

China Parades Influence in NYC

Newsweek INTERNATIONAL

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PROTEST VOTE

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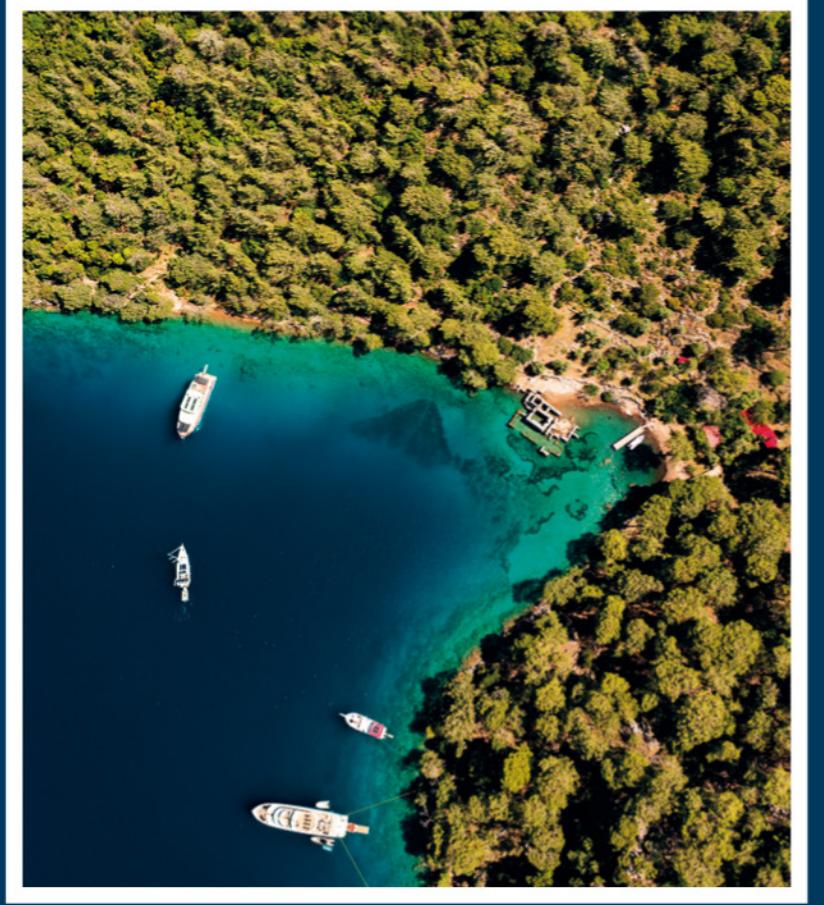


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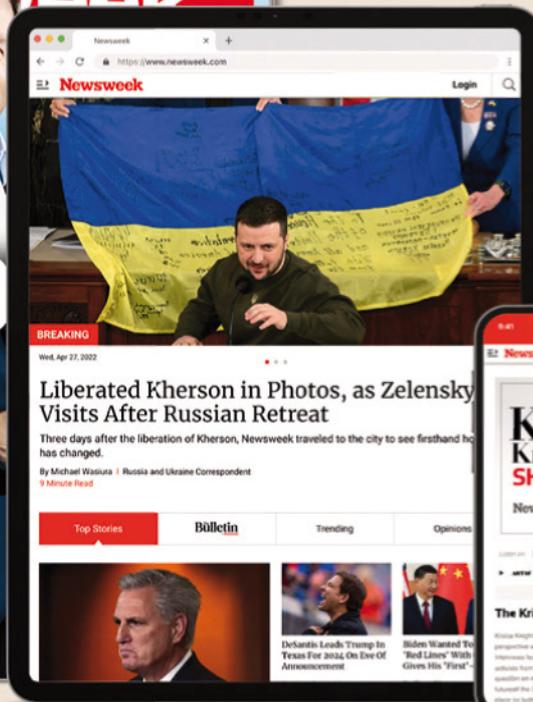


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by DANIEL BUSH

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BALTIMORE

Heavy Metal Explosion

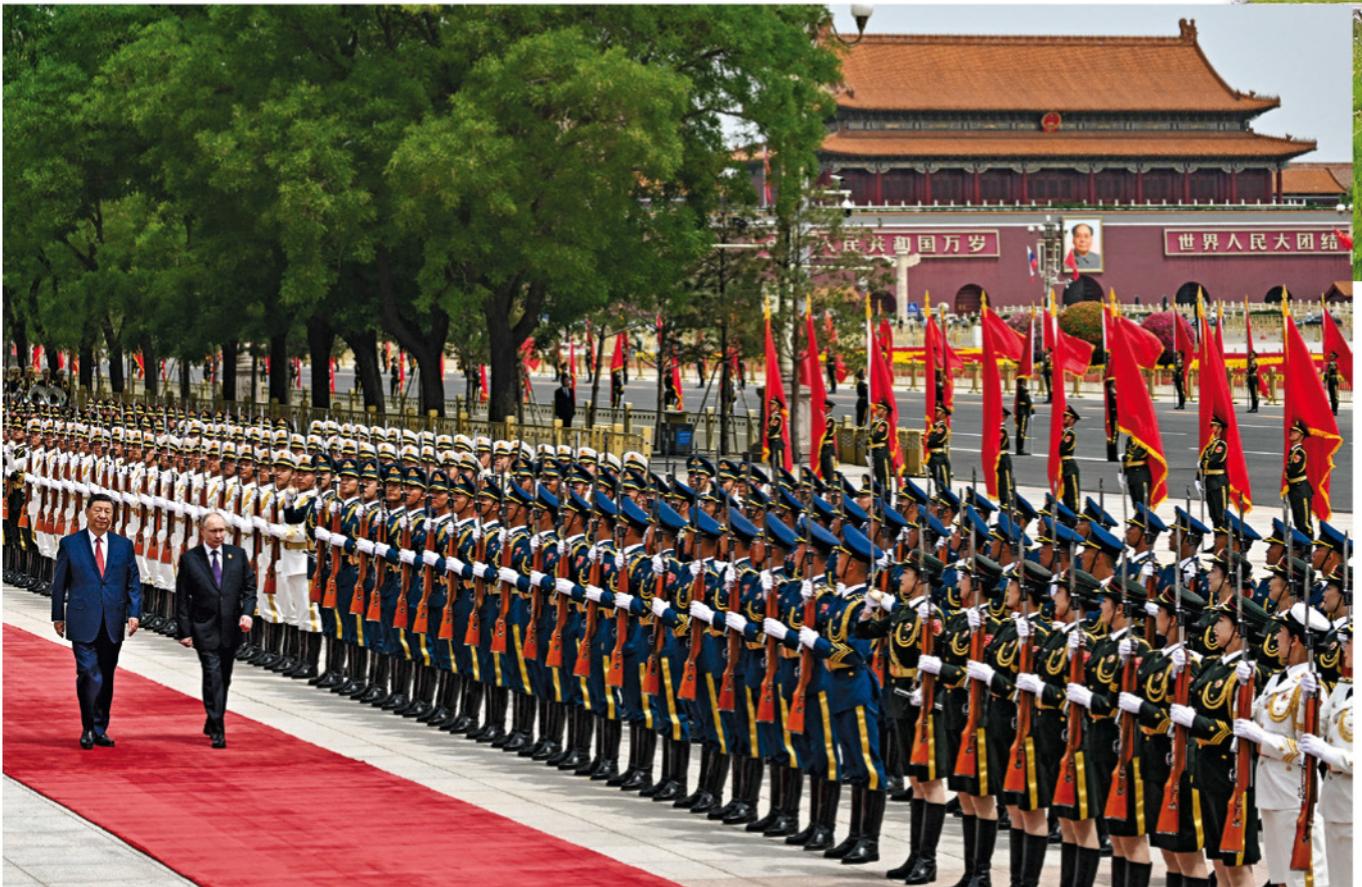
A controlled demolition rips through wreckage of the Francis Scott Key Bridge on May 13 in a bid to free the stuck cargo ship that crashed into it. An estimated 500-foot bridge section, weighing up to 12 million pounds, was shifted in the final stage of efforts to move the *Dali* into port. Its crew, 20 from India and one from Sri Lanka, have not been allowed to leave the ship stuck in the Patapsco River since the March 26 collision that caused the bridge's collapse, killing six construction workers. The men have been maintaining the vessel and helping investigators.

▶ KEVIN DIETSCH





GETTY





MICHIMALOYA, MEXICO

Green Menace

Contaminated water from the Endho dam, about 75 miles north of Mexico City, forms a green swirl on May 12. The capital city pipes all its waste to the dam, causing health and environmental hazards in the area. Further exacerbating the issue is the severe water shortage faced by North America's largest city due to years of low rainfall and the resulting historically low water reservoirs.

📷 ▶ CRISTOPHER ROGEL BLANQUET



BEIJING

Attention Grabbing

Chinese troops stand to attention for President Xi Jinping and Russian leader Vladimir Putin during a ceremonial inspection in Tiananmen Square on May 16, at the start of a two-day tour. In a joint statement, they said that for "a sustainable settlement of the Ukrainian crisis it is necessary to eliminate its root causes," while Xi promised they would "work together to uphold fairness and justice in the world."

