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Newsweek

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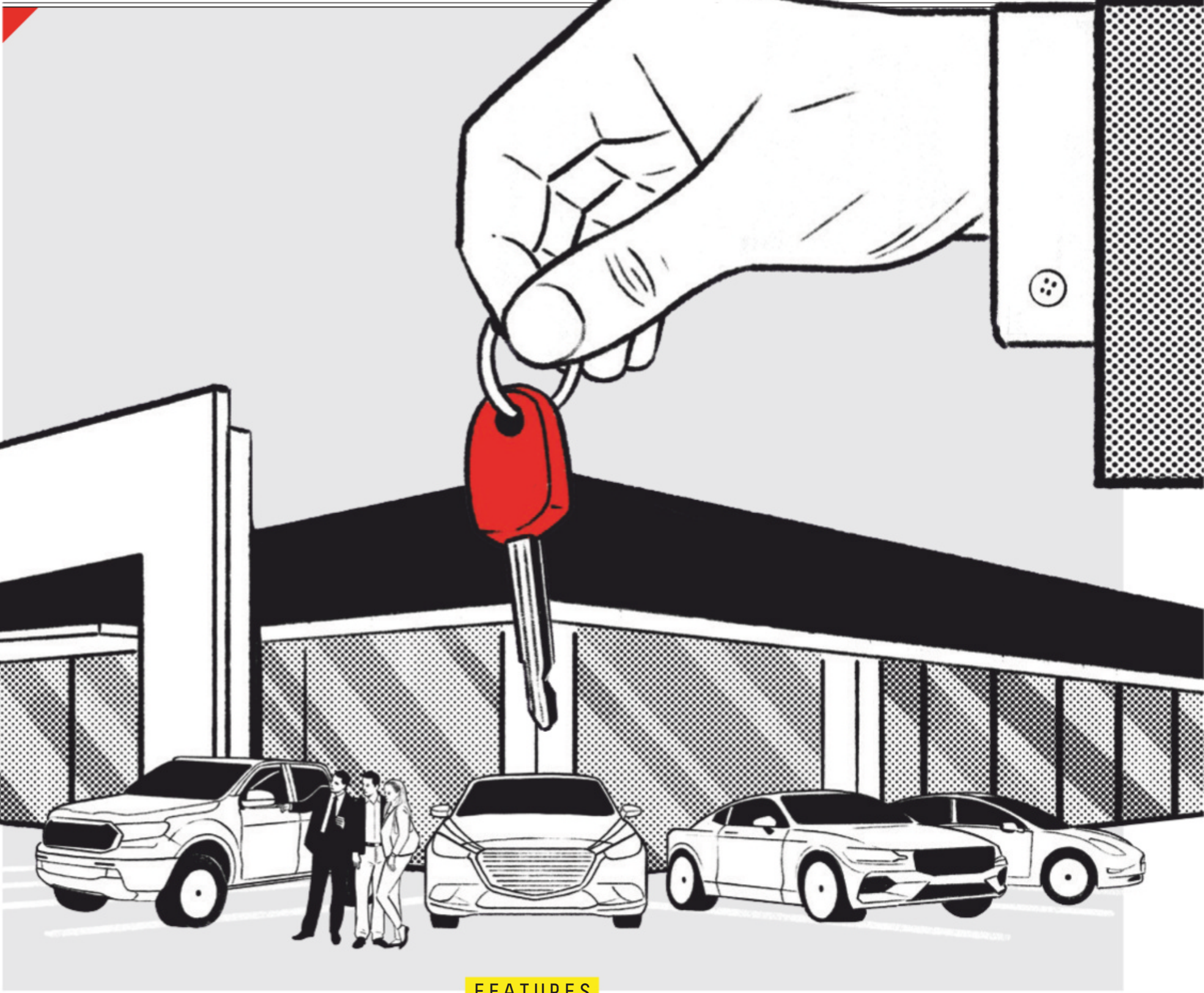
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FEATURES

KEYS TO SUCCESS
Our rankings of car dealers, produced with market research and consumer data firm Statista, starts with a customer survey involving more than 12,000 participants.

COVER CREDIT
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 For more headlines, go to **NEWSWEEK.COM**

20
Top Flight
Before Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, he and Dave Scott had to survive the near disaster of Gemini 8.
BY JAMES DONOVAN

30
America's Best Car Dealers
Starting with the East Coast, *Newsweek* offers a first-ever ranking, based mainly on a customer survey.

DEPARTMENTS

In Focus

- 06 Ahmedabad, India**
A Bridal Wave
- 08 Rome, Italy**
Women on the March
- Baghouz, Syria**
A Last Stand
- Bishoftu, Ethiopia**
Deadly Plane Crash

DEV'S DEPTH

"We weren't going to make a *Die Hard* or a movie where the handsome American hero saves the day," says Dev Patel.



Periscope

- 10 Out for Justice**
Senator Doug Jones's Wake-Up Call on Racism
- 14 Mission Improbable**
Mystery Surrounds an Ex-FBI Agent Missing in Iran

Horizons

- 38 Ashes to Ashes**
California's Next Big Geologic Threat Might Be Volcanic

Culture

- 42 Books**
Lauri Kranz Can Lead You Back to the Garden
- 46 Theater**
The Grassroots Power Behind *Be More Chill*
- 48 Parting Shot**
Dev Patel



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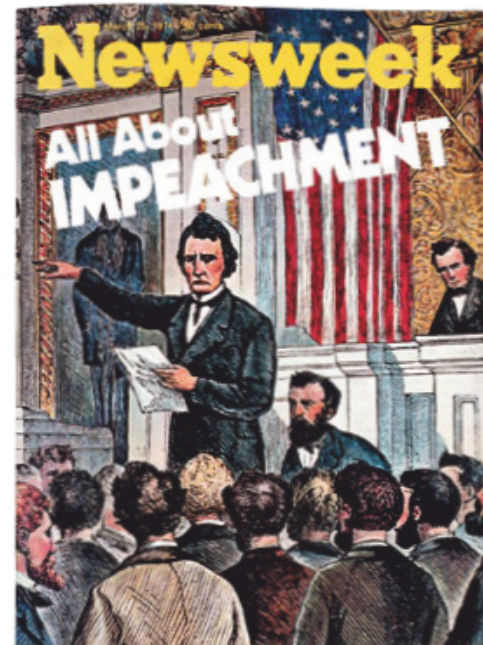


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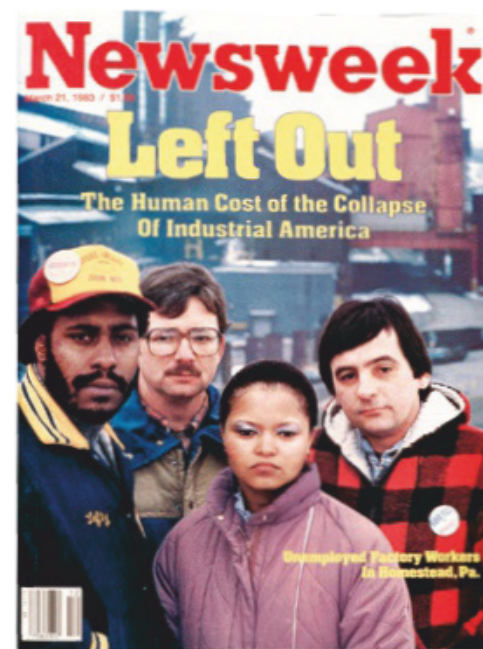
1969

During the first moon landing, the nation was fixated on one man: Neil Armstrong, the pilot who had, just three years before, saved the Gemini 8 mission and the \$24 billion space program from disaster (see Page 20). At a time of immense upheaval, America needed a hero and Armstrong was it. Described as “quiet and diffident,” he was characteristically self-effacing when *Newsweek* asked about his role in the Apollo 11 mission: “If historians are fair,” said Armstrong, who died in 2012 at 82, “they’ll recognize that this landing is only one small part of a large program.”



1974

Impeachment rumors are common now, but in 1974 even discussing a president’s forceful removal was rare. The House of Representatives had voted only once to impeach: Andrew Johnson in 1868 (the Senate failed to convict him). This time, Richard Nixon had provoked “an unsettling voyage into the unknown” but would resign before impeachment could happen.



1983

All across the heartland—from “the gray and gritty towns of Pennsylvania steel country to the red-iron ore pits of Minnesota’s mountain range”—factory workers were being laid off as new technology did their jobs. In once-booming Flint, Michigan, unemployment broke 40 percent. Flint would never recover; it is now the nation’s poorest city of its size.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: NASA; KENNETH M. NEWMAN/AL GIANNI; WALLY MCNAMEE

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AHMEDABAD, INDIA

Bridal Wave

Women partaking in a mass wedding ceremony create a sea of red on March 3. According to *The Times of India*, more than 200 couples tied the knot, with organizers giving newlyweds beds and refrigerators, among other gifts. In 2016, a diamond tycoon funded a similar event, to help fatherless brides from poor families.

→ SAM PANTHAKY





CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: FILIPPO MONTEFORTE/AFP/GETTY; DELIL SOULEIMAN/AFP/GETTY; MICHAEL TEWELDE/AFP/GETTY



BAGHOUZ, SYRIA

Fighting to the Finish

An explosion ripples across the war-torn town of Baghouz on March 3. Battered by Kurdish-led forces and U.S. warplanes, hundreds of outgunned jihadis surrendered a few days later, as fighting continued in the final patch of territory held by the Islamic State militant group (ISIS).

📷 → DELIL SOULEIMAN



ROME

Hear Them Roar

Protesters from the Italian feminist movement Non Una Di Meno (Not One Less) speak in front of the Labor Ministry on March 8. The group, which opposes violence against women, gender discrimination and harassment in the workplace, joined thousands of people taking part in marches and protests around the world as part of International Women's Day.

📷 → FILIPPO MONTEFORTE

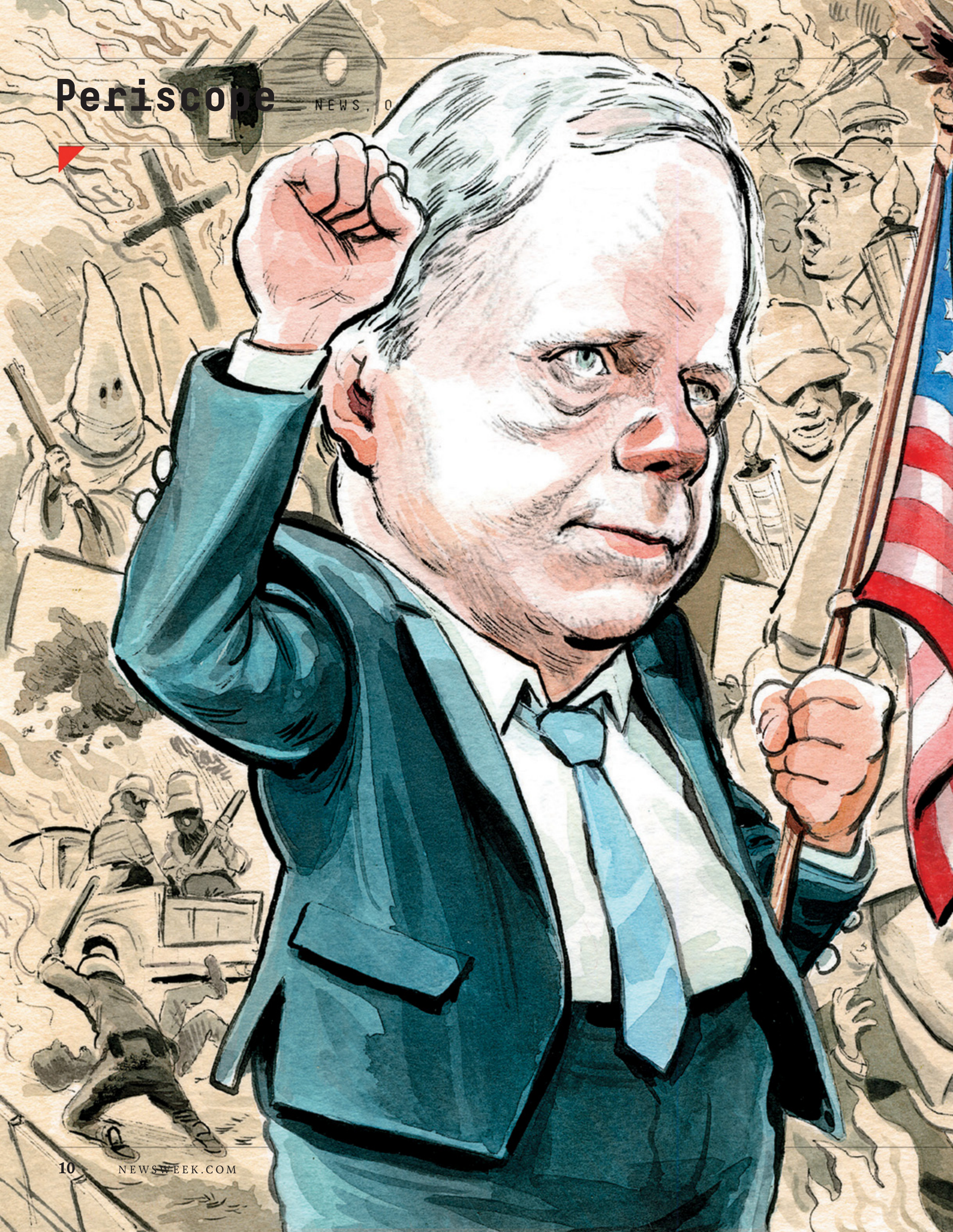


BISHOFTU, ETHIOPIA

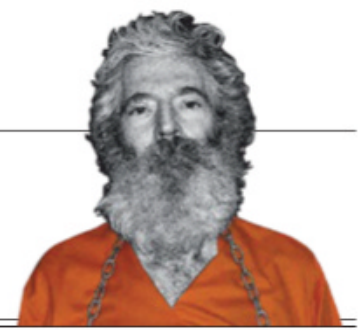
Double Trouble

A man hoists debris at the crash site of Nairobi-bound Ethiopian Airlines flight 302 on March 10. All 157 people, from 35 nations, were killed. At press time, the cause of the crash was not determined, but it was the second time in a year that the newest version of the 737 Max 8—Boeing's most popular jet—crashed minutes after takeoff; last October, 189 people were killed in Indonesia. Several international airlines have grounded their 737 Max 8 fleets.

