he devoted the rest of his career to making electric vehicles a reality. He helped launch the Santa Barbara Electric Bus Project, the world’s first roadway-powered electric vehicle system. He also co-founded UC Berkeley’s Program for Advanced Technology on the Highway. Survivors: his wife, Ivone; children, Nelson, Linda, Lisa DeNeffe and Lori Hartmann; and six grandchildren.

Adrian “Tony” Albert, MS ’12 (management science and engineering), PhD ’14 (electrical engineering), of San Francisco, June 5, at 35, in a hit-and-run biking accident. At Stanford, he was a member of the Romanian Student Association and enjoyed capoeira. He did postdoctoral research at MIT. He was committed to solving climate change and was working toward this goal as the founder and CEO of Terrafuse, a start-up that uses artificial intelligence to provide actionable climate intelligence and predict climate extreme events. He liked to support friends in need by cooking delicious food for them. Survivors: his parents, Traian and Iulia; and sister.

HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES
Carole Martha Hamal Norton, MA ’55 (communication), of Los Altos, July 23, at 88, of COPD and heart failure. She worked for the Wall Street Journal, the Hoover Institution and Mayfield Publishing. She was predeceased by her husband, Stanley, ’51, LLB ’54. Survivors: her children, Cynthia and Brady; and two grandchildren, including Hannah Subega, ’JD ’23.

Anthony Terrell “Tony” McDonald, MA ’77 (music), DMA ’82, of Columbus, Ohio, August 9, at 70. He performed with the Savoyards. In his academic career, he was a professor of music at both Hillsdale and Centre College. To preserve the history of Black composers, he created and edited A Catalog of Music Written in Honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. He was recognized for his work as a composer, arranger, conductor and musician. He played trombone with an orchestra, a percussion group and a big band, and was music director at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus. Survivors: his wife, Judith; sons, Peter, ’11, and Carey; and sister.

Sandra Renee Dunn, PhD ’79 (psychology), of Oakland, March 4, at 76. She was director of marketing and research for the San Francisco Chronicle and San Francisco Examiner, AT&T Media Services, TCI Cable and Chela Financial. She demonstrated her commitment to service and community as a longtime member of Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church and serving on several boards, including the United Way Bay Area, Urban League and Lakeshore Children’s Center. Survivors: her daughter, Terri; three grandchildren; and sister.

LAW
Prescott H. Ashe, JD ’98, of San Francisco, July 23, at 53. He worked for Bain Capital, then co-founded Golden Gate Capital. He was also CEO of Angel Island Capital Services. He enjoyed good food and fine wine, leading to investments in a number of restaurants and wineries and the establishment of Ashe Vineyards in Oakville, Calif. Survivors: his two sons; fiancée, Shabnam Bhaskaran; mother, Wanda; and three siblings.

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17. This Statement was signed and dated by Valerie Pippin, Business Manager, on 9/30/20.
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“LOOK WHAT THE DIVERS brought up this morning!” Our marine embryology professor, John Wourms, PhD ’66, pushed up his flannel sleeves and pointed to a glass specimen dish. “Behold! Parastichopus californica—the California sea cucumber!”

My first reaction was: yecch.

Pressed close to my classmates around the saltwater table at Hopkins Marine Station, I zipped up my down vest as the chill sank into my bones. This morning in 1976 was no different from other summer mornings in Monterey, Calif.: foggy and damp, a shivery 52 degrees both outside and inside this wet lab. I peeked over my classmates’ shoulders to behold the fat, 7-inch-long, orange-and-white pickle languidly floating in seawater. Darker orange nubs protruded randomly along its body, giving it the appearance of spongy Nerf armor, or a pustulant disease. The professor wet his hands and gently lifted the creature, rotating it to show us the mouth at one end and the anus at the other. “Here are the guts,” he said, delicately stretching open the hollow tube. Lacy beige strands lay inside.

I edged closer, my rational left brain reminding me what was at stake: my GPA. Still, my stomach squirmed. As a Chinese American with countless 10-course Chinatown banquets literally under my belt, I’d eaten enough sea cucumber to know that its soft, spongy texture—so prized in Asian cuisine—repulsed me. Although sea cucumber is virtually tasteless, when my teeth slid through that gelatinous mass and it slithered over my tongue, I cringed like I’d bitten into a fish eye.

Our first task as embryologists was to induce spawning in our sea cucumber. We kept straight faces as Wourms held up a syringe of potassium chloride. “Here’s how we spawn other echinoderms, like Dendraster, the sand dollar. Here goes!” He released the sea cucumber back into its dish, and we crowded around to watch for clouds of eggs or sperm. Nothing. The professor frowned. “Let’s immerse it in a dilute solution of potassium chloride overnight.” The next day, still nothing.

I won’t detail the many ways we tortured our sea cucumber that week, but one morning we arrived to see that it had eviscerated—vomited out its guts. Filmy strands floated in the water. We sneaked sideways glances at one another. Who had dealt the death blow? Wourms prodded our sad specimen. Suddenly he beamed. “It’s still alive!”

Evisceration can be a response to stress, he excitedly explained, a smart adaptive behavior. Parastichopus evolved this desperate strategy to escape from predators. Offering a writhing, tasty morsel for the predator is a brilliant distraction; the sea cucumber then covertly floats away like a piece of debris. In a few weeks, its organs regenerate and it carries on, good as new.

I brightened, delighted with this miracle of nature. I empathized with the little guy. In that moment, the sea cucumber transformed from nemesis to lodestar. It spoke to me. There’s no shame in starting over. Things will get better. And never eat the likes of me again.

Amber Wong, ’77, MS ’78, is a writer and a retired environmental engineer who lives in Seattle. Email her at stanford.magazine@stanford.edu.
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