📷 ▶ SERGEI BOBYLYOV/POOL/AFP



BANSKÁ BYSTRICA, SLOVAKIA

'Attack on Democracy'

Paramedics surround Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico as he is carried into the F.D. Roosevelt University Hospital after being shot five times on May 15. A 71-year-old man was arrested at the scene in Handlová and charged with attempted murder before Fico underwent lifesaving surgery. Foreign Minister Juraj Blanár told *Newsweek* that the assassination attempt was "an attack on democracy."

📷 ▶ AFP

SHOW OF TOGETHERNESS

Mayor Eric Adams, pictured with Consul General of China in New York City Huang Ping, at the 2022 AAPI Cultural and Heritage Parade in Manhattan.





GEOPOLITICS

All Welcome, Except Some

A Chinese foreign agent is behind an Asian American parade in New York City with Mayor Eric Adams, but not everyone is invited

WHAT HAS BECOME AN ANNUAL PARADE IN midtown Manhattan for Asian Americans was set up with the blessing of New York City Mayor Eric Adams by the CEO of a company that is a registered foreign agent of China, according to documents obtained exclusively by *Newsweek*.

The findings raise new questions over Chinese influence on operations in the U.S., and particularly in New York, where Adams and some other top politicians have previously received campaign donations from members of groups linked to China’s ruling Communist Party. *Newsweek* has reported on the extensive network of such groups in the U.S.

The annual Asian American parade began in 2022 and was expected to take place on Manhattan’s Sixth Avenue on May 19 as part of the city’s “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.”

The parade said it welcomes all Asian Americans, but documents obtained by

Newsweek show that organizers exclude groups they deem to be politically and religiously controversial—and critics of China’s rulers believe that means them.

Tibetans, Taiwanese, Hong Kongers and others at odds with the Beijing leadership of the Chinese Communist Party questioned how representative the parade was of the Asian American community. They had not been invited to take part, were not successful in applying or didn’t want to join as they felt unsafe, they said.

Among them was Frances Hui, founder of community group We The Hongkongers. She said that two weeks after applying, all she had received was requests for more information, to which she had responded. “It’s obvious to me that they are trying to stall our application until they can find a way to reject us from participating,” said Hui.

Hundreds of pages of emails obtained

by
**DIDI
KIRSTEN
TATLOW**



COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK; TOP RIGHT: CHESNOT/GETTY

by *Newsweek* under a freedom of information request indicate the parade was set up in 2022 by Robin Mui, CEO of the Chinese-language media Sing Tao US, which was ordered by the Department of Justice to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act in 2021. Working with Mui was Better Chinatown USA, a community organization led by Steven Tin, the organizer of Lunar New Year events in Manhattan's Chinatown.

The parade was organized in conjunction with Adams, his Asian Affairs Director Winnie Greco, an Asian American and Pacific Islander advisory team in the mayor's office and other city officials.

Mui confirmed to *Newsweek* he had founded and still holds the license for the parade and that he had been pushing for it for years under previous administrations before it was approved by the Adams administration.

"I was telling them, all those ethnics got their own parade every year, how come the Asians never got one?" he said by telephone. "It is not just for Chinese, this is a mainstream parade for Asians."

Adams attended the first two parades, marching behind a red banner next to Consul General of China

in New York, Huang Ping. Also taking part in 2023 were six other New York city, state or federal politicians including Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY) and diplomats from six other Asian nations, according to a report on the website of the Chinese consulate general.

Adams' office did not respond to a question from *Newsweek* whether it knew that the event was founded by the CEO of a company registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, or FARA. Being a registered foreign agent does not bar a company or individual from political activities though they must report their campaign donations.

"As the mayor of the city with the second-largest Asian American and Pacific Islander population in the country, Mayor Adams celebrates AAPI New Yorkers who contribute to the rich culture that makes our city the greatest in the world," a spokesperson for Adams' office said by email. "We celebrate all cultures that embody the diverse communities that make up New York City's rich melting pot."

PARTY TIME Senator Chuck Schumer, Governor Kathy Hochul and Adams celebrating the February 2022 Lunar New Year Parade in Chinatown.

A FARA registration

Mui said it was unfair that parent Sing Tao News Corporation, a Hong Kong-based media company, had been forced to register as a foreign agent.

"I was working for the paper for the past 43 years without any problems with the U.S. government," Mui said. Then in 2021, a new investor bought into the company. "He was born in China, and he is in the realty business, and the government says he is from Communist China. That's why we had to register. We don't have a choice," Mui said.

Mui identified the new owner as Kwok Ying Shing, the chairman of Shenzhen-based Kaisa Group who is also co-chairman of Sing Tao News Corp. In 2021, Kwok and his daughter, Kwok Hiu Ting, bought over 28 percent of the shares. A co-chief executive officer of the parent group, she is also the director of Sing Tao U.S.'s operations and is listed with Mui on the FARA filing. A year later the Kwoks sold half their shares to Hong Kong businessman Karson Choi, Mui said.

At least five of the company's seven board members belong to political institutions or social organizations that are part of the "united front" political influence system of the Chinese Communist Party. They include national and province-level branches of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, according to the company's website and Chinese-language state media reports.

Choi, the co-chairman, is a member of China's national CPPCC. The board's co-chief executive officer, the journalist Cai Jin, is a member of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Consultative Conference and the Taizhou City People's Consultative Conference.

Kwok Ying Shing is a founding chairman of the Federation of Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community



FROM LEFT: JOHN LAMPARSKI/GETTY; CULTURA EXCLUSIVE/HENGLIN AND STEETS/GETTY



HIGH HOPES Fifth Avenue in New York City. AAPI parade founder Robin Mui wants the event to grow and be held there in a couple of years' time.

Organizations, a united front group. Mui said he hoped the AAPI parade would grow and that in a couple of years it would be held on Fifth Avenue.

The Chinese consulate in New York did not reply to emails seeking comment.

Consul General Huang “called on everyone to continue to show solidarity, unite against hatred and racial discrimination, jointly promote respect, friendship, inclusiveness and love, and stand together to embrace a better future! He then announced the commencement of the parade,” the consulate said in a report of the 2023 parade on its website.

By Invite Only

“All are welcome to join us to celebrate AAPI Cultural Heritage Month!!” read a registration form issued by the community group Better Chinatown USA of the latest, third “AAPI Cultural Heritage Parade.”

But a document from the group that was among the documents reviewed by *Newsweek* stated: “For security and safety reasons, we invite and welcome non-controversial political or religious organizations to join us.”

Correspondence shows that for the inaugural parade, organizers

invited diplomats from Asian nations including Korea, Japan, Bangladesh and the Philippines to join. But one key group was not invited: diplomats from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, the de facto embassy of self-ruling Taiwan, which China claims as part of its own territory.

“We have never received an invitation from the organizers,” the press division of TECO said in an emailed statement to *Newsweek*.

The AAPI movement was being manipulated by China’s rulers, said a pro-democracy Tibetan.

“The CCP deliberately seeks out influential roles within AAPI spaces, then claims that voices critical of the Chinese government are anti-Chinese, or even anti-Asian,” Pema Doma,

“It’s a propaganda stunt that the Chinese government has its hands on to dominate a community...to advance their political agenda abroad.”

executive director of Students for a Free Tibet, said in an interview. She said she would not be participating.

“I would go so far as to say, I would not even feel physically safe in doing so, especially after the violent attacks I have personally witnessed on U.S. soil against Tibetans and Hong Kongers by pro-CCP agitators.”

Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Hui said: “It’s a propaganda stunt that the Chinese government has its hands on to dominate a community we all belong to, making it more convenient for them to advance their political agenda abroad.” Beijing imposed state security laws on Hong Kong in 2020 that prompted thousands, including Hui, to flee the city.

Mui referred questions about how the organizers decided which groups could take part to Tin, who did not return calls or emails seeking comment.

“This is a parade celebrating cultural diversity, but groups that speak out against Beijing’s policies are excluded,” said Shannon Van Sant, a Washington, D.C.-based independent researcher who formerly worked for Chinese state media.

“This aligns with efforts by the CCP, its supporters and enablers to dominate and shape discourse in communities in the U.S.—to suppress voices that are critical of the CCP, and elevate, unify and strengthen relationships with everyone else.” **N**

► **Didi Kirsten Tatlow** is a senior reporter, international affairs, at *NEWSWEEK*. Follow her on X, @dktatlow. John Feng contributed reporting. Cheryl Yu, an independent researcher, contributed research.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Could Influencers Survive a TikTok Ban?

With some content creators able to make good money from views and brand collaborations on the app, losing access to it could come at a high price

▶ AS THE POSSIBILITY OF A U.S. ban on TikTok looms, influencers have found themselves grappling with the potential ramifications on their careers and livelihoods.