📷 → MICHAEL TEWELDE



"He was taken by enemies of this country while in its service." »P.14



POLITICS

Out for Justice

Alabama Senator Doug Jones sees unsettling echoes of America's racist past in the Trump era. His new book is a wake-up call with a powerful message: Never forget

➔ DOUG JONES WAS JUST 9 YEARS OLD WHEN Ku Klux Klan members bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The 1963 blast killed four young girls and helped focus the nation's attention on the dangerous struggle for civil rights in the Deep South.

Growing up in Fairfield, just outside the city, Jones has vivid memories of Governor George Wallace standing in the doorway at the University of Alabama to prevent black students from entering, a racist act that reportedly inspired Robert Chambliss, one of the bombers, to commit the crime.

Nearly 40 years later, as a United States attorney for the Northern District of Alabama, Jones prosecuted Thomas Edwin Blanton Jr. and Bobby Frank Cherry for their roles in the bombing. The delayed justice for the families of the victims and the surrounding community was a step forward, he says—but there's still more to be done, and he sees some of Wallace in President Donald Trump.

That's what inspired him to write his new book, *Bending Toward Justice: The Birmingham Church Bombing That Changed the Course of Civil Rights* (All Points Books). Jones, now a U.S. senator after winning a remarkable special election in Alabama in 2017, saw deeply unsettling echoes of the past in Charlottesville, Virginia, where white nationalists carrying torches chanted, "Jews will not replace us." He sees it in discrimination

against the LGBTQ community, and he sees it in the hesitation of politicians to condemn acts of bigotry; Trump famously declared that there were "very fine people on both sides" in Charlottesville. Jones doesn't necessarily think the president is stoking hate on purpose, but he's stoking it nonetheless.

The freshman senator talked to *Newsweek* about the legacy of the Deep South, the power of forgiveness and the future of the Democratic Party.

Why did you feel the need to tell this story now?

I think we're sliding backwards. We're seeing an increase in voter suppression in the name of political power, and it hurts all minorities. We're also seeing a rise in hate crimes and more anti-Semitic crimes than we've had in years. There's more hateful speech out there. We saw what happened in Charlottesville. I think it's important for folks to read this book because we tend to forget the sacrifices and hard things people went through in the 1950s and 1960s. If we don't learn the lessons from history, we're doomed to repeat the bad things. So, I think, now more than ever, people need to see and understand fully the sacrifices made by the civil rights movement so we can prevent similar types of terror in the future.

BY

NICOLE GOODKIND

[@NicoleGoodkind](#)

In your book, you describe visiting Thomas Edwin Blanton Jr., the man you prosecuted for the 1963



Birmingham church bombing, in prison. Why go back?

Getting someone to admit what they did and to accept that responsibility and apologize, that has such a healing value to communities affected by hate crimes like this. He was getting older—he's in his 80s now—and I thought it was a good time to give it a shot. He was coming up for parole, and he had been in prison for a long time and had the opportunity to think about this. It's incredibly important to get people to accept responsibility for what they did, to say that they were wrong and to apologize to the greater community. When it comes to those old crimes like that, people are yearning for a little bit of reconciliation in addition to a measure of justice.

Blanton won't admit he was guilty, but the African-American guard you spoke with afterward still asked you to parole him.

There's a lot of people who might not have forgiven him, but the guard afterward said, "No one should have to die in prison," and it struck me as well. Look back at what happened in Charleston [South Carolina]: The victims of [shooter] Dylann Roof forgave him fairly quickly. I think victims can be forgiving, but for the greater community, it's just so much better when someone can acknowledge their responsibilities and talk about that and ask for forgiveness. It's just much more meaningful.

You talk a lot about the concept of delayed justice. What do you hope to see justice for?

The concept of delayed justice led me to this piece of legislation, the Civil Rights Cold Case Records Collection Act. Senator Ted Cruz co-sponsored it with me. It passed both houses of Congress, and it was signed into law

by the president. It allows these federal records to be released to the public. I'm hoping to get people to recognize and understand the horrors that can happen in the name of hate. We still see that so much today, and it's not just race—it's religion, it's gender. I'm hoping that people will understand that we really have to work for the creed that all men and women are created equal. One of the ways to do that is to remind people of the pieces of our history that we're the least proud of.

You recently tweeted about an interview between Stephen Colbert and the actress Ellen Page, where she expressed concern about the Trump administration inciting hatred and violence against the LGBTQ community. Is that something you're worried about?

Yes. I do think sometimes people get

“We really have to work for the creed that all men and women are created equal.”



so caught up in their own zealotry about an issue that they forget how much words matter. They have a pulpit by which people can take things the wrong way, and there's a lot of people out there looking toward them for a green light to do bad things. But I want to make it clear: I'm not saying that these guys are intentionally trying to incite violence. I do not believe that. But I do believe that some of their words unintentionally can give a green light to people, and that's what we've got to be careful of.

You write that the Republican Party is losing its soul. What do you mean?

Voter fraud is a nonissue in the country. But Republicans are doing things under the guise of preventing voter fraud that are designed to limit access to the ballot box. This is a clear, concerted effort, especially in states in the Deep South, to try to stop minorities from participating in voting. You only have to look at what happened in Georgia [where then-Secretary of State Brian Kemp was in charge of counting ballots in his own gubernatorial race], or look at what the secretary of state of Alabama said, that voting is a "privilege" that has to be earned, as opposed to a right. Look at the tough voter ID laws in Texas, North Carolina and Alabama, as well as the gerrymandered districts in the House of Representatives and in legislatures all over the country. Those are designed to concentrate the minority electorates into specific districts and to dilute their overall voting power.

THE NEW SOUTH Despite a failed bid to become the nation's first black female governor, Georgia's Abrams has become a rising Democratic Party star. Opposite: A charred car outside Birmingham, Alabama's 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963.



But there are signs that the South is turning purple: your successful election, Beto O'Rourke in Texas.

Let's be candid: When you see a Democrat elected to the Senate from Alabama, that gives a lot of people pause. There's a lot more hope and a lot of things we can do. The issue is that we've got to play long ball. We can't just go from one election to the next and win here, lose there and think we're learning lessons. We've got to play long-term strategies here. We're not going to turn the entire South blue or even purple overnight.

Yes, you see the demographic changes, the enthusiasm that Democrats have, the younger voters that are turning out. At the same time, remember that the Democratic Party wrote off the South for a generation, so our bench is not very strong. That said, we've got some great

folks: Stacey Abrams in Georgia and Andrew Gillum in Florida and Beto O'Rourke in Texas. I'm hopeful that as we go forward there's going to be a renewed emphasis on doling out resources in the South.

Do you worry about progressive Democrats like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez?

Well, I don't worry about the direction they're taking the party in, because I think that they're important voices and there is a constituency for those voices. But as a practical matter, you cannot flip the switch in this country and go from one side to the other, so there's got to be a more pragmatic approach, and I'm hoping that those voices also see that change can come. But it will be incremental and may not be all the change that they're advocating for

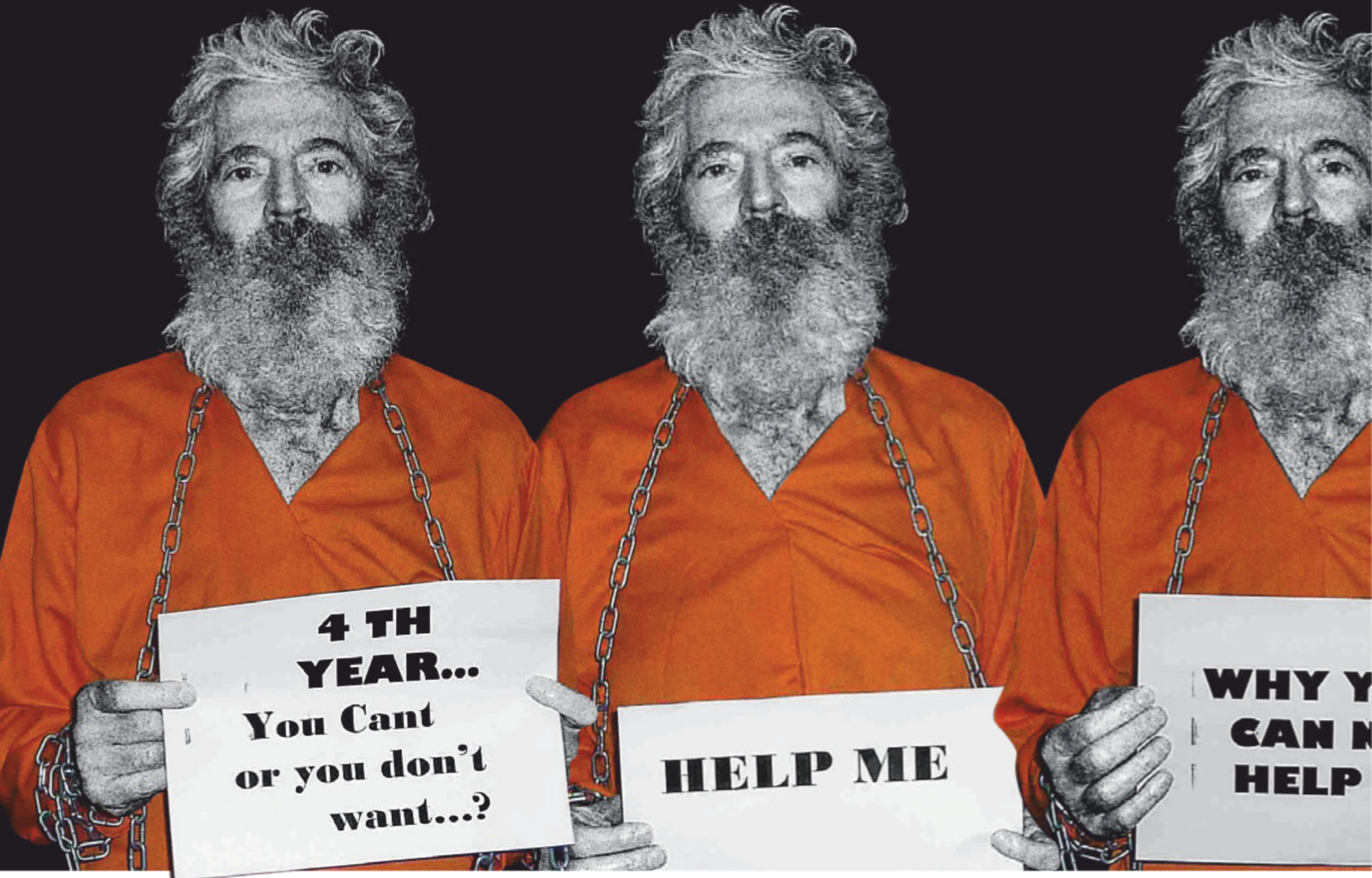
at this point. Governing is not the same as campaigning, and governing requires an element of give-and-take. *Compromise* has become such a bad word in political circles on the right and the left these days. Compromise in government should not be considered a battle lost. It should be considered progress.

But some would say these progressive, or democratic socialist, views are what the Democratic Party wants.

Donald Trump has campaigned on all things to the right, but he's accomplished very little because he approaches it as "my way or the highway." The art of the deal is different than the art of governing. So even when these folks are running on certain things, they may get a nomination or win the presidency, but it's still going to be difficult to try to get those plans enacted because you have to govern the entire country, not just from the far right or the far left.

Joe Biden is a good pal of yours. What are you thinking about a potential 2020 run?

I've talked to Joe several times about running. Of all of the public servants that I've met in my life, Joe would make a great president. He's got all of the qualifications, he's got the temperament, and I think he's got that appeal that can reach across a broad section of the American public. I mean, young, old, black, white, Hispanic, you name it—Joe can reach a lot of different people, and I think that's the kind of leader that we need. Whether he ends up running or whether he ends up getting the nomination, I really don't know, but I still think someone with that broad base appeal is really what the country needs, especially following Donald Trump. ■



SPYTALK

Mission Improbable

Ex-FBI agent Robert Levinson disappeared in Iran 12 years ago. But despite public assurances from three administrations, private rescue groups say the U.S. government is thwarting efforts to bring him home

↑ THE PLANS WERE READY; THE \$250,000 payoff cash was committed. On December 10, 2018, a former Air Force intelligence officer named Bob Kent was planning to board a plane in New York for the Middle East on a most

improbable secret mission: freeing Robert Levinson from Iran.

Levinson, an ex-FBI agent well into a second career as a private detective, had disappeared over a decade earlier from a hotel on Iran's Kish Island. He had been seen

only twice since then, first in a hostage video his family received from unknown intermediaries in 2010, and three years later in photos showing the then-63-year-old increasingly haggard and begging for help.

At first, the U.S. government claimed it had no knowledge of why Levinson, an expert on Russian organized crime, had gone to Iran. The Iranian regime denied it was holding him. But in 2013, the Associated Press and other news outlets revealed that

the ex-agent had gone to Kish on an off-the-books CIA mission to probe high-level Iranian money laundering. To the Levinson

BY

JEFF STEIN
 @SpyTalker



family, that explained why the government had not adequately pursued his release over the years, or in a prisoner swap the Obama administration conducted with Iran: He was an embarrassment to both the FBI and CIA. The possibility also existed that rival factions in Iran had not been able to agree on his release after years of denying it had him.

Desperate, the family put its own plans in motion to win his release. In doing so, they shared the plight of scores of families whose loved ones had been snatched by the Iranians (or Hezbollah, their Lebanese proxy) over the decades, including, at present, four other Americans and a U.S. permanent resident held by Iran.

Levinson's past FBI employment, and then revelations of his murky CIA mission, lent his case more gravity, of course, not to mention mystery. But in 2013, Levinson earned yet another dubious distinction: He became the

“He was taken by enemies of this country. There is no moral justification for their failure to do what is necessary to bring him home.”

longest-held U.S. hostage in American history. March 9 marked the 12th anniversary of his disappearance.

And what a tangled web his case inspired. Kent would be just the latest in a chain of unlikely players in the hunt for the missing man, including a onetime Iranian assassin, a retired detective with CIA connections, an ex-FBI agent, a former federal prosecutor, a Philadelphia truck driver and Russian mobsters.

“For years, there’s been a steady parade of well-meaning, crazy and even corrupt people who have tried to help the Levinson family or tried to use Bob’s case to help themselves,” Barry Meier, author of 2016’s *Missing Man: The American Spy Who Vanished*

in Iran, tells *Newsweek*. “It’s enough to make your head spin.”

Kent’s mission, like all the other private efforts to locate and win Levinson’s release, came to nil. Not for lack of resources—money men “with CIA connections,” as three sources involved in the case described them, had offered to pay Kent’s Iranian helpers \$100,000 for a proof-of-life package, including fingerprints, a blood sample and what they claimed was a recent, 41-second video clip of Levinson, who would be 71 on March 10. “Another \$150,000” would be needed “for the rescue,” Kent says. But just as Kent readied to leave for the airport three months ago, the federal government got in the way, he says, refusing to issue the Americans a waiver from the Trump administration’s sanctions on Iran to permit the payments.

“I received a phone call informing me that the funding was withdrawn because the State Department and/or FBI threatened my sponsors” with prosecution, Kent tells *Newsweek*.

To Levinson family attorney David McGee, a former federal prosecutor who had several meetings with government officials on the case over the years, the last-minute abort of Kent’s mission fit a long pattern of official neglect and sometimes outright interference in

efforts to free the former FBI agent.

“I am continually astounded and dismayed at the failure of the government of the United States, through three administrations, to bring Bob Levinson home,” McGee tells *Newsweek*. “He was taken by enemies of this country while in its service. There is no moral justification for their failure to do what is necessary to bring him home.”

The FBI took sharp umbrage at McGee’s judgment. “While we cannot discuss how we handle particular investigations, over the past 12 years, the FBI has worked diligently to follow every credible lead to determine the whereabouts of Bob Levinson and will continue to do so,” the bureau says in a statement to *Newsweek*. “Bob spent 22 years serving as an FBI special agent, and as we mark the anniversary of his disappearance, our resolve to find him only increases.”

Meanwhile, the bureau has posted a \$5 million reward in exchange for “information that could lead to Bob Levinson’s safe return.”

Kent, who had been collecting threat intelligence for corporate clients in the Middle East for several years since his 2007 Air Force discharge, got involved in the Levinson case last April “in response to an informal FBI inquiry,” he says. He had been tracking the movements of Iranian operatives, particularly Saif al-Adel, an Egyptian-born militant on the FBI’s Most Wanted Terrorists list suspected of working for Iran’s Revolutionary Guard.

Hoping to land a government intelligence contract, he reached out to FBI

“The bureau will need to subpoena me again before they get a damn thing from me.”



MANHUNT The Treasury Department building in Washington, where officials oversee Iranian sanctions. Opposite: Christine Levinson arrives in Tehran with her son Daniel, right, in December 2007.



FROM LEFT: MICHAEL BROCHSTEIN/SOPA IMAGES/LIGHTROCKET/GETTY; BEHROUZ MEHRI/AFP/GETTY

counterterrorism agents. But they were skeptical about his sources, he says; as a kind of test, they “sarcastically” told him to “find Bob Levinson.” Two months later, he came back with assurances he could obtain proof-of-life evidence and perhaps even more.

Kent’s main FBI contact (a counterterrorism agent whose name *Newsweek* is withholding at the bureau’s request) “thanked me for sharing my information, promised to investigate the background information I shared and told me repeatedly that arranging the proof-of-life meeting in Iraq would be ‘incredibly complex,’” Kent says. The agent said he would get back with an update within 10 days. He also “recommended I not contact McGee,” Kent says—the FBI privately dismisses the lawyer as “a meddler”—but Kent rejected the suggestion. Since July, he’s been “working for McGee pro bono,” he says.

Months went by without further

word from the FBI. A group in Northern Virginia “with ties to the CIA” that had volunteered to finance the proof-of-life mission—and that Kent, McGee and others involved declined to identify—was standing by. But as it turns out, moneymen have often been drawn to the Levinson cause, with some of the funds from troubling sources.

One such was Oleg Deripaska, the Russian aluminum tycoon who would be sanctioned by the Treasury Department in 2018 for “a range of malign activity around the globe.” A decade earlier, hoping he might earn points toward solving his visa problems with the U.S., “Deripaska announced he was willing to fund a search [for Levinson] and pay any ransom needed to free Bob,” according to Meier’s authoritative account. “Bureau officials were elated.” In the end, nothing came of it.

The same offer came from an even more odious Russian figure with U.S. legal problems. Notorious mobster

Semion Mogilevich, who occupies a spot on the FBI’s Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list in connection with an alleged massive stock swindle, telegraphed U.S. officials through intermediaries that he would finance a Levinson rescue effort. The involvement of Mogilevich, often dubbed “the most dangerous criminal in the world,” was hugely ironic: As an FBI agent and private investigator, Levinson had been tracking Mogilevich for years. “I don’t know his motivation,” Kent says of Mogilevich, but “he backed out.”

“We had several other people offer to put up the money,” Kent adds, provided they could persuade the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), which administers and enforces economic and financial sanctions, to grant them a waiver.

They couldn’t. But soon after Kent’s aborted December trip, McGee met with FBI agents and sensed a more cooperative new mood at the bureau. He came away thinking the FBI was going to help fund the \$100,000 proof-of-life payment—after it vetted the material as genuine—but those prospects soon dissolved. Then, in an early February meeting Kent and McGee had with several officials at the State Department, Robert O’Brien, the special presidential envoy for hostage affairs, told them that if OFAC cleared the deal and the Defense Department authorized it, the Joint Special Operations Command might be able to assist with the Levinson mission.

McGee soon got a personal meeting scheduled with a sanctions official at Treasury to pursue the waiver issue. At the last minute, however, the department canceled the February 8 appointment. “We were back to square one,” McGee says. (A Treasury spokesman asked that *Newsweek* not identify the official by name and refused to discuss the case further.)



Kent's appeals to various congressional offices were also fruitless.

Meanwhile, another private group was angling to locate Levinson, this one sparked by a most unlikely character. Walton Martin, a Philadelphia-area truck driver and former Marine, tells *Newsweek* he became obsessed with Iran during the 1979-81 hostage crisis, in which revolutionary-minded students in Tehran stormed the U.S. Embassy and captured 52 U.S. diplomats and citizens. Eventually, he launched a one-man project to aid Iranian defectors and refugees in Turkey, working closely with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees' office in the capital city of Ankara.

Over time, he developed a constant stream of intelligence from inside Iran, some of it related to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's operations and, eventually, on Levinson's purported whereabouts. He began sharing it with the FBI. They developed a close relationship, judging by several emails

Martin shared with *Newsweek*.

His FBI handlers, whose names *Newsweek* is withholding out of concern for their personal safety, were excited. "There is a definite 'buzz' in the govt about our missing friend," one of the agents told him in a July 27, 2017, email, "and part of it is you working nonstop on it—I am relaying everything you are telling me to the people that need it."

Martin eventually found his way to yet others working privately on Levinson. One was Joseph O'Brien, a former FBI agent who had led

FRIEND OR FOE? From top: Deripaska, who offered to fund a search amid visa problems with the U.S.; Salahuddin, whom Levinson flew to Kish Island to meet in March 2007. Opposite: Pompeo and Bolton.

the bureau's 1980s investigation of Paul Castellano, head of the Gambino crime family. He had considered Levinson a mentor when they worked together in New York. In 2016, O'Brien and another ex-FBI colleague offered the bureau help on Levinson with their own Iranian-exile contacts but were rebuffed. "They told us to get lost, basically," O'Brien told *Newsweek* last year.

Eventually, Martin and O'Brien teamed up and, spending thousands of dollars out of their own pockets, started getting their own reports from inside Iran on Levinson's purported whereabouts, plus offers to provide proof of life. Now, the government demanded to know what they had and how they got it. Martin, wary of the FBI's handling of the case, refused. On February 22, 2018, he was subpoenaed by Tejpal Chawla, an assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, demanding he appear before a grand jury with "all letters, correspondence and reports related to" Levinson's "whereabouts, condition and location." In a tense meeting with Justice Department officials, Martin handed over his information, and the subpoena was withdrawn. O'Brien says he later delivered packages of their Iranian reports to the offices of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and White House national security adviser John Bolton. They got no response, but the FBI later told Martin it was "skeptical" about the authenticity of his Iranian sources and reports. (A Farsi speaker who examined a handful of the reports for *Newsweek* identified some of them as "obvious forgeries.")

Martin is bitter about his treatment by the FBI. “I don’t work on a one-way street and to be frank, the Bureau will need to subpoena me again before they get a damn thing from me,” he told McGee in an email he shared with *Newsweek*. “I’m working to get Bob home and I will NOT willingly submit to threats, intimidation or interference from anyone, including USG and FBI. We are much closer to bringing Bob home than the Bureau is.”

O’Brien, partnered with Martin, persisted with developing sources in Iran. They were also joined by a retired Washington, D.C., detective who had worked on counterterrorism cases with the CIA and FBI. The detective, who asked not to be named because of his continuing government work, tells *Newsweek* that in the spring of 2018 he met with Abolfazl Bahram Nahidian, a radical Virginia

imam who is considered close to Iran and whose contacts might offer a back channel on Levinson.

One of the imam’s contacts, according to the detective, was David Belfield, an African-American convert to Islam who had taken the name Dawud Salahuddin and in 1980 carried out an assassination of an anti-regime activist in Potomac, Maryland. Decades later, in Iran, he was offering himself up to journalists and others as a source of information


and analysis on the regime.

It was Salahuddin whom Levinson flew to Kish Island to meet in March 2007, to discuss high-level Iranian money laundering abroad. And it was Salahuddin whom Levinson’s wife, Christine, reached out to after he disappeared. But the imam claimed to have no specific knowledge of the Levinson affair and referred the detective to the Pakistan Embassy, which handles Iran’s affairs in Washington, D.C.

Salahuddin had insisted to Levinson’s wife that he had nothing to do with her husband’s disappearance; Iranian agents had hustled him from the hotel where they met. He himself had suffered from their connection, Salahuddin said, with authorities refusing to give him a new passport or internal travel documents.

A former senior intelligence official responsible for Iran tells *Newsweek* the government believes, privately, that Levinson is dead. Officially, it maintains he’s alive, with the FBI calling the 12th anniversary of his disappearance “an opportunity for the leadership of the government of Iran to demonstrate its commitment to basic freedoms and civil rights and return Mr. Levinson home to his family.”

But Christine Levinson says the government has let her down. “Time and time again, Bob has been left behind, deprioritized or seemingly forgotten,” she told the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa and International Terrorism on March 7.

“My husband served this country tirelessly for decades,” she said. “He deserves better from all of us and from our government. He deserves our endless pursuit to bring him home, to fight day and night and leave no stone unturned.” 

**“Time and time again,
Bob has been left
behind, deprioritized or
seemingly forgotten.”**





NEIL ARMSTRONG made his historic leap for mankind on July 20, 1969. But three years earlier, he'd performed another, salvaging a mission that could have derailed the space program. The harrowing details of the Gemini 8 spaceflight—and the steely cool that would eventually put Armstrong on the moon



NASA (2)

ROCKET MEN

Armstrong, also opposite, and Scott board Gemini 8 on March 16, 1966. Though they expected challenges, they didn't know they would be pushed to the limits of their abilities just to survive.

T O P F L I G H T

by

**JAMES
DONOVAN**

IN JULY, THE WORLD WILL MARK 50 YEARS SINCE NEIL ARMSTRONG and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the moon. But this month marks the anniversary of an almost-forgotten mission that, but for the skill of the astronauts on board, could have become a spectacular disaster for NASA. Author James Donovan tells the story in this excerpt adapted from his new book, *Shoot for the Moon: The Space Race and the Extraordinary Voyage of Apollo 11*.

BY MARCH 1966, THE GEMINI PROGRAM, DESIGNED TO PERFECT techniques that would be required for the Apollo lunar landing, was in full swing. The astronauts loved the two-man spacecraft—essentially a larger version of the Mercury capsule, it granted its pilot almost complete control, and the ability to change orbits. Gemini 8 was an especially ambitious three-day mission, since it would involve the first docking of two spacecraft and an extended spacewalk. It was the first spaceflight for both members of the crew: Neil Armstrong and David Scott.

Scott, 33, had become an astronaut in 1963. He had it all: good looks, confidence, a master’s in aeronautical engineering. He was a fighter pilot’s son, a fighter pilot and test pilot himself, and married to the daughter of a retired Air Force general—clearly one of NASA’s fair-haired boys, evidenced by the fact that he was the first in his astronaut class chosen to fly in space.

Armstrong, 35, would be the mission’s command pilot. The former naval aviator and civilian test pilot had been selected as an astronaut in 1962 after being one of the few men selected to fly the rocket-powered X-15, a sleek,

black experimental plane designed to explore the limits of an aircraft, and a pilot, at hypersonic speeds and extreme altitudes. He made seven X-15 flights and hoped to fly the Air Force’s X-20 Dyna-Soar, an even more ambitious space plane, if it ever became operational. The X-20 program was an aerospace-engineering super-challenge—just the kind of project Armstrong loved and had spent most of his life working toward.

Born in a small-town Ohio farmhouse, Armstrong had earned his student pilot’s license on his 16th birthday and soloed a few weeks later, all before he learned to drive a car. In 1947, he began studying aeronautical engineering at Purdue on a four-year Navy scholarship, and in 1949 he reported for three years of military duty, earning his wings as a naval aviator. The Korean War broke out in 1950; a year later, his unit was sent to the center of action. Armstrong flew 78 missions in a Grumman F9F Panther, once having to bail out after his jet sustained serious damage on a bombing run.

After the war, he finished his degree in 1955 and began work as a research test pilot. He’d been initially unimpressed with NASA’s Mercury program, but after John Glenn’s orbital flight in 1962, he changed his mind and applied to be an astronaut. Armstrong was quieter and humbler than most high-octane test pilots, but he already had a reputation for quick thinking and coolness under pressure. He would need both for his first flight into space.

A lot was at stake. Although the first few Gemini missions had been successes, and the United States was seen as ahead in the space race, CIA spy plane photographs showed that the Soviets were building a monster rocket—one that could only be aiming at the moon. The Americans had much to accomplish before they could attempt lunar landing: rendezvous, docking, spacewalking. And the recent deaths of three astronauts while piloting their jet planes had dredged up familiar arguments about the relative expense and danger of piloted space flight versus robotic missions. The program sorely needed a “nominal” flight that would keep it on schedule and on target.

Instead, they nearly had a disaster. The astronauts would be pushed to their limits just to get back to Earth alive. And in the process, Armstrong would cement his reputation as the right man to take NASA’s biggest step.