The video-sharing app—which has 150 million users in the United States—is the cornerstone of many influencers’ online presence, a crucial avenue for audience engagement and a significant source of income.

But, fueled by concerns over national security, on April 24 President Joe Biden signed into law the bill that started a 270-day clock for TikTok’s Chinese parent company ByteDance

to divest their stake in the company, otherwise a U.S. TikTok ban comes into effect. “It’s like a stab in the back,” said Noah Jay Wood, a content creator and actor with 7.2 million followers for his account @noahjaywood on the app.

“TikTok is the foundation of all of my social media platforms. So without TikTok, I would have never grown on like Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube,” he told *Newsweek*.

According to Influency, a platform specializing in influencer marketing, the U.S. has an estimated 10 million influencers.

Increasingly, these

by
**ALICE
GIBBS**

individuals are forging full-time careers in content creation. Goldman Sachs reports that the creator economy, encompassing such influencers, was estimated to be a \$250 billion industry in 2023 and is projected to hit \$480 billion by 2027.

Losing TikTok would entail far more than a decline in followers. “It would be extremely impactful for creators who make a majority of their income through TikTok,” Jess Hunichen, co-founder of a global influencer talent management agency Shine Talent Group, told *Newsweek*. “There’s no question that we would see some very immediate impact.”

Through the TikTok Creator Rewards Program (formerly the Creativity Program Beta), creators can earn between 50 cents and \$1 per 1,000 views—so between \$500 and \$1,000 per 1 million views. While this can prove profitable, there are plenty of caveats with eligibility, content types and what qualifies as a view.

This isn’t the only way creators make money on the platform as they can earn large sums working with brands. For example, TikToker Alex Ojeda, who has 8.4 million followers, told *Business Insider* he charges \$20,000 for a single sponsored video.

Finding a New Home

Despite having large followings across a series of social platforms now, Wood explained that TikTok is the best place for him to keep up with the latest viral trends and gather inspiration. “Now I have to figure out which social media platform I have to...scroll on and find ideas,” he said.

“And that’s super hard too because TikTok has the best algorithm out of all of them.” The app’s algorithm shows videos depending on what it thinks a user would most like to see,





OFFLINE ACTION From far left: TikTok supporters on March 13 at U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.; influencers include Bria Alana, Nupur Sharma and Ayzha Nyree.

concerns, there is optimism among experts. “I understand why creators are worried about how this could affect their income,” Harry Gestetner, co-founder of leading Gen Z creator platform Fanfix, told *Newsweek*.

“In the short term, some creators would take a slight hit on brand deal income as brands reevaluate their influencer and creator marketing strategies. However, over the longer term, most of those ad dollars would just move to other platforms like Instagram,” said Gestetner, who explained that Fanfix is encouraging influencers to build an audience among multiple platforms.

“There will be a technological shift here. And I think it’s kind of akin to, say, the internet or... the rise of AI or iOS,” he said. “I think that generally comes with a lot of worry. However, there’s a huge amount of opportunity that comes out of that. I’m very bullish on the creator economy. I’m very excited about the creator economy. I think creators are very resilient.”

Without TikTok, Hunichen predicts there will be a shift not just to other platforms, but to new forms of content too—meaning influencers could survive a ban on the app. “We’ll see increases in sponsorships of Substacks or podcasts in a less traditional way,” she theorized. “Podcasts have been very numbers-focused, so podcast partnerships may emulate collaborations or partnerships on TikTok and Instagram.”

► **Alice Gibbs** is a *NEWSWEEK* senior internet and trends & culture reporter. Find her on X @alicegibbs_

in contrast to platforms that base what they show on social networks.

Maks Majewski has 2.8 million followers for his handle @thatguymaks and makes videos on everything from *Fortnite* to pranking his parents.

“A TikTok ban would have a huge effect on me,” he told *Newsweek*. “Even though I’m from the U.K., a large proportion of my followers are based in the U.S. [It] would basically more than halve my following if the ban does go through.”

“My income would be hit just due to TikTok being my largest and main platform,” he added. “My main income is based from views and campaigns...[and a ban] would eliminate both if it does happen.... The only option would be to migrate onto another platform. However, TikTok was always the place that made me who I am today and it’ll always feel like home. Not all platforms are as friendly as TikTok.”

Daniel Sango Antonio, @doctor-sango on TikTok, agreed. “TikTok is one of my main income sources,” he told *Newsweek*. “Luckily for me, I’ve got other platforms I can rely on. But it would be nicer if TikTok sticks around.” Whether a ban will come into force is still unclear.

TikTok have remained steadfast in their commitment to fight the ban. In a statement in April, the app’s CEO Shou Zi Chew said: “Rest assured, we aren’t going anywhere.” And despite

“The only option would be to migrate onto another platform. However, TikTok [will] always feel like home. Not all platforms are as friendly as TikTok.”

OPINION

'It's Time to Treat Addiction Like Cancer'

Both are serious illnesses but, unlike those struggling with substance use disorders, I didn't face shame and stigma when seeking help over my tumors

▶ HAVING JUST COMPLETED SIX months of radiation and chemotherapy for stage 3B colorectal cancer, I'm thankful for an exceptional health care experience and the best possible outcome, which doctors cautiously call "No Evidence of Disease."

Though I'll need anxiety-provoking scans every few months for the foreseeable future, my oncologist reviewed my recent results, congratulated me with all the usual caveats and emphasized: "It's not every day I'm able to share such good news."

His declaration left me relieved but painfully aware of persistent disparities, not only in cancer care but [also] in the way we treat other diseases; namely, addiction.

I'm a white, middle-class, well-insured man who has worked in non-profit behavioral health services for more than 30 years, so my social determinants of health are admittedly different to others I met in the infusion room.

Cancer care is far from perfect, but the chasm between addiction and the rest of medicine was at once eye-opening and disheartening.

While substance use disorders are more treatable than ever before, over a million Americans have died from

overdoses during a 20-year-long opioid crisis, and illegally manufactured fentanyl has driven annual fatalities to record highs.

Alcohol still kills more people than any illicit drug, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and the National Institutes of Health-reported surge in drinking during COVID that's been linked to social isolation, job loss, economic hardship and mental health problems has not yet subsided.

Cocaine and methamphetamine use have risen in the last decade, so much so that some experts are warning that stimulant use may become our nation's next drug epidemic.

Cancer and addiction are serious illnesses that become more manageable and survivable with timely detection, front-line treatment, regular follow-ups, a robust support system and a healthy dose of hope.

I've had two types of cancer in two years, and in both instances I was screened, diagnosed early and ushered into care. Doctors designed an evidence-based treatment plan that commenced as soon as I consented.

That's not what usually happens with addiction. In fact, according to Department of Health and Human Services estimates from 2022, only 6

by
**JEFFREY L.
REYNOLDS**



percent of the more than 48 million Americans with a diagnosable substance use disorder received treatment for their condition.

Most of those folks didn't think they had a problem, but others faced barriers to care or were reluctant to seek help. It's no wonder why.

I didn't hide my cancer diagnosis and I didn't need to sneak off to treatment. I never worried about losing my job, housing, custody of my kids or the support of friends and family.

Many people struggling with the disease of addiction, on the other hand, are also battling a deadly combination of private shame and public stigma, deeply rooted in the notion that addiction is a personal choice reflecting a lack of willpower and a moral failing. My loved ones didn't have to spend hours combing the internet and calling dozens of



SORE POINT Of more than 48 million Americans with substance use disorder in 2022, only 6 percent went on to receive treatment.

better suited for more moderate cases before they'll pay for an inpatient stay that's been recommended by a licensed health care professional.

Those who don't die or wind up in jail while failing first are sometimes lucky enough to land in an inpatient rehab, but, even then, insurers arbitrarily limit lengths of stay or abruptly cut reimbursements, forcing a premature discharge. Then they limit follow-up outpatient visits in a way that would be unacceptable for any other disease.

My tumor would probably still be there if my insurer had suddenly decided they would only pay for 11 radiation treatments instead of the 27 my health care team prescribed.

FDA-approved medications like methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone, used in combination with traditional counseling and behavioral therapies, are considered the "gold standard" for treating opioid use disorder.

Yet, those who use medication-assisted treatment to cut their cravings, normalize their brain chemistry and reduce their risk of a fatal overdose are often told that they're "trading one addiction for another" and

are berated for needing a "crutch." Nobody said that about my life-saving radiation, chemotherapy or any of the drugs I was prescribed to manage rough treatment side effects.

I got appointment text reminders, informational videos about what to expect during treatment and my clinical notes were available instantaneously after each visit.

Social workers, a dietitian and other members of the treatment team checked on me during chemo sessions. Case managers and patient navigators from both the hospital and my health insurer called me regularly. I didn't need those services, but I took comfort in the fact that I wasn't battling cancer alone.

When I abruptly stopped taking anti-nausea medication that made me feel loopy, there was no judgment from medical staff and I wasn't considered "non-compliant."

I worry that my cancer could come back, but if it does, nobody will blame me for not "wanting it badly enough." Nobody will accuse me of "relapsing" or suggest that money spent on my treatment was wasted. I wouldn't be thrown out of treatment or shunned in peer support groups.