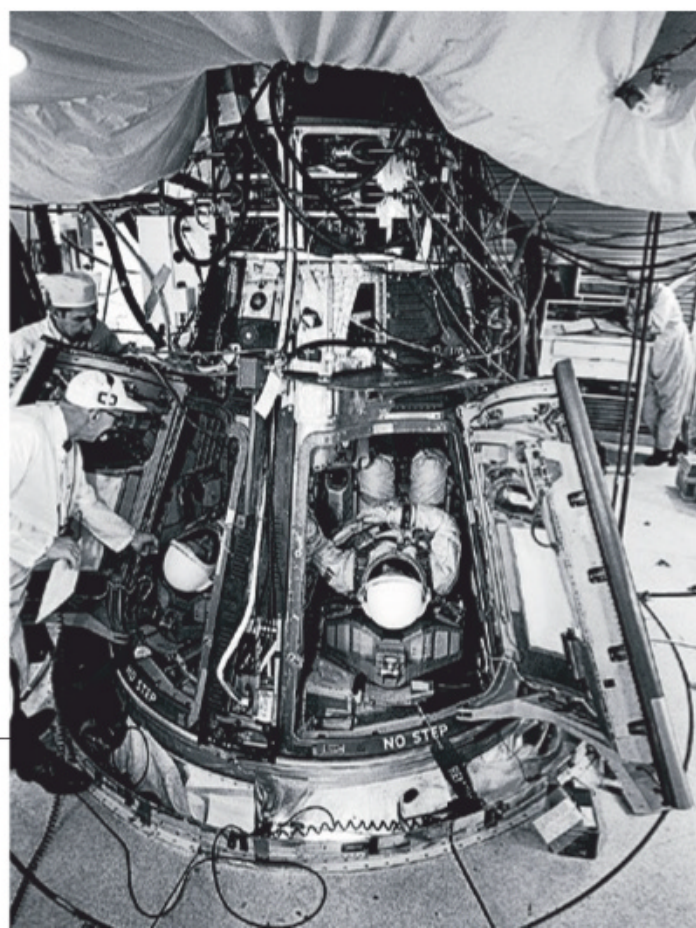
The mission started off well. Despite a series of equipment problems in the two weeks before the launch, at 10:41 a.m. on March 16, 1966, Gemini 8 lifted off smoothly. After reaching orbit, Armstrong initiated the first of nine thruster maneuvers—or burns—to catch the target, a modified Agena upper-stage rocket launched 95 minutes earlier and now in a higher orbit. They were aided by Gemini’s

Armstrong
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more modest than most
high-octane test pilots,
but he was developing a
reputation for **QUICK**
THINKING under pressure.





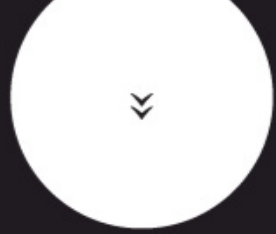
SPACE ODYSSEY
Despite their rigorous preparation, the astronauts would be confronted with an emergency that nobody had foreseen. Clockwise from top: Scott practiced for his walk in a zero-G jet flight; Scott and Armstrong training in a simulator; the two men strapped into their Gemini 8 capsule, ready for liftoff; Scott at the Manned Spacecraft Center. Opposite: As a test pilot, Armstrong had flown the hypersonic X-15.





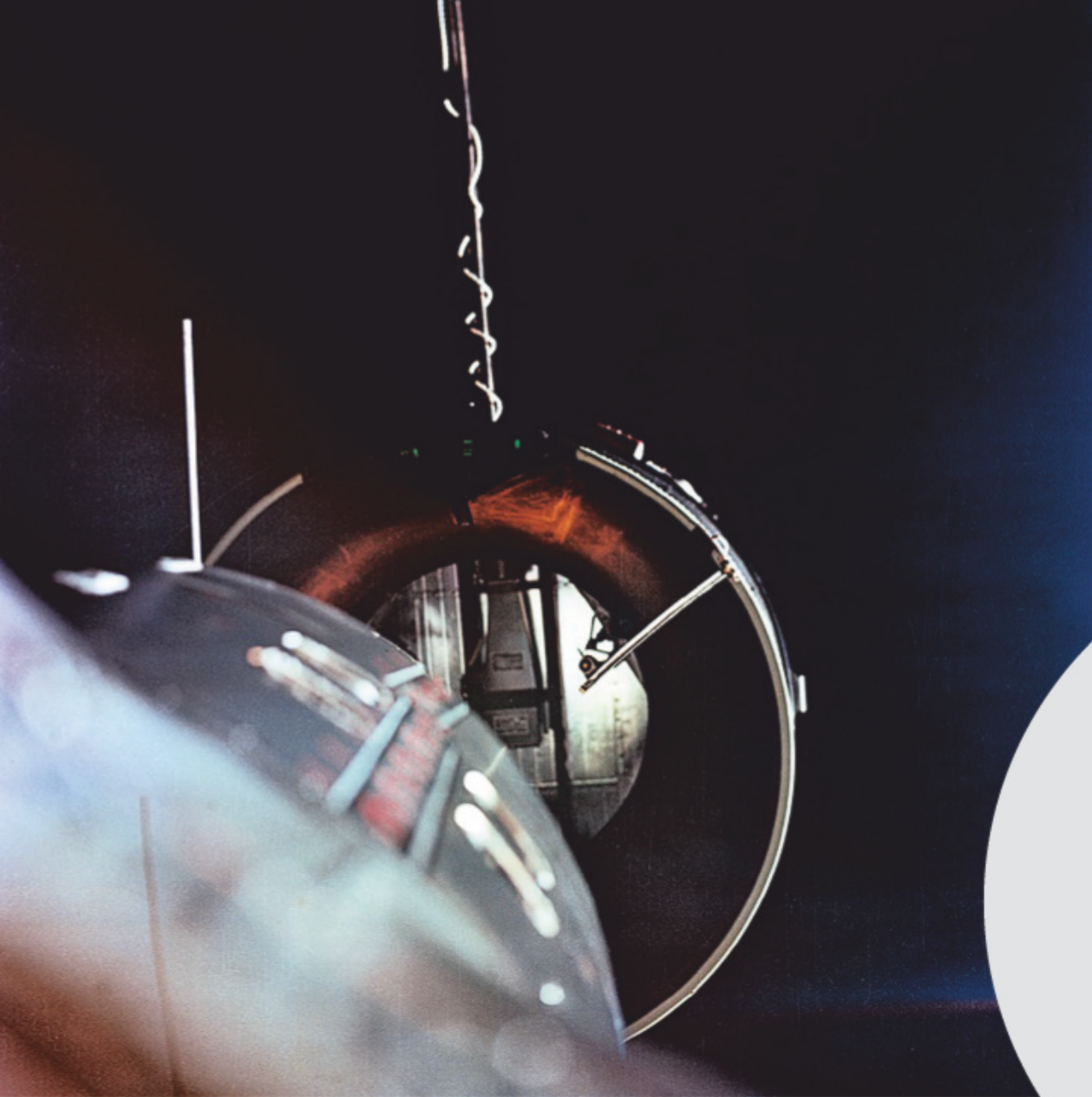
LAUNCH POINT

An Atlas rocket carrying the target vehicle Agena lifts off from Cape Kennedy shortly before Armstrong and Scott were launched. Opposite: Armstrong delicately guides Gemini close to Agena in orbit.



Flight controllers—and virtually everyone else in NASA—
were wary of the Agena even before its **EXPLOSION**
five months earlier, during the Gemini 6 mission.





They were
SPINNING IN SPACE
while connected to
a rocket full of fuel,
and they could
not call anyone for
guidance.

guidance computer, primitive but effective in determining the locations of the two spacecraft and calculating the best transfer arc. Less than six hours after liftoff, Armstrong braked his ship about 150 feet from the silver-and-white, 26-foot-long Agena, shining in the bright sunlight. Rendezvous was accomplished.

After a half-hour of inspecting the Agena for problems, Armstrong slowly approached to within 3 feet using the Gemini's small thruster jets. He received permission to dock, a job that required exquisite timing and a feather-light touch. A few moments later, like a giant shuttlecock nuzzling a huge thermos, his craft's nose eased into a docking collar in the front of the Agena and latched on. "Flight, we are docked. It's...really a smoothie," said Armstrong. In Mission Control, there were cheers, backslapping and handshakes; Armstrong and Scott had just achieved the first docking in space.

Flight controllers—and virtually everyone else in NASA—were wary of the Agena. It was a glitch-prone craft; one had exploded shortly after launch five months earlier, during the Gemini 6 mission. They suspected the rocket thrusters might be faulty and had instructed Jim Lovell, acting as CapCom (capsule communicator) at a tracking station on Madagascar, to warn the Gemini 8 crew. Just before Armstrong and Scott passed out of communication range, Lovell told them, "If you run into trouble and the attitude-control system in the Agena goes wild, just...turn it off and take control with the spacecraft."

Armstrong and Scott would soon be out of range of the tracking station and incommunicado. They turned up the cock-

pit lights and pulled out their flight books, then began doing docking chores and checking command links between the two spacecraft. In a little while, they could begin to relax.

Gemini 8 had moved into night, and since the lights were on in the cockpit, the crew couldn't see much through their two small windows. After a couple of hours of taking care of Agena operations and general housekeeping, they'd try to sleep. Scott, especially, needed a good rest. He was scheduled to do a two-hour-plus spacewalk the next day.

Twenty-seven minutes after uniting with the Agena, Scott looked up at the control panel and noticed that they were in a slow 30-degree left roll. He told Armstrong, who used thrusters to correct it. After a minute or so, the roll started again. Remembering what Lovell had advised, Armstrong told Scott, who had all the Agena controls on his side, to turn off its attitude-control system. Scott did. The roll stabilized, but a few minutes later it began again, this time at a faster rate—then even faster. Armstrong ordered Scott to switch the Agena on and then off again in case it was an electrical problem. Meanwhile, he fought the motion with his attitude hand controller on the console between them, with little success.

They were spinning in space while connected to a rocket full of fuel, and they could not call anyone for guidance. This was an emergency situation that they had not practiced for and that no one had imagined. Something had to be done and quickly, before the gyrations broke them apart, caused the Agena to rupture or explode, or ripped the Gemini from the adapter section that car-

'A SMOOTHIE,' THEN CRISIS

From far left: The first docking is completed in space with the Agena; Scott and Armstrong, shown in simulation; flight directors Hodge, left, and Eugene Kranz; the Gemini splashes down in the Pacific after near-disaster.



ried their power and life-sustaining essentials. Oxygen loss and quick death from asphyxiation would almost certainly follow. To make matters worse, Scott noticed that the fuel in one of their control systems was down to 13 percent.

Neither of them heard the loud cracking sound that they would have expected one of their own thrusters to make when firing. It had to be the Agena. "We'd better get off," Scott said to Armstrong.

"OK, let me see if we can get the rates of rotation down so we don't re-contact. You ready?"

"Stand by."

Once they undocked, the Agena would be dead to ground control. Scott set the rocket's recording devices so a ground tracking station could pick up its data as it passed overhead and learn why it had malfunctioned.

"OK, any time," he said. "We're ready."

"Go," said Armstrong, and as Scott hit the undocking switch, he quickly pulled them away from the Agena before the two spacecraft whirled into each other.

The Gemini rolled even more rapidly and began to tumble end over end. Both men had logged plenty of time on the human centrifuge, a mechanical study in sadism, and that experience proved invaluable to them now. Brilliant sunlight glinted off the spaceship's black nose, then darkness, then sunlight. Soon, it was spinning at a rate estimated to be close to two full revolutions per second. As Armstrong would later put it, with characteristic understatement, "Physiological limits were being approached."

Test pilots had a phrase for flights that went bad: gone to worms. This mission had swiftly gone to worms. "Buddy, we've got troubles," Scott said.

"I gotta cage my eyeballs," Armstrong said dryly. The two went to work trying to stabilize their craft.

About then, they came in range of another tracking station. Coastal Sentry Quebec, a ship in the western Pacific, south of Japan, with limited ability to communicate with Mission Control. The station crew could tell something was amiss. Their telemetry told them the Gemini had undocked, but they had no idea why. They would have only a few minutes to communicate before the spacecraft sped over them and out of range again.

"Gemini 8, CSQ CapCom. How do you read?"

"We've got serious problems here," Scott said. "We're tumbling end over end up here. We're disengaged from the Agena."

The CSQ CapCom could hear Scott, though the violent spinning distorted his speech, and scrambling antenna patterns fragmented the transmission. Voices faded in and out. The station could do nothing but acknowledge and ask what the problem was.

"We're rolling up, and we can't turn anything off," Armstrong said. "Continuously increasing in a left roll."

They were still spinning in roll, pitch and yaw at more than a revolution per second. Everything that had been loose in the cabin—charts, checklists, flight plan—was bouncing against the walls. Both men were being thrown around, and they were becoming dizzy. They had trouble seeing the overhead dials and switch-

es. Nausea was soon to come, from the contents of their stomachs sloshing around, as was vestibular nystagmus, a sickening, dizzying sensation that would cause an uncontrollable movement of the eyeballs and blurred vision. Both men were seconds away from passing out, and if they did, the chances of recovery would be remote. They could hear Flight Control cutting in from Houston and asking CSQ what was going on, then CSQ trying to explain, and suddenly they passed out of range again for another 15 minutes.

Armstrong and Scott knew there was only one option: the re-entry control system and its two separate rings of thrusters in the nose of the spacecraft. “All we have left is the re-entry system,” Armstrong said, his voice strained.

After their 26-minute ordeal, Armstrong said, **“SORRY, PARTNER.”** The spacewalk Scott had trained long and hard for wouldn’t happen.

“Do it,” said Scott.

There were half a dozen control panels around the interior of the spacecraft. The re-entry control switch was in an awkward spot, right above Armstrong’s head. After countless hours in the simulator, each man knew the position of every control by feel; as fighter pilots, they’d always gone through blindfolded cockpit checks, and they carried that into their Gemini training. There were a dozen switches on the plate with the re-entry control switch. Somehow, Armstrong reached up and found the right one. He flicked it on, then threw the switches to activate the engines that would control the Gemini’s re-entry into Earth’s atmosphere.

Armstrong got no response. He asked Scott to give it a try—Scott got no response either. Without a hand controller, they wouldn’t make it home. Still whirling and tumbling—the craft’s thrusters were turned off, but there was no air to slow the capsule’s movements—they started throwing switches again in case one was in the wrong position.

Just then, the hand controllers began working. With a delicate pulsing of the thrusters, Armstrong managed to slow down the violent spinning and then, finally, stop it. He turned off the re-entry control system to save fuel—they’d need it, and they had used about 75 percent of it just to stop the spinning. He reactivated his maneuvering thrusters one by one until he found the culprit: number eight, a yaw thruster, was stuck in the on position, probably due to an electrical short. They hadn’t heard the thruster popping because it had been on the entire time. The Gemini, not the Agena, had been at fault.

A Gemini mission rule dictated that using the re-entry system meant that the mission must be aborted; if these thrusters developed a leak, the crew would not be able to get the craft into position for the critical retrofire that would stabilize it and return them to Earth at the proper angle. Attitude control was essential to re-enter the atmosphere safely. Flight director John Hodge, a silver-haired Englishman known for his imperturbability, knew he had to call an end to the mission. But where? And when? As soon as it was possible, of course, but could they find a prime or secondary recovery site?

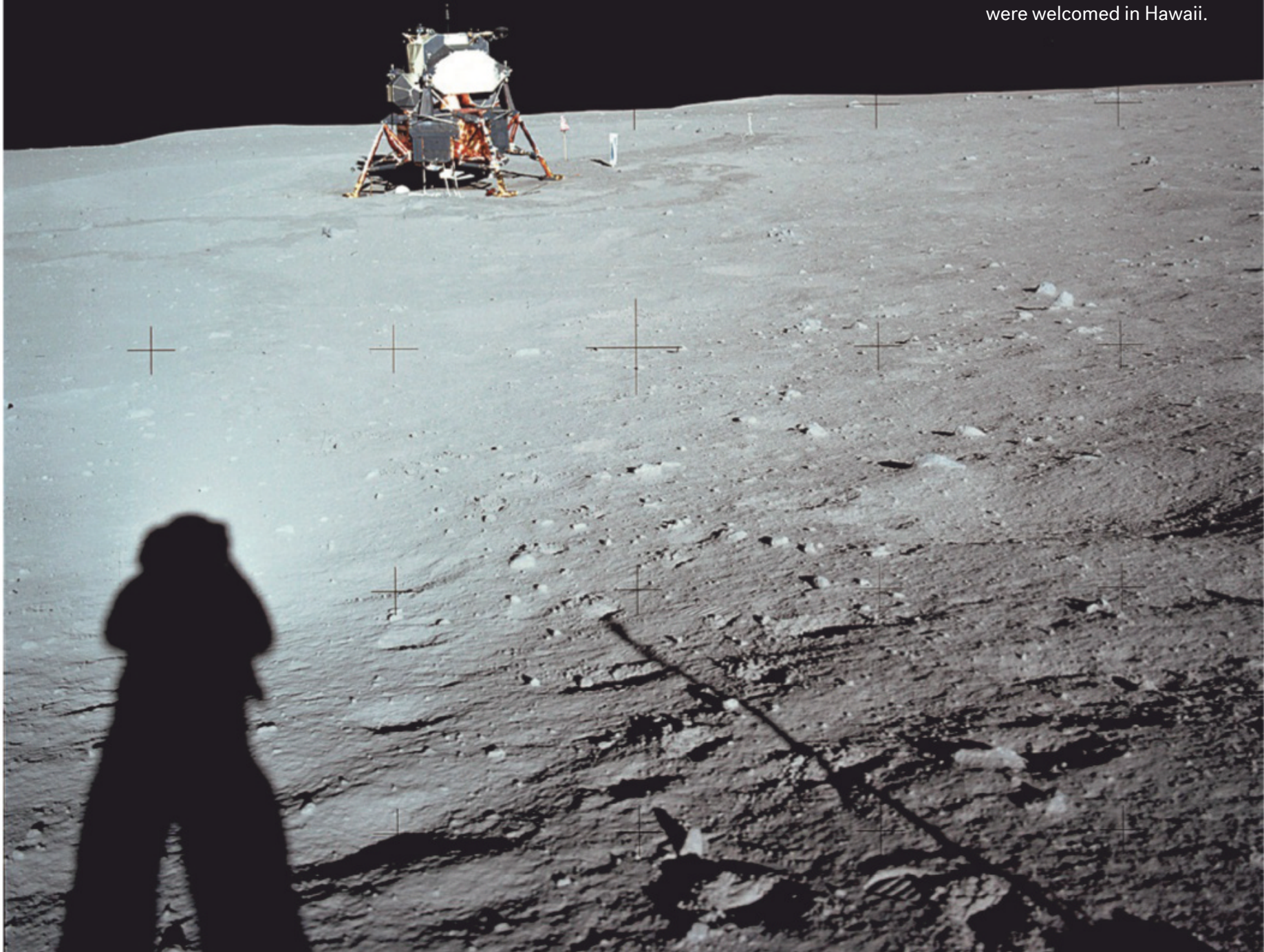
After their 26-minute ordeal, Armstrong said, “Sorry, partner.” He had planned to let Scott take the Gemini’s controls later, and the spacewalk Scott had trained long and hard for wouldn’t happen. But Scott knew they had no choice.

Twenty minutes later, after running through the options with his flight controllers, Hodge made his decision: re-entry in the seventh orbit, less than three hours away. If retrofire occurred as planned, the recovery point would be about 620 miles southeast of Japan. A



MAN ON THE MOON

On July 20, 1969, Armstrong took this famous photo. Opposite: Three years earlier, the Gemini 8 was hoisted aboard the USS *Leonard F. Mason*, and the astronauts were welcomed in Hawaii.



Navy destroyer began moving at flank speed toward the position.

As Gemini 8 passed over Africa, Armstrong was concerned that they'd land in a remote area—and possibly on hard ground. The spacecraft was designed to handle that, but the impact would be excessive, even with their shock-absorbing contour couches, and since they had no control over the landing, it would be impossible to avoid ground obstacles or a steep hill or even a mountain. Scott worried when he saw the Himalayas getting larger below them as they re-entered the atmosphere. But as the craft plummeted to Earth, then activated its parachutes, the two astronauts were relieved to see the blue of water below them.

Twenty minutes after they made a hard splashdown in rough seas, three frogmen dropped from an Air Force transport plane and secured the spacecraft. Three hours later, the destroyer winched Gemini 8 on deck. The crew was

healthy but worn out after their 10-hour-41-minute flight.

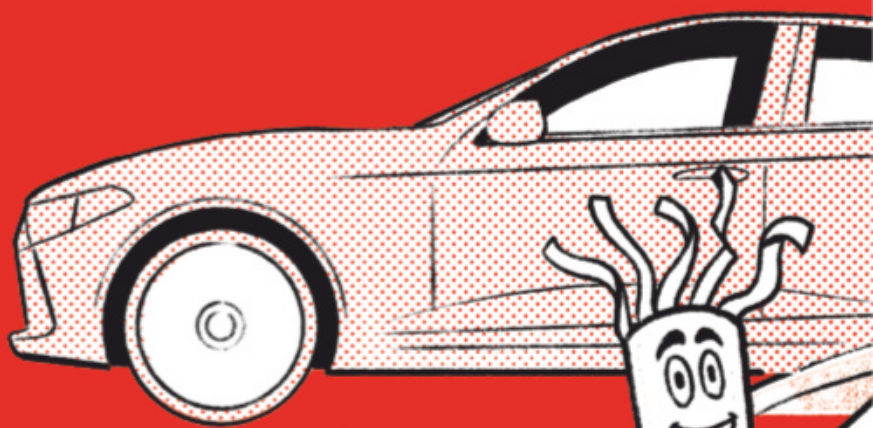
There was whispering among some of the newer astronauts that the two had panicked, but no spaceflight veteran thought that. They had followed the book and done what they had to do to survive—and done it superbly. Far from blaming the two, NASA officials commended the crew for their calm performance under extreme conditions. They were especially impressed with the commander. The flight only confirmed what they knew: Armstrong was one cool customer in a crisis. **N**



→ Excerpted from the book *SHOOT FOR THE MOON* by James Donovan. Copyright © 2019 by James Donovan. Reprinted with permission of Little, Brown and Company. All rights reserved.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **Alex Fine**

BEST CAR





DEALERS

★ OF THE EAST COAST ★

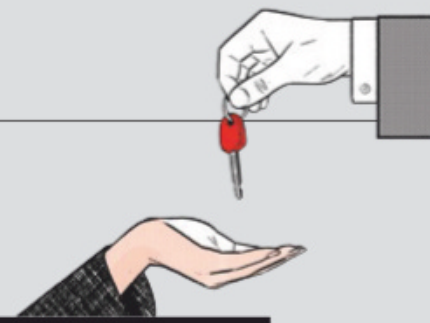
THERE ARE AT LEAST 1.2 BILLION DRIVERS IN THE WORLD, ABOUT 220 million of them in the United States alone. Over the next two decades, those numbers will collapse as the world enters the age of the autonomous vehicle. *Newsweek* is committed to reporting on the disappearance of drivers and the impact it will have on jobs, infrastructure, finance, the economy, the environment and society. (A world in which cars can drive themselves is coming faster than you realize.) Nowhere will the change be felt more acutely than at America's car dealerships—mostly third- or fourth-generation, family-owned businesses that helped create the world's first driving society. That's why *Newsweek* has partnered with Statista Inc., the global market research and consumer data firm, to develop the first-ever ranking of the best car dealers in the United States, starting with the East Coast.

Methodology

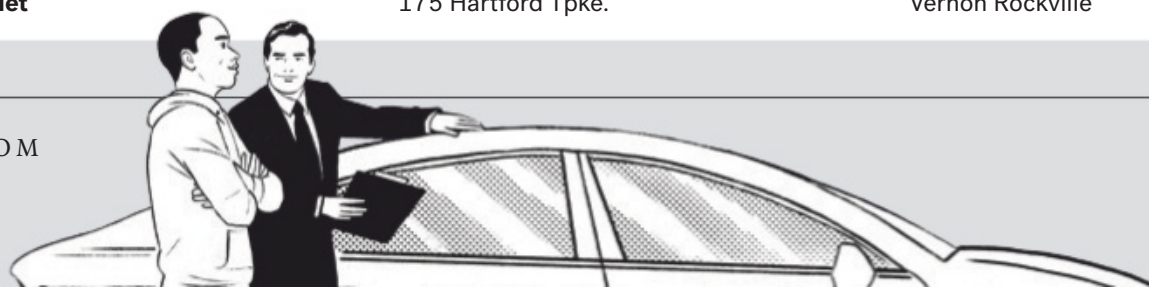
The ranking was mainly based on a comprehensive customer survey with more than 12,000 participants, recruited through an online access panel. In addition, customers were able to take part in the survey via Newsweek.com. Car dealership contacts were invited to make recommendations for other car dealerships. Survey participants were those who have bought a car within the last three years (or are actively looking for a new car right now). They were asked to name car dealerships they have had experience with and were able to rate them in different categories, including staff, service and prices.

→ THE FULL LIST OF 1,000 TOP DEALERSHIPS IS AVAILABLE AT NEWSWEEK.COM/BEST-CAR-DEALERS-USA-2019

THE TOP 100 EAST COAST DEALERS

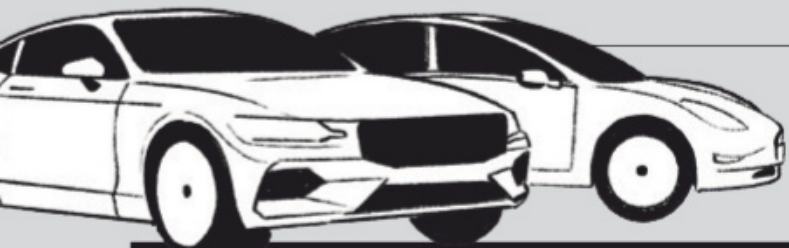


CUSTOMER SCORE	DEALERSHIP	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
9.8	Rick Case Kia	3190 Satellite Blvd.	Duluth	GA	30096
9.8	West Herr Chevrolet of Williamsville	8040 Transit Rd.	Williamsville	NY	14221
9.8	BMW of Alexandria	499 South Pickett St.	Alexandria	VA	22304
9.7	Walker Ford	17556 U.S. Hwy. 19 North	Clearwater	FL	33764
9.7	Johnson Lexus of Durham	1013 Southpoint Autopark Blvd.	Durham	NC	27713
9.7	Central Ave Nissan	1919 Central Park Ave.	Yonkers	NY	10710
9.7	Dick Myers Chrysler Dodge Jeep	1711 South Main St.	Harrisonburg	VA	22801
9.6	Sandy Sansing Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram	6348 Hwy. 90	Milton	FL	32570
9.6	Audi Clearwater	18940 U.S. Hwy. 19	Clearwater	FL	33764
9.6	Fields BMW Lakeland	4285 Lakeland Park Dr.	Lakeland	FL	33809
9.6	Audi Fort Myers	10050 Daniels Interstate Ct.	Fort Myers	FL	33913
9.6	Maxie Price Chevrolet	3600 Hwy. 78	Loganville	GA	30052
9.6	Boch Nissan South	685 South Washington St.	North Attleborough	MA	02760
9.6	Bob Mayberry Hyundai	3220 West Hwy. 74	Monroe	NC	28110
9.6	Lamacchia Honda	932 West Genesee St.	Syracuse	NY	13204
9.6	Hendrick Lexus Charleston	2424 Savannah Hwy.	Charleston	SC	29414
9.6	Pomoco Nissan of Hampton	1134 West Mercury Blvd.	Hampton	VA	23666
9.5	AutoNation Chevrolet Greenacres	5757 Lake Worth Rd.	Greenacres	FL	33463
9.5	Jenkins Nissan of Leesburg	10234 U.S. Hwy. 441	Leesburg	FL	34788
9.5	Berlin City Lexus of Portland	191 Riverside St.	Portland	ME	04103
9.5	Davis Chevrolet Buick GMC	96 Radio Dr.	Lexington	NC	27292
9.5	Hendrick Honda Hickory	945 U.S. Hwy. 70 Southeast	Hickory	NC	28602
9.5	Della Mazda	92 Quaker Rd.	Queensbury	NY	12804
9.5	Serafini Nissan Volvo	3101 Vestal Pkwy. East	Vestal	NY	13850
9.4	Carter Chevrolet	175 Hartford Tpke.	Vernon Rockville	CT	06066