With renewed hope and a revised treatment plan, I'd live to fight another day. If all else eventually failed, I'd know that my health care team did everything they could to save my life and that my family, friends, co-workers and community not only rallied around me, but also loved me with all their hearts.

People with addiction desperately want and deserve no less. **N**

► **Jeffrey L. Reynolds, Ph.D** is the president/CEO of Family & Children's Association, a New York-based nonprofit organization. All views expressed are the author's own.

facilities hoping they could at least get me on a waiting list. They didn't have to sift through "treatment brokers" who collect commissions from out-of-state rehabs.

Neither they nor I had to battle my health insurance company to get the tumors removed from my nether regions. While each of my expensive treatments had to be preauthorized and my doctors had to continually prove "medical necessity," I got what I needed without a fight.

Health insurers handle conditions above the neck very differently, and getting them to pay for addiction treatment or mental health care in the right setting for an adequate amount of time is soul-sapping.

Insurers routinely require patients with severe substance use disorders to "fail first" at outpatient addiction treatment centers that are

“When I stopped taking anti-nausea medication that made me feel loopy, there was no judgment and I wasn’t considered ‘non-compliant.’”

BIDEN'S BATTLEGROUND ELECTION

A small number of Democrats **PROTESTING**
the president's support for Israel's war in Gaza could
PREVENT him from winning a second term

|
by DANIEL BUSH



ND

AMERICANS AREN'T FIGHTING abroad in Ukraine or Gaza as they once did in Vietnam and Iraq. But growing protests over U.S. military support for Israel have increased the likelihood that 2024 may join 1968 as a rare foreign policy-influenced election—and the fallout could cost President Joe Biden in the critical battleground states he needs for reelection.

The young people, progressives, Arab and Muslim Americans and others—including some Jews—voicing outrage over the killing of tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza in Israel's war on Hamas make up a relatively small part of the electorate, though they've commanded outsized attention by clashing with police on college campuses in an echo of past protests over foreign wars.

But the 2024 election will come down to close races in swing states such as Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Georgia, and if enough Biden supporters stay home or vote for a third-party candidate, it could land former President Donald Trump back in the White House.

"President Biden is playing with fire here," Ahmad Abuznaid, the executive director of US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, told *Newsweek*. "The more death and destruction we see coming out of Gaza, the more people are fed up with it and the more they're questioning our support for the state of Israel," said Abuznaid, speaking on behalf of the group's political advocacy arm.

Foreign policy has traditionally taken a back seat in U.S. elections to economic and other domestic concerns, and polls show foreign policy isn't top of mind for most voters in 2024. But it played a major part in the 1968 election, in which Republican Richard Nixon defeated a Democratic rival as America was roiled by campus protests over the Democratic administration's deepening involvement in Vietnam. In 2004, Republican George W. Bush's handling of the post-9/11 war on terror helped him win reelection, despite a growing antiwar protest movement over Iraq and Afghanistan. Biden is well aware of the political dimensions of Israel's war in Gaza, according to people familiar with his thinking.

"I know he's concerned about it," Chuck Hagel, a former U.S. defense secretary, told *Newsweek*, referring to progressive opposition to the war. But Hagel, who said he has spoken to the president

several times in recent months, added that with Israel and other foreign policy issues, Biden puts political considerations aside to focus on what he "thinks is the right thing to do."

"Overall he's done a very good job of handling a very difficult situation," Hagel said.

A lot can change before Election Day. Biden has increased his criticism of Israel as the war has dragged on. Moves like his early May decision to stop some weapons shipments to Israel if it proceeded with a major offensive in Rafah may win back some voters he's alienated in recent months.

Israel and the militant group Hamas could reach a ceasefire agreement that ends the fighting in Gaza. In Europe, Ukraine could regain momentum now that Congress has passed a long-stalled military aid package to help Kyiv in its war with Russia—though support for Ukraine in that war has been less contentious among Biden's supporters. A majority of Democratic voters support aiding Ukraine, and congressional Democrats voted overwhelmingly in favor of the latest aid package.

But with no immediate end in sight to the war in Gaza, the Middle East could continue dominating headlines, forcing Biden to potentially grapple with protests through the August Democratic National Convention in Chicago in an echo of the chaotic scenes from 1968 when police clashed with antiwar

POLITICS ASIDE

From left: Biden greets Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu upon arrival in Israel on October 18, 2023; pro-Palestinian protesters and police face off at Portland State University in Oregon on May 2, 2024.





“Twenty years ago there was much more **OVERLAP** in the news sources for young and old...[today,] TikTok is the number one source of **INFORMATION** on the war in Gaza for young people.”

protesters at the Democratic convention in the same city. “Right now it’s all about the margins, and Biden can’t afford to be losing voters on the margins,” Thomas Patterson, a political scientist at the Harvard Kennedy School, told *Newsweek*.

“In the post-World War Two period, foreign policy has only played a big role in U.S. elections when things aren’t going well,” Patterson added, and with Gaza, “Biden’s gotten himself into a no-win situation.”

Political Fallout in Key Battlegrounds

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY BUILT UP SUPPORT WITH Arab and Muslim Americans in the post-9/11 years, when then-President Bush launched two wars in the Middle East and the Republican Party was tied to a neoliberal foreign policy agenda that fell from favor as the wars dragged on.

But Biden’s military support for Israel has eroded some of the goodwill Democrats established with those groups over the past two decades, political strategists, historians and Middle East analysts said.

“There is no question at this point that [Biden’s military support for Israel] is going to seriously affect Arab American voters,” James Zogby, the president of the Arab American Institute, told *Newsweek*.

The Trump campaign did not respond to a request for comment from *Newsweek*. The Biden campaign defended Biden’s handling of the conflict in Gaza.

“The President shares the goal for an end to the violence and a just, lasting peace in the Middle East. He’s working tirelessly to that end,” Charles Lutvak, a Biden campaign spokesperson, said in a statement to *Newsweek*. Lutvak also argued voters would side with Biden when comparing his

foreign policy record with Trump's. "Joe Biden's decades of experience in foreign policy and deep relationships with our allies make him exactly the leader America needs on the global stage in this moment. Trump, on the other hand, nearly tweet-ed our way into a nuclear war with North Korea and weakened our leadership around the world by praising Vladimir Putin and other dictators," Lutvak said. "A second Trump term threatens to be even worse."

The domestic political fallout from the war in Gaza has cast a spotlight in particular on Arab and Muslim Americans, overlapping groups that make up a small portion of the U.S. population but that could have a big impact in a few critical battle-ground states.

Just 1 percent of U.S. residents—3.5 million peo-ple—identified as being of Middle Eastern or North African descent, according to the 2020 Census, a total that includes Arabic and non-Arabic speak-ers and other ethnic and racial groups. The census doesn't collect information on religious affiliation,

HISTORIC ACTIONS

From left: U.S. tanks near the Kuwait-Iraq border in March 2003, a day after Bush ordered Hussein to leave or face direct conflict with America; antiwar protesters outside the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968; the aftermath of rioting in Lawndale, Illinois, following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.



but a widely cited Pew Research Center study found there were 3.4 million Muslims in America in 2017—and estimated the number would double by 2050. According to a separate Pew study published last month, 66 percent of Muslim Americans say they are Democrats or left-leaning independents.

Those voting blocs are small, but they're clustered in big enough numbers in places like Michigan to impact key statewide elections.

Michigan's Arab American population is the larg-est as a percentage of a state's population of any state in the country, according to the Arab American In-stitute. There were also 206,050 registered Muslim voters in Michigan in the 2020 presidential elec-tion—more than Biden's 154,000-vote margin of victory over Trump in the state. More than 100,000 voters in Michigan's Democratic primary in Febru-ary voted "uncommitted" to register opposition to Biden's support for Israel in its war with Hamas.

And Michigan isn't alone. The battleground states of Wisconsin and Pennsylvania are also home to Arab and Muslim American communities that are larger than Biden's narrow victory mar-gin in those states in the last election. More than 48,000 voters in Wisconsin's Democratic primary last month cast "uninstructed" ballots as an anti-war vote, in a state Biden won by just 20,000 votes.

Nationally, 1.5 million Muslim Americans voted in the 2020 presidential election, a turnout rate of 71 percent according to a report on the election by Million Muslim Votes, a grassroots group. That turnout doesn't have to dip too much in Michigan and other battlegrounds to help swing the election to Trump, Democratic strategists and others said.

"I don't think that Arab Americans are coming back to him" after Gaza, Celinda Lake, Biden cam-paign's 2020 chief pollster, told *Newsweek*.

The Youth Revolt

THE PROTESTS OVER GAZA ON CAMPUSES ACROSS THE country, from Columbia University in New York City to USC in Los Angeles, have made clear Biden faces a growing backlash from young people on the left—regardless of race, ethnicity or religious beliefs.

The moment represents a turning point for a di-verse generation of younger progressives who op-pose Israel's policies toward Palestinians and who view the current war as a genocide, said Abuznaid, the head of US Campaign for Palestinian Rights.