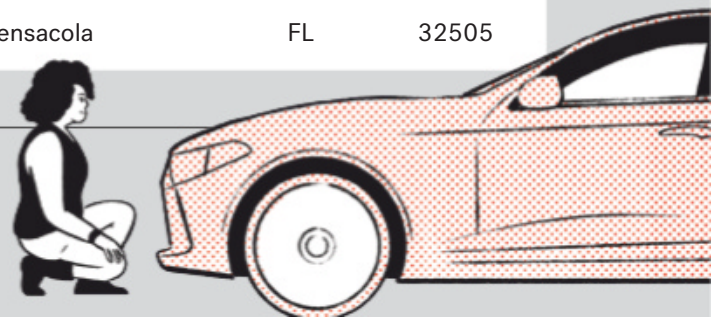
CUSTOMER SCORE	DEALERSHIP	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
9.4	Ferman Ford	24825 U.S. Hwy. 19 North	Clearwater	FL	33763
9.4	Sutherlin Nissan of Fort Pierce	4815 South U.S. Hwy. 1	Fort Pierce	FL	34982
9.4	Kia of Lagrange	1217 Lafayette Pkwy.	LaGrange	GA	30241
9.4	Jim Ellis Buick GMC	5862 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	Atlanta	GA	30341
9.4	Milton Martin Honda	2420 Browns Bridge Rd.	Gainesville	GA	30504
9.4	Malcolm Cunningham Chevrolet	2031 Gordon Hwy.	Augusta	GA	30909
9.4	Mercedes-Benz of Boston	259 McGrath Hwy.	Somerville	MA	02143
9.4	Alden Mazda	37 Alden Rd.	Fairhaven	MA	02719
9.4	East Charlotte Nissan	6901 East Independence Blvd.	Charlotte	NC	28227
9.4	Cella Ford	3210 Dr. M.L.K. Blvd.	New Bern	NC	28562
9.4	BMW of Stratham	71 Portsmouth Ave.	Stratham	NH	03885
9.4	Holman Toyota	1301 Rte. 73	Mount Laurel	NJ	08054
9.4	Woodbury Nissan	439 Mantua Pike	Woodbury	NJ	08096
9.4	Romano Toyota	6400 Basile Rowe	East Syracuse	NY	13057
9.4	West Herr Dodge	3551 Southwestern Blvd.	Orchard Park	NY	14127
9.4	John Sisson Nissan	470 Washington Rd.	Washington	PA	15301
9.4	Jones Honda	1335 Manheim Pike	Lancaster	PA	17601
9.4	Colonial Nissan	117 Bustleton Pike	Feasterville	PA	19053
9.4	Elmwood Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram	625 Taunton Ave. Rte. 44	East Providence	RI	02914
9.4	Benson Nissan Kia	1100 North Pine St.	Spartanburg	SC	29303
9.4	Five Star Chevrolet	2199 David McLeod Blvd.	Florence	SC	29501
9.4	Honda Cars of Rock Hill	686 Galleria Blvd.	Rock Hill	SC	29730
9.4	Lindsay Lexus of Alexandria	3410 King St.	Alexandria	VA	22302
9.4	Sheehy Toyota of Fredericksburg	3507 Jefferson Davis Hwy.	Fredericksburg	VA	22408
9.3	Audi Coral Springs	5555 North State Rd. 7	Coral Springs	FL	33073





THE TOP 100 EAST COAST DEALERS

CUSTOMER SCORE	DEALERSHIP	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
9.3	Stingray Chevrolet	2002 North Frontage Rd.	Plant City	FL	33563
9.3	Ed Morse Cadillac of Tampa	101 East Fletcher Ave.	Tampa	FL	33612
9.3	Courtesy Hyundai Tampa	3810 West Hillsborough Ave.	Tampa	FL	33614
9.3	AutoNation Chevrolet South Clearwater	15005 U.S. Hwy. 19 North	Clearwater	FL	33764
9.3	Jenkins Nissan	4401 Lakeland Hills Blvd.	Lakeland	FL	33805
9.3	Nalley Toyota of Roswell	11130 Alpharetta Hwy.	Roswell	GA	30076
9.3	Rick Case Hyundai Duluth	3180 Satellite Blvd.	Duluth	GA	30096
9.3	Adams Chevrolet	1517 Pulaski Hwy.	Havre De Grace	MD	21078
9.3	Bill Black Chevrolet Cadillac	601 East Bessemer Ave.	Greensboro	NC	27405
9.3	Greenville Toyota	3615 South Memorial Dr.	Greenville	NC	27834
9.3	Scott Clark Nissan	9215 South Blvd.	Charlotte	NC	28273
9.3	Randy Marion Chevrolet of Statesville	601 Gaither Rd.	Statesville	NC	28625
9.3	Toyota Subaru of Morristown	169 Ridgedale Ave.	Morristown	NJ	07960
9.3	Holman Ford Turnersville	3641 Rte. 42 South	Turnersville	NJ	08012
9.3	Curry Subaru	3040 East Main St.	Cortlandt Manor	NY	10567
9.3	Capitaland GMC Subaru	37 Saratoga Rd.	Glenville	NY	12302
9.3	BMW of Hudson Valley	2068 South Rd.	Poughkeepsie	NY	12601
9.3	Saratoga Honda	3402 Rte. 9	Saratoga Springs	NY	12866
9.3	#1 Cochran Hyundai of Monroeville	4520 William Penn Hwy.	Monroeville	PA	15146
9.3	Marty Sussman Honda	1543 Easton Rd.	Abington	PA	19001
9.3	Auddie Brown Chevrolet	1050 Lochend Dr.	Darlington	SC	29532
9.3	Gloucester Toyota	6357 George Washington Memorial Hwy.	Gloucester	VA	23061
9.3	Charles Barker Lexus Virginia Beach	3909 Virginia Beach Blvd.	Virginia Beach	VA	23452
9.2	Hertrich Nissan of Dover	1378 South Dupont Hwy.	Dover	DE	19901
9.2	Allen Turner Hyundai	6000 Pensacola Blvd.	Pensacola	FL	32505





CUSTOMER SCORE	DEALERSHIP	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
9.2	Lexus of Orlando	5725 Major Blvd.	Orlando	FL	32819
9.2	Braman Hyundai	2001 Northeast 2nd Ave.	Miami	FL	33137
9.2	Ed Voyles Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram	789 Cobb Pkwy. Southeast	Marietta	GA	30060
9.2	Conyers Nissan	1420 Iris Dr. Southwest	Conyers	GA	30094
9.2	Athens Ford	4260 Atlanta Hwy.	Athens	GA	30606
9.2	Milton Ruben Superstore	3512 Washington Rd.	Augusta	GA	30907
9.2	Gary Rome Hyundai	150 Whiting Farms Rd.	Holyoke	MA	01040
9.2	Annapolis Subaru	149 Solomons Island Rd.	Annapolis	MD	21401
9.2	Asheboro Ford	1602 East Dixie Dr.	Asheboro	NC	27203
9.2	Cox Toyota	3860 Danbrook Rd.	Burlington	NC	27215
9.2	Jones Ford	2410 Ocean Hwy. West	Shallotte	NC	28470
9.2	Nissan World of Springfield	146 Rte. 22 West	Springfield	NJ	07081
9.2	Audi Meadowlands	425 Rte. 3 East	Secaucus	NJ	07094
9.2	Acura Turnersville	3400 East Rte. 42	Turnersville	NJ	08012
9.2	West Herr Chevrolet of Orchard Park	3575 Southwestern Blvd.	Orchard Park	NY	14127
9.2	Power of Bowser Pleasant Hills	10001 Clairton Blvd.	Pleasant Hills	PA	15236
9.2	Dean Honda	911 Clairton Blvd. (Rte. 51)	Pittsburgh	PA	15236
9.2	Shults Toyota	880 East Main St.	Bradford	PA	16701
9.2	Bobby Rahal Toyota	6711 Carlisle Pike	Mechanicsburg	PA	17050
9.2	Blaise Alexander Nissan	10 Alexander Dr.	Muncy	PA	17756
9.2	Peruzzi Nissan	165 Lincoln Hwy.	Fairless Hills	PA	19030
9.2	Crews Chevrolet	8199 Rivers Ave.	North Charleston	SC	29406
9.2	Bell and Bell Buick GMC	2491 Hwy. 9 East	Little River	SC	29566
9.2	McKinney Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram	4574 Calhoun Memorial Hwy.	Easley	SC	29640
9.2	Sheehy Ford of Springfield	6727 Loisdale Rd.	Springfield	VA	22150



THE TOP 5 BY STATE



Connecticut

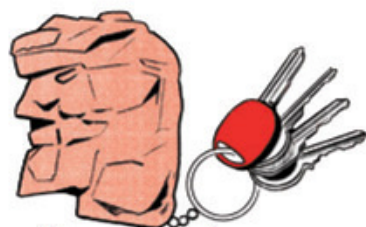
- 9.4 **Carter Chevrolet**
175 Hartford Tpke.
Vernon Rockville 06066

- 9.1 **Schaller
Honda Mitsubishi**
1 Veterans Dr.
New Britain 06051

- 9.0 **Blasius Chevrolet Cadillac**
90 Scott Rd.
Waterbury 06705

- 9.0 **Middletown Nissan**
1153 Newfield St.
Middletown 06457

- 8.9 **Manchester Honda**
24 Adams St.
Manchester 06042



New Hampshire

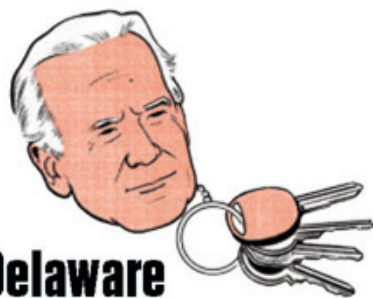
- 9.4 **BMW of Stratham**
71 Portsmouth Ave.
Stratham 03885

- 9.0 **Audi Stratham**
58 Portsmouth Ave.
Stratham 03885

- 8.8 **AutoServ
Dealer Group**
40 East Main St.
Tilton 03276

- 8.6 **Rockingham
Toyota**
412 South Broadway
Salem 03079

- 8.5 **Banks Chevrolet
Buick GMC**
137 Manchester St.
Concord 03301



Delaware

- 9.2 **Hertrich Nissan of Dover**
1378 South Dupont Hwy.
Dover 19901

- 9.1 **Bayshore Ford**
4003 North Dupont Hwy.
New Castle 19720

- 8.4 **C.F. Schwartz
Toyota**
1536 North Dupont Hwy.
Dover 19901

- 8.3 **Price Honda**
4567 South Dupont Hwy.
Dover 19901

- 8.3 **Newark Toyota World**
230 East Cleveland Ave.
Newark 19711



New Jersey

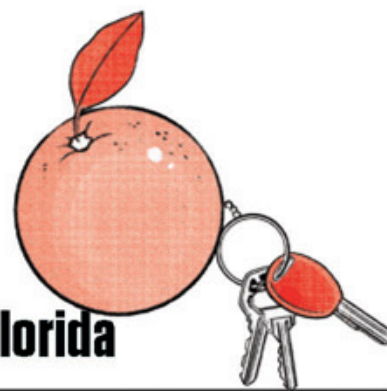
- 9.4 **Holman Toyota**
1301 Rte. 73
Mount Laurel 08054

- 9.4 **Woodbury Nissan**
439 Mantua Pike
Woodbury 08096

- 9.3 **Toyota Subaru of
Morristown**
169 Ridgedale Ave.
Morristown 07960

- 9.3 **Holman Ford
Turnersville**
3641 Rte. 42 South
Turnersville 08012

- 9.2 **Nissan World of
Springfield**
146 Rte. 22 West
Springfield 07081



Florida

- 9.7 **Walker Ford**
17556 U.S. Hwy. 19 North
Clearwater 33764

- 9.6 **Audi Clearwater**
18940 U.S. Hwy. 19
Clearwater 33764

- 9.6 **Fields BMW Lakeland**
4285 Lakeland Park Dr.
Lakeland 33809

- 9.6 **Audi Fort Myers**
10050 Daniels
Interstate Ct.
Fort Myers 33913

- 9.6 **Sandy Sansing Chrysler
Dodge Jeep Ram**
6348 Hwy. 90
Milton 32570



New York

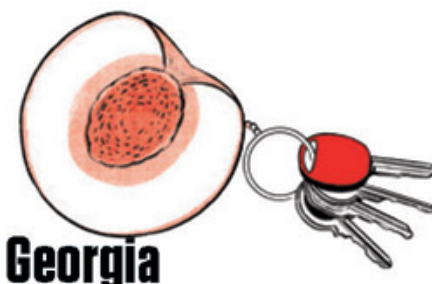
- 9.8 **West Herr Chevrolet
of Williamsville**
8040 Transit Rd.
Williamsville 14221

- 9.7 **Central Ave Nissan**
1919 Central Park Ave.
Yonkers 10710

- 9.6 **Lamacchia Honda**
932 West Genesee St.
Syracuse 13204

- 9.5 **Della Mazda**
92 Quaker Rd.
Queensbury 12804

- 9.5 **Serafini Nissan Volvo**
3101 Vestal Pkwy. East
Vestal 13850



Georgia

- 9.8 **Rick Case Kia**
3190 Satellite Blvd.
Duluth 30096

- 9.6 **Maxie Price Chevrolet**
3600 Hwy. 78
Loganville, 30052

- 9.4 **Jim Ellis Buick GMC**
5862 Peachtree
Industrial Blvd.
Atlanta 30341

- 9.4 **Kia of Lagrange**
1217 Lafayette Pkwy.
LaGrange 30241

- 9.4 **Milton Martin Honda**
2420 Browns Bridge Rd.
Gainesville 30504



Pennsylvania

- 9.4 **John Sisson Nissan**
470 Washington Rd.
Washington 15301

- 9.4 **Jones Honda**
1335 Manheim Pike
Lancaster 17601

- 9.4 **Colonial Nissan**
117 Bustleton Pike
Feasterville 19053

- 9.3 **Marty Sussman Honda**
1543 Easton Rd.
Abington 19001

- 9.3 **#1 Cochran Hyundai
of Monroeville**
4520 William Penn Hwy.
Monroeville 15146



Massachusetts

- 9.6 **Boch Nissan South**
685 South Washington St.
North Attleborough
02760

- 9.4 **Mercedes-Benz of Boston**
259 McGrath Hwy.
Somerville 02143

- 9.4 **Alden Mazda**
37 Alden Rd.
Fairhaven 02719

- 9.2 **Gary Rome Hyundai**
150 Whiting Farms Rd.
Holyoke 01040

- 9.1 **Central Chevrolet**
675 Memorial Ave.
West Springfield 01089



Rhode Island

- 9.4 **Elmwood Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram**
625 Taunton Ave. Rte. 44
East Providence 02914

- 8.5 **Balise Chevrolet of Warwick**
1338 Post Rd.
Warwick 02888

- 8.4 **Flood Ford of East Greenwich**
2545 South County Trail
East Greenwich 02818

- 8.4 **Tasca Ford Cranston RI**
1300 Pontiac Ave.
Cranston 02920

- 7.7 **Bald Hill Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram**
1035 Bald Hill Rd.
Warwick 02886



Maryland

- 9.3 **Adams Chevrolet**
1517 Pulaski Hwy.
Havre de Grace 21078

- 9.2 **Annapolis Subaru**
149 Solomons Island Rd.
Annapolis 21401

- 8.9 **J.B.A. Chevrolet**
7327 Ritchie Hwy.
Glen Burnie 21061

- 8.9 **Pohanka Honda of Salisbury**
2011 North Salisbury Blvd.
Salisbury 21801

- 8.8 **Rosenthal Acura**
623 North Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg 20879



South Carolina

- 9.6 **Hendrick Lexus Charleston**
2424 Savannah Hwy.
Charleston 29414

- 9.4 **Honda Cars of Rock Hill**
686 Galleria Blvd.
Rock Hill 29730

- 9.4 **Benson Nissan Kia**
1100 North Pine St.
Spartanburg 29303

- 9.4 **Five Star Chevrolet**
2199 David McLeod Blvd.
Florence 29501

- 9.3 **Auddie Brown Chevrolet**
1050 Lochend Dr.
Darlington 29532



Maine

- 9.5 **Berlin City Lexus of Portland**
191 Riverside St.
Portland 04103

- 9.0 **Berlin City Nissan of Portland**
277 Maine Mall Rd.
South Portland 04106

- 8.8 **Charlie's Motor Mall**
465 Western Ave.
Augusta 04330

- 8.4 **Varney Buick GMC**
260 Hogan Rd.
Bangor 04401

- 8.2 **Prime Honda**
754 Portland Rd.
Saco 04072



Virginia

- 9.8 **BMW of Alexandria**
499 South Pickett St.
Alexandria 22304

- 9.7 **Dick Myers Chrysler Dodge Jeep**
1711 South Main St.
Harrisonburg 22801

- 9.6 **Pomoco Nissan of Hampton**
1134 West Mercury Blvd.
Hampton 23666

- 9.4 **Sheehy Toyota of Fredericksburg**
3507 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Fredericksburg 22408

- 9.4 **Lindsay Lexus of Alexandria**
3410 King St.
Alexandria 22302



North Carolina

- 9.7 **Johnson Lexus of Durham**
1013 Southpoint
Autopark Blvd.
Durham 27713

- 9.6 **Bob Mayberry Hyundai**
3220 West Hwy. 74
Monroe 28110

- 9.5 **Hendrick Honda Hickory**
945 U.S. Hwy. 70 Southeast
Hickory 28602

- 9.5 **Davis Chevrolet Buick GMC**
96 Radio Dr.
Lexington 27292

- 9.4 **East Charlotte Nissan**
6901 East
Independence Blvd.
Charlotte 28227



Vermont

- 9.0 **Carbone Toyota of Bennington**
751 North Bennington Rd.
Bennington 05201

- 8.9 **Lamoille Valley Ford**
222 Rte. 15 West
Hardwick 05843

- 8.9 **Alderman's Toyota**
33 Seward Rd.
Rutland 05701

- 8.8 **Carbone Hyundai of Bennington**
897 North Bennington Rd.
Bennington 05201

- 8.7 **802 Toyota**
30 Berlin Mall Rd.
Berlin 05602

GEOLOGY

Ashes to Ashes

California's next big geologic threat might not be an earthquake



LILLY HUSBANDS/GETTY



CALCULATED RISK
Mount Shasta, the fifth-highest peak in California, has a “very high” risk of eruption in the next 30 years.

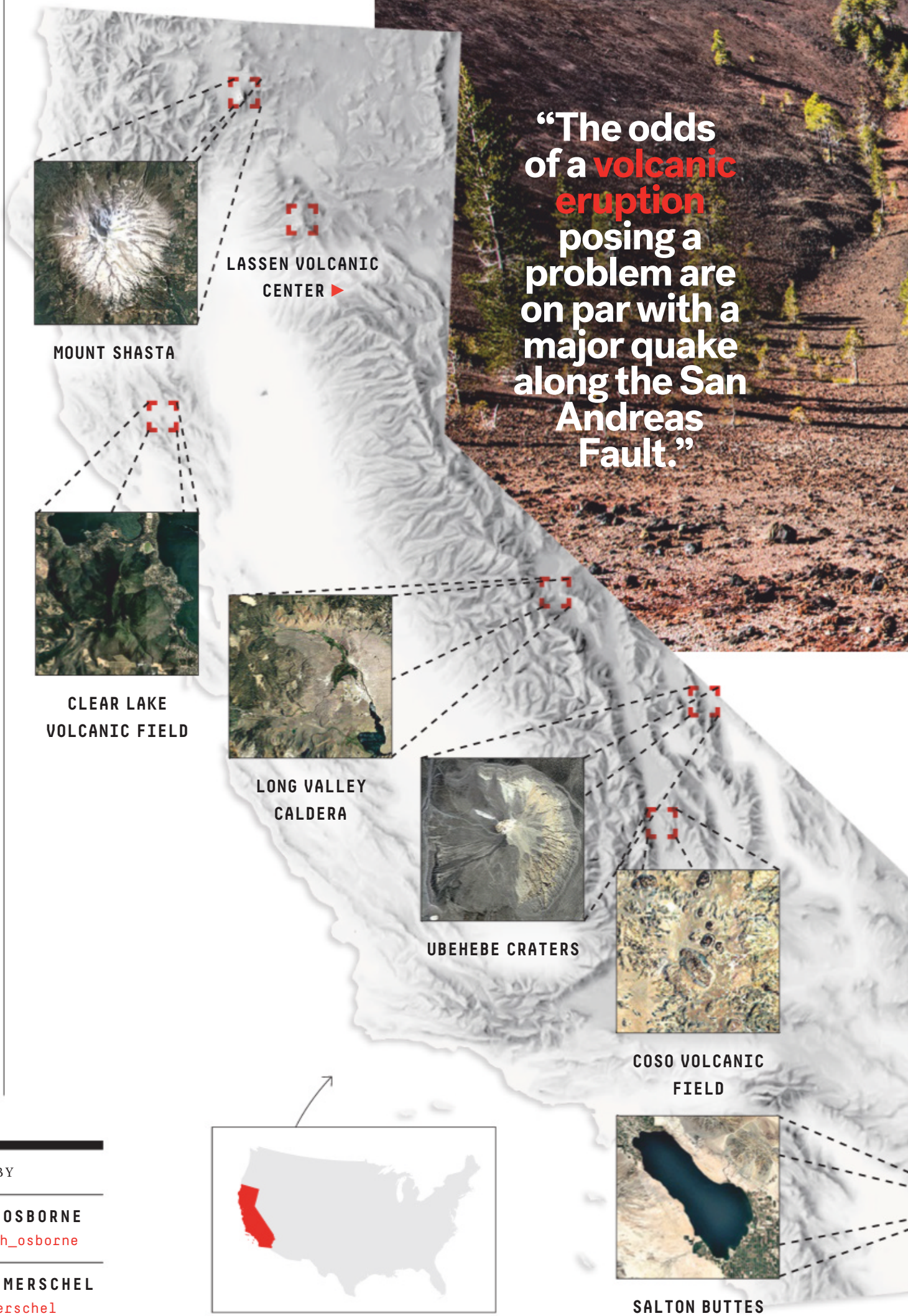
➔ CALIFORNIANS ARE FAMILIAR with all kinds of natural disasters: earthquakes, landslides and wildfires, to name a few. But are they ready for a volcanic eruption?

They'd better be, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) says. A new report points out that the state has eight volcanic areas that could spring to geologic life. And the odds of one of them posing a problem are on par with the odds of a major quake along the San Andreas Fault.

"Future volcanic eruptions are inevitable," according to the USGS report. At least 10 volcanic eruptions have taken place in the state in the past 1,000 years, and there's a 16 percent chance of a small- to moderate-sized eruption over the next 30 years. By comparison, there is a 22 percent chance of a magnitude 6.7 or larger earthquake at the San Andreas Fault in the San Francisco Bay Area in the next 25 years.

Seven of the assessed volcanoes have magma beneath them, meaning they are considered "active." One, the Long Valley volcanic region in the Sierra Nevada near Mammoth Lakes, is one of the biggest calderas in the world, measuring 20 by 10 miles. It formed during a "supereruption" about 760,000 years ago. Nothing like that is in this USGS forecast, although there's a better than one-in-five chance of some kind of eruption in Long Valley in the next 100 years.

Even if you like those odds, the report has plenty to keep a volcanophobe awake at night. For example, there is a reminder that, in the early 20th century, Lassen Peak in Shasta County erupted, producing "a yearlong series of minor steam blasts before a larger explosion sent an



“The odds of a volcanic eruption posing a problem are on par with a major quake along the San Andreas Fault.”

BY

HANNAH OSBORNE
 @hannah_osborne

MICHAEL MERSCHER
 @mmerschel



PEAK PERFORMANCE Lassen Volcanic National Park in Northern California, above, and the state's seven active volcanoes, opposite.

eruption column 30,000 feet high and unleashed destructive pyroclastic flows and lahars.”

A pyroclastic flow, if you don't have your geology textbook handy, happens when gas-pressurized ash and lava fragments rush outward from the volcano at ground speeds greater than 50 miles per hour. Lahars, the report explains, are “slurry-like flows of volcanic ash, rock, and water with the consistency of wet concrete.”

In the Lassen Peak eruption, wind-borne ash drifted 275 miles east and fell as far away as Elko, Nevada. “The most energetic part of the eruption was over in a matter of days, but steam blasts and lahars created hazardous conditions for several years afterwards,” the report says. And this was what volcanologists

consider a “small” eruption.

The USGS report considers the risk of a minor eruption within the Lassen region to be about 2 percent over the next 30 years. That's enough to warrant a risk rating of “very high.” Mount Shasta, 60 miles north of Redding, also has a “very high” risk—a 3.5 percent chance of eruption within the next 30 years. The Clear Lake Volcanic Field, about 90 miles north of San Francisco, is considered a “high” risk; the report says additional research is needed to determine the likelihood of an eruption there.

If one of them does blow, millions of people who don't live near them could be affected. “Even a fine dusting of volcanic ash can cause widespread disruption to power lines,” the report says, noting that a 2011 eruption in

Chile caused blackouts that persisted for weeks, as ash caused electrical discharge on insulators and knocked over transmission poles. Water lines, gas lines, cellphone service, air travel and more could be disrupted.

The report, which was prepared in collaboration with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the California Geological Survey, does say the regions are being monitored closely and suggests the next steps will be to assess specific sites so that residents and officials can be prepared. “Understanding the hazards and identifying what and who is in harm's way is the first step,” says the report. After that, it's up to communities to come up with plans to mitigate risk and build resilience to the hazards. ■

TOP: DIEGO CUPOLO/NURPHOTO/GETTY; CALIFORNIA: GLOBE TURNER/GETTY; INSET IMAGES: GOOGLE (6)

BOOKS

Dishing the Dirt

In a sumptuous new book, Lauri Kranz proves that anyone can get back to the garden and grow their own food



TOP RIGHT: WALTER MCBRIDE/GETTY



THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

How a rabid teen fan base got a musical on Broadway. » P.46



➤ LAURI KRANZ’S PASSION WAS ALWAYS LARGE, but she started small, in her father’s vegetable patch behind their house in Bloomfield, Connecticut. The land sloped down to the edge of a wood, and as a child she would work by his side, “talking or not,” she says, “pulling weeds and watering—that was enough magic for me.”

There were cucumbers on the vine, a watermelon or two, juicy tomatoes and towering sunflowers. And when she’d venture beyond the garden, into the woods, she found skunk cabbage and “low-growing shrubs, dripping with red berries. It was my entry into the woods and the wonders of nature.”

Kranz grew up, moved to Los Angeles, became a singer-songwriter and had two sons. Eventually, she also found a way to turn her childhood enthusiasm into a career and, more than that, a mission. It began by volunteering at her oldest child’s primary school;

she picked its garden as her activity, quickly becoming obsessed. “I went to the library and took out all the books on gardening,” says Kranz. “The school’s garden became my laboratory.”

BY

MARY KAY
SCHILLING

Soon, she was raising vegetables at home, and when her youngest started school, there was no gardening curriculum. “So I started one,” says Kranz. “Parents would ask if I could help them with a garden at their homes, which friends of theirs would see...,” and on and on until she had a business, Edible Gardens L.A., founded in 2009. Her client list has grown to include celebrities (among them Katy Perry, Adam Scott and Nicole Ritchie), top restaurants, museums and anyone interested in growing their own food. It’s an enlightening experience even for an award-winning chef like Suzanne Goin, whose family garden was planted by Kranz eight years ago. “Seeing and feeling the plants and being aware of where they are in the season changed how we thought about food.”

Kranz is now sharing her wisdom in a new book, *A Garden Can Be Anywhere: Creating Bountiful and Beautiful Edible Gardens* (Abrams), a collaboration with her husband, Dean Kuipers. The luscious photos by Yoshihiro Makino will make you long to get dirt under your nails, and Kranz’s facility at

GOING TO SEED

“Nourishment and beauty were once separate goals, but not for me,” says Kranz. “An edible garden should be as compelling to the senses as an ornamental garden. Sometimes, I allow arugula to go to seed just because the flowers are beautiful.”

simplifying the process of raising fava beans or beets or lemon verbena—yes, anywhere—will have you scouring seed catalogs. “Every time I see Lauri, I come away feeling nourished—her superpower is her warmth,” says another client, actress Maya Rudolph. “There is no ego to her approach.”

Nor is there a desire to dominate what she grows. “I embrace wildness,” Kranz says of her approach. “I don’t like too much order; rows can be helpful or unnecessary.”

Kranz is a persuasive advocate for the restorative powers of nature. “Diving straight into the earth’s natural processes makes you part of the real world again,” she says. “You start to make good soil, and you feel better. You start growing things, and then you realize, Oh yeah, I co-evolved with all this stuff. We know one another.”