“Support for Israel’s genocide is incredibly unpopular right now with young people and people of color,” Abuznaid said, noting that this was “President Biden’s base.”

Public polls show a broad divide in attitudes between younger and older Americans on the worst outbreak of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in decades. Hamas killed some 1,200 people in the October 7 attack inside Israel and abducted 250 more. Israel responded with a military campaign in Gaza that has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians according to Gaza’s Hamas-run health authority, which doesn’t distinguish between combatants and civilians.

One poll by the Arab American Institute taken in January found that 37 percent of people aged 18 to 29 felt increased sympathy toward Palestinians as a result of the current war, compared to just 19 percent of all American adults who said they felt the same way. A separate March poll by Gallup found that just 38 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds held a favorable view of Israel, compared to 71 percent of Americans 55 and older who view Israel favorably.

Younger voters are critical to Biden’s success in November. He relied on young and nonwhite voters to beat Trump in 2020, carrying the 18- to 29-year-old vote by 24 points according to national exit polls. Biden’s support among young

Black and Latino voters was even higher. Experts said the Gaza protests also reflect a broader frustration among young people of all backgrounds who want the Biden administration to address issues such as student loan debt and housing affordability at home instead of spending billions on things like military aid to Israel.

Young people’s frustration over U.S. foreign policy isn’t new, of course. But while the protests today have drawn comparisons to the antiwar protests over Iraq and Vietnam that marked the 2004 and 1968 elections, experts said 2024 is unique for reasons beyond the fact that America doesn’t have troops on the ground fighting in the Middle East or Europe.

The country is far more polarized now along party lines than it was during the Iraq and Vietnam

FOREIGN POLICY played a major part in the 1968 election in which Republican Richard Nixon defeated a Democratic rival as **AMERICA WAS ROILED** by campus protests over the Democratic administration’s deepening involvement in Vietnam.



criminal charges in four separate cases that he says are politically motivated.

Most voters will be focused on the economy, immigration, abortion and other issues and not on foreign policy, Robert Blizzard, a Republican pollster, told *Newsweek*. “This election is going to be a referendum on the Biden economy versus a referendum on Trump’s personality,” Blizzard said.

Still, reminders of past inflection points in American politics remain, said Zogby, the head of the Arab American Institute.

“I go back to ‘68,” Zogby said. The Vietnam War wasn’t the only factor that tipped the election to Richard Nixon, “but you can’t deny that it played a critical role,” he said. Israel’s war in Gaza has raised similar questions today. For young progressive voters and others angry with Biden’s support for Israel, “the choice is not Trump or Biden,” Zogby said. “It’s, Do I vote [for Biden] or not vote at all?”

“Right now it’s **ALL ABOUT THE MARGINS,** and Biden can’t afford to be **LOSING VOTERS** on the margins.”

eras. Biden’s embrace of international alliances and Trump’s isolationism offers voters an even starker foreign policy choice than in previous elections, historians and others said. Social media has also transformed the way the public absorbs information on foreign events, helping drive the age gap in public opinions on Gaza.

“Twenty years ago there was much more overlap in the news sources for young and old,” said Lake, the Democratic pollster. Today, “TikTok is the number one source of information on the war in Gaza for young people,” she said, giving them greater access to graphic images of the violence in Gaza than older Americans typically see in mainstream news outlets.

“They are watching two very different wars,” Lake said.

The 2024 White House race also defies easy comparison to past presidential elections due to other factors that have nothing to do with Gaza. It’s the first U.S. presidential election between two major-party candidates who are both over 70 years old, and Trump’s run for a second term comes as he faces

Biden’s ‘Political Calculation Is Off’

THE BIDEN CAMPAIGN IS BETTING HIS SUPPORTERS will ultimately back him over Trump, despite any lingering anger some may have over Gaza. Democrats believe that by the fall, left-leaning voters will start focusing more on Trump’s 2024 campaign promises.

As a 2024 candidate, Trump has said he would reinstate his administration’s travel ban targeting Muslim-majority countries, enact the biggest deportation program in American history as part of a crackdown on illegal immigration and reevaluate “NATO’s purpose and NATO’s mission.” He has also said that in a second term he would urge Russia “to do whatever the hell they want” to NATO members that don’t meet defense spending requirements.

Trump has also been a steadfast supporter of Israel and although he has appeared more critical of its handling of the war in recent weeks, he has given no indication he would adopt policies over Gaza that would please progressives more.

“I have a very high level of concern” about

ACTIVIST GENERATION
Clockwise from above: Pro-Israel demonstrators near Columbia University in New York City on May 6; pro-Palestinian activists on May 9 at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.; boys observing smoke from Israeli strikes on May 13 in Rafah, Gaza Strip.



FROM LEFT: SPENCER PLATT/GETTY; KENT NISHIMURA/GETTY; AFP/GETTY

Trump's leadership if he returns to the White House, Hagel—the former Republican U.S. senator from Nebraska who served as defense secretary in the Obama administration—said in the *Newsweek* interview. “I think he would be disastrous for this country and the world.”

Voters have historically rejected presidential candidates with extreme foreign policy views, said Elaine Kamarck, a senior fellow at Brookings and former Clinton White House official. “Biden is much more of a traditional American president in many ways, but particularly on America’s role in the world,” Kamarck told *Newsweek*. Trump has shown he’s “really not in the mainstream of American foreign policy.”

The president’s approach to Israel may also wind up being more in line with most Americans’ views, even if it alienates some progressives on the far left. It is possible that “the kind of middle-ground messaging of American international leadership and having a sense of order on campuses [appeals to] a larger group of people than the people who aren’t going to vote for him” over Gaza, Jeremy Ben-Ami, the president of J Street, a liberal advocacy group, told *Newsweek*. Others said appealing to the middle was a mistake that may cost Biden the election.

“His political calculation is off,” Abuznaid said. “President Biden is not reading the room.” **N**

ISOLATIONIST-IN-CHIEF

Trump—pictured here on May 13 at his New York City criminal trial over payments of hush money—promotes a more extreme foreign policy than Biden.



VOTES OF

NO CONFIDENCE

Why recent U.K. election results will ring alarm bells for Joe Biden *by* EWAN PALMER

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN MAY BE looking across the Atlantic with trepidation as Britain's left-leaning Labour Party suffers heavy losses among Muslim voters across the country.

Earlier this month, England and Wales saw hundreds of local council, mayoral and police crime commissioner elections taking place, with the opposition Labour Party scoring a number of key victories in the latest sign that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the Tory Party are on course for a crushing defeat in the next as-yet unannounced U.K. general election.

Nevertheless, Labour lost scores of votes in areas with significant Muslim populations, with the BBC reporting that the party's vote is down 8 percent compared to last year in wards where more than one in 10 residents identify as Muslim. The falling Muslim support is seen as a direct response to how Labour and its leader, Keir Starmer, reacted to Israel's war against Palestinian militant group Hamas in Gaza.

Just like Biden, Starmer has been criticized for his handling of the Israel conflict, including not calling for a full ceasefire to end the violence sooner. A YouGov survey published March 1 found that just 14 percent of Britons believe Starmer has handled Labour's response to the conflict well, compared to 52 percent who believe he has handled it badly.

Labour's national campaign coordinator, Pat McFadden, said on the LBC radio station that the war in Gaza has affected Labour's support with the Muslim population in the local elections.



WARNING SIGNS Despite many wins, local election results showed declining votes for the Labour Party in wards with more than one in 10 Muslim residents, likely a result of party leader Starmer's response to the conflict between Israel and Hamas. Clockwise from top left: Counting London ballots; protesters calling for an arms embargo against Israel on London's Waterloo Bridge on May 11; counting ballots in Birmingham, England; Starmer on May 3 in Northallerton, England.

"There's no point in me coming on your program and denying that's the case," McFadden said. "And I'm not surprised that people have strong feelings about this issue. And so many thousands of innocent people have been killed and people want it to stop, and we do, too."

Biden has also faced intense scrutiny from progressive members of his own party and the U.S. Muslim population for his handling of and response to Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza.

The criticism against the president has risen in recent weeks amid tension and violence on college campuses across the country with pro-Palestinian demonstrations.

The outcry could affect the 2024 presidential election, especially if it decides who is victorious in the

swing state of Michigan, which has the largest U.S.-Arab population in the nation. Biden won Michigan by three points over Donald Trump in 2020 and will need to hold on to it and other battleground states if he hopes to win a second term in office.

There has already been a sign of discontent in Michigan over Biden's handling of the Israel-Hamas conflict. In February, Biden easily won the Democratic primary in the Wolverine State. However, the results were slightly tarnished by "uncommitted" getting more than 100,000 votes (13.3 percent) in what was seen as a major protest vote against the president.

In April, an Emerson College Polling/The Hill swing state poll showed that Trump is just one point ahead of Biden in Michigan (45 percent to 44

percent). *Newsweek* contacted Biden's campaign team for comment via email.