Kuipers had been studying and writing about environmental politics and the human-nature relationship for decades when he met Kranz in 2012. His two sets of grandparents had farms in Michigan. “Until I left there,” Kuipers says, “I sort of assumed everyone knew when it was time for tying grapes or detasseling corn.” His new memoir, *The Deer Camp* (out in May, Bloomsbury), is about how working 100 acres near Kalamazoo healed his family after decades of emotional trauma.

In his book, he quotes ecologist and author Paul Shepard, who believed the physical earth to be essential to our welfare: “The soil was a source of complex life long before men or agriculture first appeared,” Shepard wrote. “It is as

“Every time I see Lauri, I come away feeling nourished. Her superpower is her warmth.”

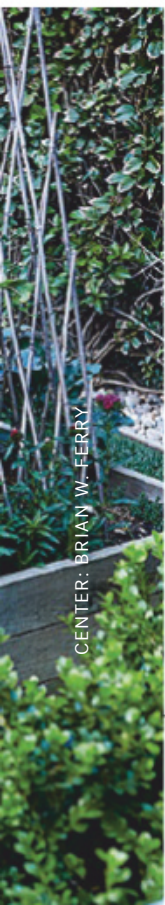
fundamental to our well-being now as ever, though most of us never put our hands in it.” He maintained that humans today are sick because of our separation from nature.

Kranz and Kuipers are intent on offering a pathway back, whether it begins in a backyard or an apartment window box. To that end, she continues to create and teach gardening curriculums for children. Eating food pulled from your own soil, says Kranz, is not only healthier, it reveals the process of growing (food doesn’t, in other words, “magically appear on grocery store shelves”), the patience required, the value of failure (“our best teacher”) and the necessity of coexisting with wildlife (using deterrents as opposed to poisons). Gardening illuminates our connection with the larger ecosystem “that we are part of it, and if nature succeeds we all do.”

Nothing makes her happier than seeing the faces of young gardeners as they watch their plants and vegetables “move through the seasons and come full circle. When we understand nature’s processes,” says Kranz, “we can engage more fully in the deeper parts of ourselves.” **N**

UP THE GARDEN PATH In her book, Kranz clearly lays out how to plan a garden, including whether to plant directly in the ground or in raised beds or in an enclosed house. She includes African basil in all of her gardens: “It smells absolutely gorgeous and it brings the bees, which are vital to food production.” Kranz also counsels using your plot to experiment. “Plant one thing you like, and one thing you don’t—for me that was Kolrabi. Once I saw how the bulb of the plant formed just above the soil line, I was smitten.”





CENTER: BRIAN W. FERRY



THEATER

Sounds Like Teen Spirit

How a grassroots online movement led to Broadway's latest hit musical, *Be More Chill*

IT WAS FALL 2016, AND JOE Iconis was sure his musical, *Be More Chill*, was dead. The composer had wrapped a successful but brief six-week run at New Jersey's Two River Theater in June 2015 and proceeded to spend a year and a half unsuccessfully pitching it to producers and theaters in New York City.

"Nobody wanted it," Iconis tells *Newsweek* of his adaptation of Ned Vizzini's 2004 young adult novel of the same name. "Nobody cared." Dejected, he and his collaborator, book writer Joe Tracz, moved on to other projects.

Then, in May 2017, the duo started

getting notifications on social media: a Facebook tag from someone who shared their favorite *Be More Chill* song, an Instagram post containing fan art of key scenes, a direct message on Twitter asking questions about characters, then another and another. Suddenly, the cast album was bubbling up on the Spotify charts.

Iconis texted Tracz and actor George Salazar (who plays Michael in the show): "Are you guys doing something with *Be More Chill*? Is something going on that I don't know about?"

There was, but not

because of anyone involved in the production. A small but active online community of young theater lovers—the same type of fans who are obsessed with *Heathers: The Musical* and *Dear Evan Hansen*—found the cast recording of the show on Spotify and turned it into a viral hit more or less overnight.

"There was no marketing push, no team of people in suits. It wasn't like suddenly Lin-Manuel Miranda tweeted about the show and people discovered it," says Tracz, who wrote the book for the popular 2017 off-Broadway musical *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*. "It was people who love theater and who were seeing themselves in the story."

The plot finds high school loser Jeremy (played by Will Roland on Broadway) becoming cool overnight thanks to a pill that plants an all-knowing supercomputer, called a SQUIP, into his brain. The instruction: "Be more chill." Jeremy does just that and, in the process, ditches his loyal best friend, Michael; screws things up with his crush, the theater-obsessed Christine (Stephanie Hsu); and learns that popular kids aren't as happy as they seem.

Jeremy's not, as Roland says, "a superhero or a supermodel. But despite his incredible mediocrity, he's able to have a remarkable journey." And he's highly relatable to the small but vocal following that began making *Be More Chill* Tumblr accounts, writing fanfiction and, most importantly, sharing the cast album. According to Iconis, "there was a certain point, before we ever had plans to do anything more, where our album sales were better than every other Broadway show except the blockbusters *Hamilton* and the [similarly teen-focused] *Dear Evan Hansen*."

The 37-year-old Iconis won the

BY

ANNA MENTA

[@annalikestweets](https://twitter.com/annalikestweets)

Jonathan Larson Award, a grant for early-career composers, in 2006. After that, he wrote and produced six musicals, but none made it to Broadway. “I’ve self-produced a lot of work—I’m a fairly big go-getter,” he says, and with *Chill’s* grassroots groundswell of support he saw an opportunity. “We definitely fanned the flames,” he says.

For a second time, Iconis pitched to New York producers. Still, no interest. Then, after the show was licensed for community theater productions, Jerry Goehring stepped in. The director of Sacred Heart University’s theater program chose the musical in February 2018 and was impressed with how quickly the student production sold out. Goehring optioned the rights, becoming the show’s lead producer, and by last summer, *Be More Chill* had an off-Broadway home: the Pershing Square Signature Center.

That nine-week run sold out before opening night, earning a sold-out extension. Reviews, however, were mixed, with a particularly harsh take from *The New York Times*: “The theatrical equivalent of one of those high-pitched dog whistles that only those under 25 can hear.”

They are still listening, and responding, enthusiastically. *Chill’s* February move to Broadway broke the Lyceum Theatre’s house record for a seven-performance gross, bringing in a total \$738,384 (the previous record was set by Patrick Stewart’s *Macbeth* in 2008). At an early preview, the 25-and-unders were screaming, dancing, and singing with some dressed like the characters

(Jeremy’s blue-and-yellow-striped shirt, Christine’s lime-green dress). One young woman—overcome with emotion during Roland’s opening solo—buried her face in her hands. “I’m sort of a celebrity to them, which couldn’t be further from the truth,” says Roland, who was in *Dear Evan Hansen’s* original cast.

Iconis says he didn’t want to come off as “some old dude trying to sound like a young person. I didn’t write the characters for [a specific age group]. I just tried to write honest and truthful human beings.”

“There was no marketing push. It wasn’t like suddenly Lin-Manuel Miranda tweeted about the show and people discovered it.”



YOUNG BLOOD *Be More Chill’s* diverse-in-every-way cast allows fans “to see themselves in the roles,” says co-creator Iconis, right.

And the “true diversity” of the cast, he adds, supports that mission. “When kids see a leading lady or man who does not look like a typical leading lady or man,” says Iconis, “it allows them to see themselves in roles.” (Roland is white, Hsu is Asian-American, and Salazar is Filipino and Ecuadorian.)

Salazar’s emotional anthem, “Michael in the Bathroom”—performed as his character is having a panic attack during a Halloween party—is a showstopper and, says Iconis, “emblematic of what we’re trying to do with the show as a whole. We always talk about *Be More Chill* as a celebration of misfits, and this is a song that the ‘best friend character’ would never normally get in a musical. I love that.” So many kids, he adds, have thanked him “for having a show about people who have panic attacks but that isn’t, like, a dire tragedy.”

The biggest cheer of the night comes near the show’s end, when the school bully, Rich (Gerard Canonico), announces that he’s bisexual. “So often, stories of characters coming out on stage are portrayed as a tortured, tormented difficult realization,” says Tracz, who is gay. “In our show, it’s celebratory, joyous and a thing to cheer about. That’s always really cool to see. I didn’t have a line or character like that when I was in high school.”

When Tracz and Iconis started writing *Be More Chill*, there was no *Dear Evan Hansen* or *Mean Girls*. “It felt radical, putting young people’s lives in the context of a big shiny musical, like something you hadn’t seen since the days of *West Side Story* and *Bye Bye Birdie*,” says Tracz, who, with Iconis, is in early talks for a *Chill* film adaptation. “It’s been incredible,” he adds, “to see young people getting off their computers and traveling to see live theater.” **N**

PARTING SHOT

Dev Patel

➤ LESS THAN A YEAR BEFORE MILITANTS OPENED FIRE ON THE CROWD AT the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in November 2008—part of a series of interconnected attacks in Mumbai, India—Dev Patel was dancing on the train station’s platform for the final scene of his breakout performance in the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*. “No one I personally knew was injured, but it rocked my family and my friends in India,” says Patel, who was born and raised in England by Gujarati Indian Hindu parents. “When I heard there was a film being made, I wanted to be a part of it.” *Hotel Mumbai*, opening March 29, takes place at the Taj Mahal Palace hotel, one of the attack sites, with Patel’s fictional waiter, Arjun, working under real-life hero Hemant Oberoi (played by Bollywood’s Anupam Kher). Patel, known for *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and his Oscar-nominated role in 2016’s *Lion*, did have early reservations about his part. Director Anthony Maras “won’t mind me saying that Arjun was slightly two-dimensional at the time,” says Patel. “I felt we could push it further.”

You asked to make your character Sikh. Why?

I’d been reading about Sikh cab drivers who were abused after 9/11, and what struck me was people didn’t understand their faith. To prepare, I spent time in one of Mumbai’s predominately Sikh slums—an incredible community, so selfless. They have a holy temple, a gurdwara, and there’s a quote when you enter: “My turban, my pride.” I remembered reading an article about a Sikh man who used his turban to stop someone from bleeding after a car crash.

“We weren’t going to make a *Die Hard* movie, where the handsome American saves the day.”

What do you say to those who think action movies based on real attacks are exploitative?

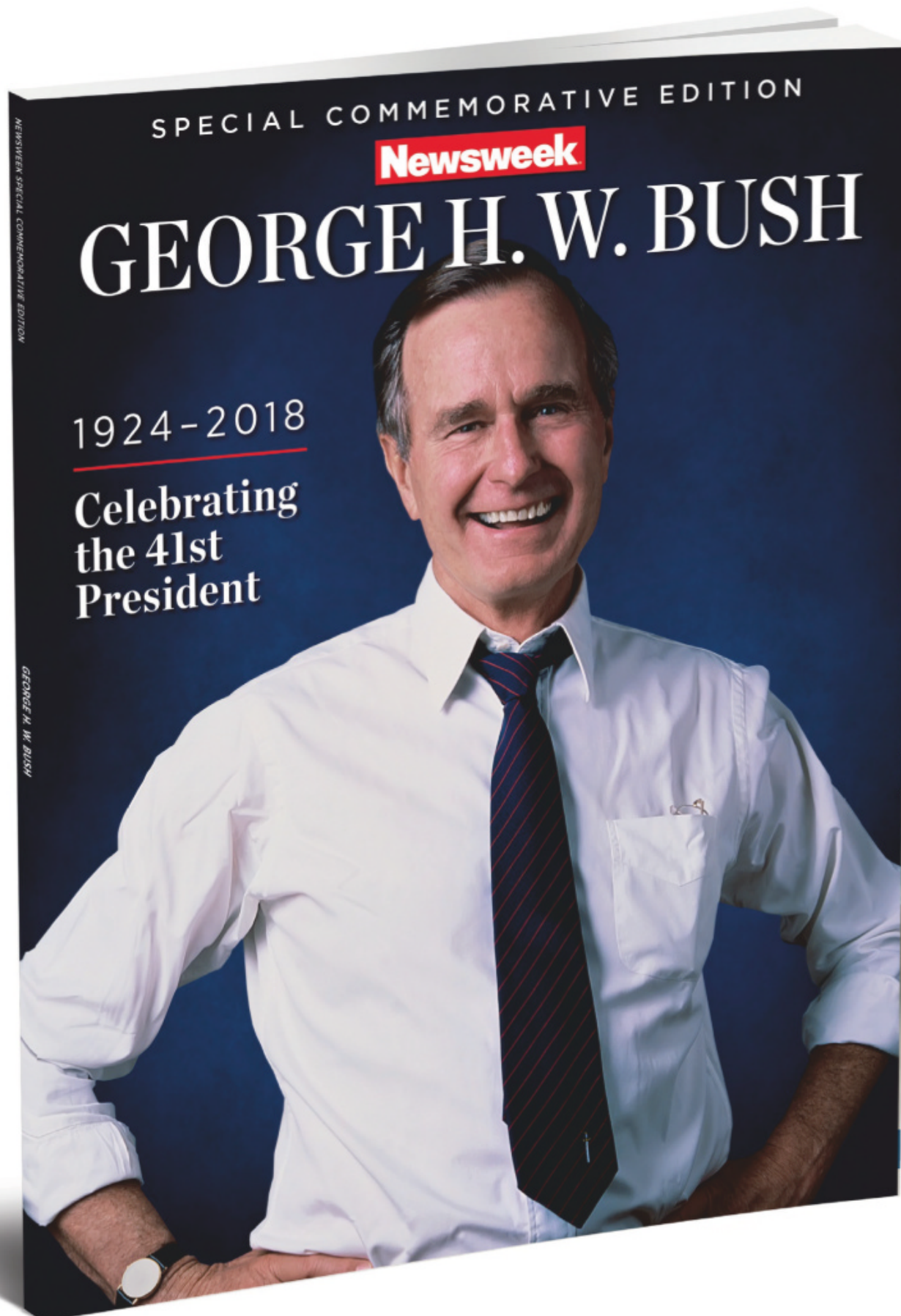
As an executive producer, that’s what I was most vocal about. We weren’t going to make a *Die Hard* movie, where the handsome American hero saves the day. Even if your character was doing something selfless, there was never a “cool moment” where you’re firing a gun. And Anthony boldly gives screen time to the terrorists, so you can start to understand the socioeconomic situations that breed such mindsets.

Not much is known about your directorial debut, *Monkey Man*, other than that it’s a revenge film.

There are themes of *John Wick* and *Oldboy*. It takes a myth about an Indian god, Hanuman, and sets it in modern Mumbai. It’s not a graphic novel, but it feels like one. —Anna Menta



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