Elsewhere, a group of Muslim leaders in several 2024 swing states such as Michigan, Georgia and Pennsylvania announced in December 2023 the #AbandonBiden campaign over anger at the president's response to the Israel-Hamas conflict.

"We believe that we are not going to allow this country to continue to uplift the military industrial complex and continue to get us into wars and continue to not value life," organizer Jaylani Hussein told *Newsweek*.

According to FiveThirtyEight's national polling-average tracker for the presidential election, as of press time, Trump was ahead with 41.3 percent compared to Biden with 40.3 percent. **N**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LEON NEAL/GETTY; HENRY NICHOLLS/APP/GETTY; ANTHONY DEVILIN/GETTY; IAN FORSYTH/GETTY

▶ THE WORLD'S MOST LOVED WORKPLACES® ARE REMARKABLE FOR a variety of reasons. Beyond just the considerations of pay and benefits, they lead in terms of employee satisfaction, workplace culture and providing the tools for employees to do their best work. Statistics published in a 2023 Pew Research Center report found that just about half—51 percent—of respondents in a survey of U.S. workers were “highly satisfied” with their job. But when looking at more specific qualities, the survey found that fewer than half expressed high levels of satisfaction with the amount of feedback they receive from their manager and their chance to develop new skills. And only one-third were satisfied with their opportunities for promotion. With workplace fulfillment across all aspects of a job so rare, the companies spotlighted here are each distinguished for earning high marks from their employees. To recognize these companies, *Newsweek* partnered with the Best Practice Institute for the second annual Global Most Loved Workplaces® ranking, which is based on BPI's Love of Workplace Index™ analysis of employee-provided data, including information from online ratings and interviews with company officials. The analysis considers areas like a company's level of collaboration, how workers feel about their future at the workplace, the alignment between employee and employer values, the perceived amount of respect for employees and opportunities for career achievement. Altogether, 2 million employees were surveyed and several hundred company officials were interviewed to compile a ranking of the top 100 most loved global companies. *Newsweek* is pleased to acknowledge them with a spot on this list. ▶ **Nancy Cooper**, *Global Editor in Chief*



Most Loved Workplaces®

2024



INSPIRATION/GETTY

JUNE 07, 2024

Methodology

NEWSWEEK'S RANKING OF THE 2024 Global Most Loved Workplaces® pays tribute to companies that put trust, belonging and respect for their employees at the center of their business model and, in doing so, have earned the loyalty and respect of the people who work for them.

The list was created in partnership with Best Practice Institute (BPI). BPI is a benchmark research company that studies and identifies the specific management practices that lead to employee motivation and satisfaction and has documented the vital link between worker satisfaction and productivity and performance. BPI measures five primary areas to determine how employees feel about where they work to create the Most Loved Workplaces® list: the level of collaboration at the workplace, how positive workers are about their future at the company, how much employer values align with employee values, respect at all levels and career achievement. In consultation with *Newsweek* editors, BPI also considered employee wellness, diversity, inclusion, career advancement and other workplace and talent development initiatives.

Altogether, more than 2 million employees were surveyed at companies ranging in size from 10 employees to more than 10,000. Additionally, several hundred company officials were interviewed.

To identify the top 100 companies ranked in this *Newsweek* publication, companies were evaluated and scored as follows: 50 percent of the initial score was based on direct employee responses to BPI's proprietary Love of Workplace Index® assessment. Another 15 percent was derived from analysis of external public ratings from sites such as Comparably, CareerBliss, Glassdoor, Indeed and Google. The final 35 percent came from BPI's direct interviews and written responses from company officials. *Newsweek* then researched every company on the list to determine the final list of 100 companies and their rankings.

The rankings combine proprietary quantitative and qualitative analysis developed by Best Practice Institute in partnership with The School of International and Public Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh and featured in the book *In Great Company* (McGraw-Hill, 2019) by BPI and Most Loved Workplace® founder Louis Carter.

Go to [MostLovedWorkplace.com](https://www.MostLovedWorkplace.com) to learn more about becoming a certified Most Loved Workplace® and be considered for future lists.

- 1 Navro**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 95
- 2 Żabka Group**
POLAND 🇵🇱 3,000
- 3 Supercharge**
HUNGARY 🇭🇺 220
- 4 FloQast**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 650
- 5 Petfolk**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 200
- 6 Advithri Technologies LLC**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 181
- 7 HLB International**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 46,755
- 8 OxfordSM**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 33
- 9 Auticon UK**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 63
- 10 YouScan**
UKRAINE 🇺🇦 59
- 11 Aperia**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 65
- 12 Relay Payments**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 122
- 13 Kevel**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 100
- 14 Kraken**
REMOTE 🌐 2,400
- 15 Zyte**
IRELAND 🇮🇪 235
- 16 SamsungFood**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 97
- 17 Everest Infrastructure Partners**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 84
- 18 Synctera**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 94
- 19 Wyndham**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 2,257
- 20 O2e**
CANADA 🇨🇦 700
- 21 AirHelp**
GERMANY 🇩🇪 401
- 22 BVNK**
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 77
- 23 NIBRT**
(National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training)
IRELAND 🇮🇪 105

Tanium





AirHelp

24 Chainlink Labs
REMOTE 🇺🇸 303

25 PureSpectrum
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 211

26 Tanium
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,815

27 Hack Health
CHINA 🇨🇳 47

28 Rapid Transformation Therapy
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 82

29 Skillshare
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 150

30 Tiger Recruitment
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 55

31 Thesis
REMOTE 🇺🇸 82

32 Cynthus
MEXICO 🇲🇽 52

33 Incyte
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 2,500

34 ZapAI
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 10

35 STRYDE
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 71

36 Bizzabo
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 165

37 Kyndryl
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 80,000

38 Daemon
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 124

39 Simprints
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 50

40 Barrows North America
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 50

41 LHi
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 337

42 Day Translations
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 74

43 Damex
GIBRALTAR 🇮🇪 45

44 Celigo
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 719

COURTESY OF TANIUM; AIRHELP

45 Automattic
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,944

46 Bold Business
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 375

47 Cielo
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 3,500

48 EPAM
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 53,150

49 Stihl
GERMANY 🇩🇪 19,805

50 Automation Anywhere
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,500

51 TravelPerk
SPAIN 🇪🇸 1,200

52 Apollo Health and Lifestyle
INDIA 🇮🇳 5,187

53 Conduent
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 56,676

54 Wellcom
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 130

55 Dayforce
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 8,500

56 Pexapark AG
SWITZERLAND 🇨🇭 104

57 Milliken & Company
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 8,000

58 Altair
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 3,179

59 Session AI
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 60

60 Karyopharm
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 315

61 Aspire Systems
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 180

62 Activpayroll
SCOTLAND 🇬🇧 365

63 Mehiläinen
FINLAND 🇫🇮 36,000

64 TITANS freelancers
SLOVAKIA 🇸🇰 40

65 Flo Health
ENGLAND 🇬🇧 467





COURTESY OF TRAVELPERK, HEMPEL

- 66 Ipsy**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 511

- 67 Eaton**
IRELAND 🇮🇪 92,000

- 68 Exabeam**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 459

- 69 Mitgo**
GERMANY 🇩🇪 568

- 70 Arista Networks**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 4,023

- 71 Thryv**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 3,040

- 72 Samuel & Sons Passementerie**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 100

- 73 GRENKE Italia**
GERMANY 🇩🇪 2,100

- 74 Hunter Fan Company**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 195

- 75 All for One Group**
GERMANY 🇩🇪 3,000

- 76 Advanced Call Center Technologies**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 12,000

- 77 Mohegan**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 11,007

- 78 Zebra Technologies**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 10,034

- 79 Palo Alto Networks**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 11,000

- 80 Hempel**
DENMARK 🇩🇪 7,600

- 81 tbi bank**
BULGARIA 🇬🇧 1,900

- 82 Truckrr Information Services**
INDIA 🇮🇳 50

- 83 Finn**
GERMANY 🇩🇪 350

- 84 Ansys**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 6,409



- 85 KnowBe4**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,764

- 86 ABC Fitness**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,277

- 87 Synopsys Inc.**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 20,870

- 88 Firstup**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 384

- 89 Split**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 144

- 90 The RepTrak Company**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 144

- 91 RKD**
IRELAND 🇮🇪 230

- 92 Sonar**
SWITZERLAND 🇨🇭 520

- 93 Titmouse**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 1,333

- 94 Greif**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 40,000

- 95 Funnel**
SWEDEN 🇸🇪 315

- 96 Brisa**
TURKEY 🇹🇷 750

- 97 Nosto**
FINLAND 🇫🇮 204

- 98 Unisys**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 16,100

- 99 Everise**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 15,000

- 100 IDEAL Industries Inc.**
UNITED STATES 🇺🇸 840

“The script was just the most beautiful writing I’ve ever read.” ▶ P.46



Fiction



PAGE-TO-SCREEN

Big Swiss
BY JEN BEAGIN
SCRIBNER | \$17

This book made me laugh harder than I have in a while! Absurd and witty at the same time, Beagin’s novel follows the captivating story of Greta, a 45-year-old woman who finds work transcribing therapy sessions for a sex therapist in Hudson, New York. As the characters in her headphones become real-life acquaintances, and even friends, the story spirals into a captivating read that will have you doubled over in laughter. Read it before the HBO series comes out!

▶ **Katherine Fung**, Senior U.S. Reporter



SCIENCE FICTION

Edge of Here: Stories From Near to Now
BY KELECHI OKAFOR
TRAPEZE | \$23.74

Combining sci-fi, romance and social issues might sound heavy, but these eight short stories will leave you wanting more. *Black Mirror* fans will love the way Okafor seamlessly weaves futuristic technology and spirituality into tales exploring contemporary Black womanhood and relationships. Thought-provoking and enjoyable, I’m looking forward to seeing what Okafor has up her sleeve next.

▶ **Carrie Anderson**, Senior Editor, Print & Digital

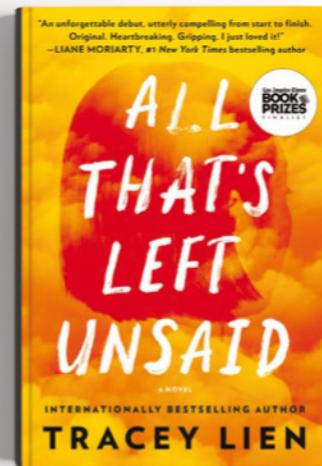


HISTORICAL FICTION

Daughters of Shandong
BY EVE J. CHUNG
BERKLEY | \$28

This expansive novel is a beautiful, heartbreaking story of a Chinese girl amid civil war and the Communist Revolution. It explores the bonds of family and the consequences of the society’s patriarchal values. Chung’s debut is based on her grandmother’s harrowing trek across mainland China—from her family estate in the countryside to refugee camps in Hong Kong and finally Taiwan. *Daughters of Shandong* brings to life brave women who seek to control their own fate in the face of insurmountable odds.

▶ **Meredith Wolf Schizer**, Senior Editor



THRILLER

All That's Left Unsaid
BY TRACEY LIEN | WILLIAM MORROW PAPERBACKS | \$18.99

This gripping mystery set in the outer suburbs of Sydney examines how bigotry dismantles the engineering of successful societies. It’s a suspenseful story with some incisive politics to boot.

▶ **Tom Norton**, Fact Check Reporter



THRILLER

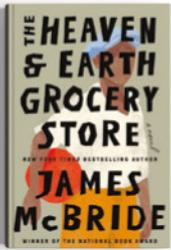
The Housemaid Is Watching
BY FREIDA MCFADDEN
POISONED PEN PRESS | \$17.99

This book will make you forget you have a job, dinner to cook and plans with friends until you finish. Arguably the best of the series, Millie’s

stunning complexity blows away any worry of “trilogy syndrome” as she takes you with her family into their new cul-de-sac of horror. She’s your new best friend solving the mystery of what the heck happened next door.

Gray R. Thomas, Publishing Editor

GETTY; ALL BOOK JACKETS COURTESY OF PUBLISHERS; TOP RIGHT: MARLEEN MOISE/WIREIMAGE



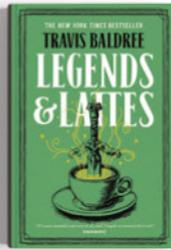
HISTORICAL FICTION

The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store

BY JAMES MCBRIDE
RIVERHEAD BOOKS | \$28

With no crazy twists or turns, it's just a captivating story about what happens when a community comes together to help each other out. At its core, this book is about the best parts of humanity defeating the worst parts to save a young boy's life.

► **Jenni Fink**, Senior Editor, National News



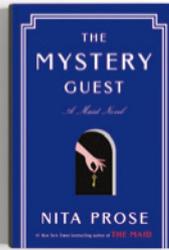
FANTASY

Legends & Lattes

BY TRAVIS BALDREE
TOR BOOKS | \$29.99

"High fantasy, low stakes," reads the blurb for this wonderfully warm, cozy and heartwarming tale of an orc giving up the adventuring life to open a cafe. Hooked readers can also check out the bookstore-centric prequel with a coastal setting perfect for summer.

► **Thomas Kika**, Weekend Staff Writer



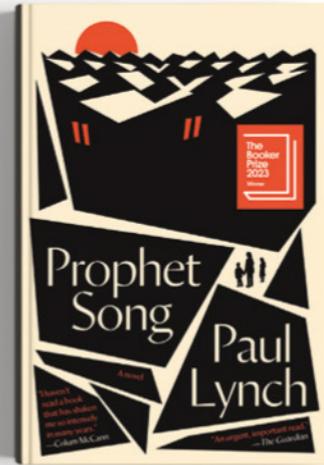
WHODUNIT

The Mystery Guest

BY NITA PROSE
BALLANTINE BOOKS | \$29

It's like *Murder, She Wrote* meets *Monk*. This second installment of the series—the continued adventures of Molly the maid who just can't seem to escape people ending up dead around her—certainly lives up to how great the first book was.

► **H. Alan Scott**, Senior Editor



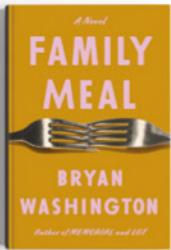
REAL-WORLD MEETS FICTION

Prophet Song

BY PAUL LYNCH | ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS | \$26

This novel imagines a near-future Ireland electing a fascist party with unimaginable consequences. Told through the story of a mother and her family, it evokes Ukraine, Gaza and refugee crises the world over.

► **Ben Kelly**, Audience Editor



LGBTQ+ STORIES

Family Meal

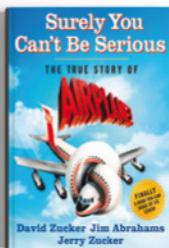
BY BRYAN WASHINGTON
RIVERHEAD BOOKS | \$28

Washington's sophomore novel is a tender story of former best friends who come back into each other's lives as they deal with grief, intimacy and finding community. It's about the relationships that give us strength when we need it most.

► **Katherine Fung**, Senior U.S. Reporter



Nonfiction



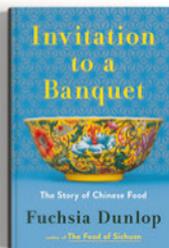
COMEDY

Surely You Can't Be Serious: The True Story of Airplane!

By David Zucker, Jim Abrahams, Jerry Zucker
St. Martin's Press | \$35

Airplane! was one of those classic comedy movies every kid grew up watching, even if a few of the gags flew a little over our heads—pun intended. The yardstick against which all spoof comedy should be judged, more than 40 years after its original release, this breezy oral history brings together the surviving principal players for an often-hilarious look back at how this enduring favorite found its way to the big screen against all odds.

► **Jack Beresford**, Senior Internet Trends & Culture Reporter



COOKING

Invitation to a Banquet: The Story of Chinese Food

By Fuchsia Dunlop
W. W. Norton & Company | \$32.50

A mouthwatering ramble through Chinese cuisines that highlights the incredible variety they bring to the senses. This entertaining work draws on the author's rare expertise and decades of experience. It is also a masterly explanation of Chinese history, society and geography—from the Middle Kingdom to diaspora communities who learned to conjure up new recipes that became popular locally even if they were unheard of back home.

► **Matthew Tostevin**, Standards Editor



HISTORY

On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe

By Caroline Dodds Pennock
Knopf | \$32.50

A dazzling book that completely upends your perception of Native Americans during the Age of Discovery. Pennock shines a light on the forgotten Indigenous Americans who during the 15th and 16th centuries ventured over to Europe—whether as slaves, diplomats or even royalty—and proceeded to profoundly change what Europeans dubbed the “Old World” just as much as colonizers transformed the new one.

► **Alfred Joyner**, News Director



CURIOUS MINDS

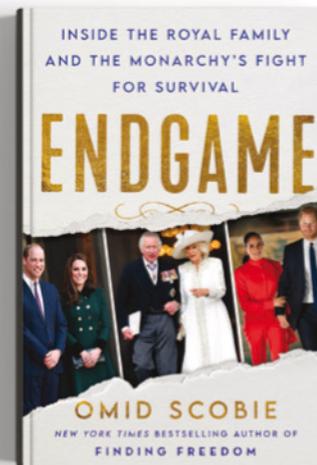
The Age of Magical Overthinking: Notes on Modern Irrationality

By Amanda Montell
Atria/One Signal | \$28.99

After reading her two previous books (*Wordslut* and *Cultish*), I genuinely believe Montell can do

no wrong—and in fact, her latest work is just as brilliant. I would admit I'm partial, but I swear this one is bound to improve any reader's life—if anything, because it talks about all of us and our cognitive biases.

► **Giulia Carbonaro**, U.S. News Reporter



THE ROYALS

Endgame: Inside the Royal Family and the Monarchy's Fight for Survival

By Omid Scobie | Dey Street Books | \$32



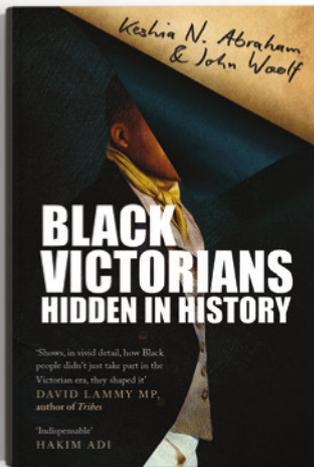
THE ROYALS

The Making of a King: King Charles III and the Modern Monarchy

By Robert Hardman | Pegasus Books | \$35

No one royal book can tell you all you need to know, as all of them offer a particular perspective. These two will go really well together if you're the kind of person who wants to hear both sides and decide for yourself. In *Endgame*, Harry and Meghan's perspective on monarchy is fused with a timely add-on about growing Republican sentiment in Britain. After the prosecution, read Hardman for the defense.

► **Jack Royston**, Chief Royal Correspondent



BLACK HISTORY

Black Victorians Hidden in History

By Keisha N. Abraham and John Woolf

Duckworth Books | \$25

I'm a big fan of period pieces like *The Gilded Age* and *Victoria* as well as historical nonfiction. Similarly, *Black Victorians* thoroughly and eloquently illuminates the lives and impact of both prominent and ordinary Black Brits in the 19th century.

► **Jennifer H. Cunningham**, Executive Editor



POP CULTURE

One in a Millennial: On Friendships, Feelings, Fangirls, and Fitting In

By Kate Kennedy
St. Martin's Press | \$30

Podcaster Kate Kennedy takes millennial women on a trip down memory lane. Through a series of essays, Kennedy highlights how things like American Girl dolls, mall trips to collect our favorite Bath & Body Works scents and AOL Instant Messenger shaped our early childhoods, but also later dives into how to navigate "love, marriage and a baby carriage" IRL. It's a great blast from the past (remember gel pens and popular girl handwriting?) and very relatable to many millennial women in her discussions about being online, reproductive rights and mental health.

► **Ashley Park**, Recruitment Manager



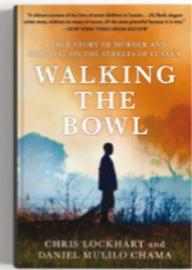
FINANCIAL LITERACY

Rich Dad Poor Dad: What the Rich Teach Their Kids About Money—That the Poor and Middle Class Do Not!

By Robert T. Kiyosaki
Plata Publishing | \$18.95

Still relevant more than 25 years after its initial publication, this compelling narrative contrasts two fathers' financial philosophies. I appreciate its insightful exploration of financial literacy, independence and building wealth through investments. This transformative read challenges conventional wisdom and encourages readers to rethink their relationship with money. The book's practical advice and clear language make complex financial concepts accessible to everyone.

► **Lee Eccleston**, Senior Microsoft 365 Administrator



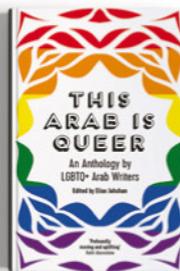
TRUE CRIME

Walking the Bowl: A True Story of Murder and Survival on the Streets of Lusaka

By Chris Lockhart and Daniel Mulilo Chama
Hanover Square Press | \$21.99

Through impressive investigative reporting and fieldwork, *Walking the Bowl* pulls no punches in describing the plight of street children in Zambia's capital. Yes, it is bleak. But it's never gratuitous. The characters' lives are certainly distressing, but they are also compelling. And, just when you think all hope is lost, the story, slowly and surprisingly, begins to move you. It becomes a pay-it-forward-type tale that defies credulity in a way that fiction would never be able to get away with. A gem of nonfiction storytelling.

► **Yannick Demoustier**, Publishing Editor



MEMOIR

This Arab Is Queer: An Anthology by LGBTQ+ Arab Writers

By Elias Jahshan
Saqi Books | \$19.95

A groundbreaking book about LGBTQ+ life and love from the Arab world and its diaspora. A truly unprecedented and eye-opening insight

into a community too often ignored from a group of 18 amazing writers. Perfect for those who love great writing, romance, politics and learning. A necessary read for our times.

► **Shannon Power**, Pop Culture and Entertainment Reporter

French Polynesia: Expanding Its Horizons with the USA

French Polynesia, a scattered archipelago of 118 islands and atolls in the vast South Pacific, is the epitome of paradise. Beyond its stunning beaches and clear waters, it captivates travelers with its rich culture, history, and economic opportunities.

Amidst the turmoil of World War II, the serene shores of Bora Bora emerged as an unexpected bastion of collaboration between French Polynesia and the United States. Over 6,000 American GIs descended upon the island between 1942 and 1946, transforming it into a strategic outpost and fostering a unique cultural exchange with the local Tahitian population. Moetai Brotherson, President of French Polynesia, reflects on this period, noting, "This legacy underscores the strength of our bilateral ties, shaped by shared cultural affinities and mutual interests."

French Polynesia, an overseas collectivity of France, spans over 1,240 miles across five archipelagos: the Austral Islands, the Gambier Islands, the Marquesas Islands, the Society Islands, and the Tuamotu Archipelago. With a population of 310,000, the region boasts an exclusive economic zone of 2.1 million square miles, brimming with potential for sustainable development.

"Our focus lies on tourism, driven by our unparalleled natural beauty," asserts President Brotherson. "Our aim is to welcome 600,000 visitors over a decade, necessitating a redistribution strategy across our five archipelagos."

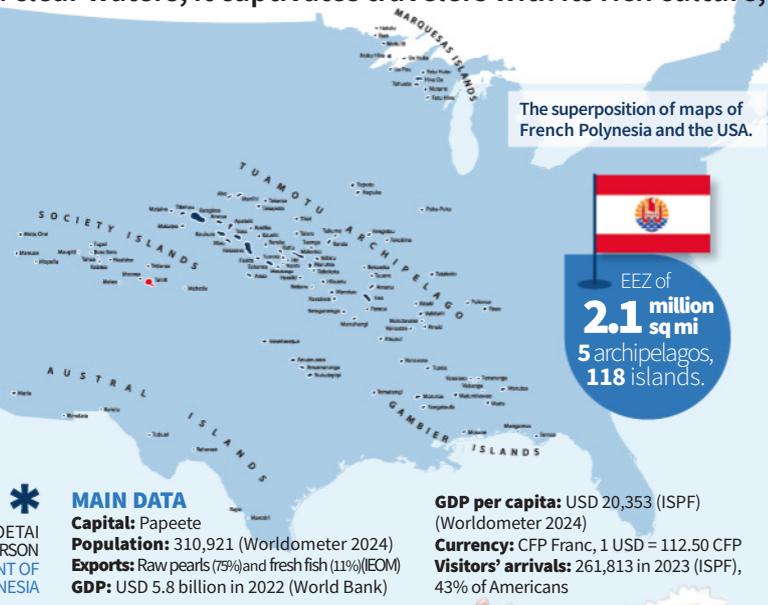
Tourism serves as the cornerstone of French Polynesia's economic strategy, with Jean Marc Mocellin, CEO of Tahiti Tourisme, highlighting the sector's growth. "In 2023, tourist numbers reached a new high of 262,000, up from the previous record of 236,600 in 2019," Mocellin notes. "Tourism contributes 9 to 10% of Polynesian GDP, providing 18% of jobs and involving 5,200 businesses."

President Brotherson underscores the forthcoming surfing event at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Teahupoo, emphasizing the region's status as a top surfing destination. French Polynesia

French Polynesia



*** MOETAÏ BROTHERSON
PRESIDENT OF
FRENCH POLYNESIA**



The superposition of maps of French Polynesia and the USA.



EEZ of
2.1 million sq mi
5 archipelagos,
118 islands.

MAIN DATA

Capital: Papeete
Population: 310,921 (Worldometer 2024)
Exports: Raw pearls (79%) and fresh fish (11%) (IEOM)
GDP: USD 5.8 billion in 2022 (World Bank)

GDP per capita: USD 20,353 (ISPF) (Worldometer 2024)
Currency: CFP Franc, 1 USD = 112.50 CFP
Visitors' arrivals: 261,813 in 2023 (ISPF), 43% of Americans

aims to seamlessly integrate the Olympics into its culture, expecting a surge in post-event tourism driven by curiosity about the historic Olympic venues.

The nation is diversifying its economy beyond tourism, with a focus on sectors such as agriculture and energy transition. Ambitious plans to triple fisheries capacity sustainably are being outlined, alongside efforts to promote ventures in aquaculture and agriculture.

Several success stories stand out in these fields. Tahiti Marine Products, for instance, specializes in breeding and cultivating tropical sea cucumbers, catering to the demands of food supplements, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. Meanwhile, the Laboratoire de

Cosmétologie du Pacifique Sud is renowned for its production of Monoï, exported to global giants like Yves Rocher. Hotu Vanilla is among the few vanilla exporters, showcasing Tahitian vanillas devoted following in international haute cuisine. Yet, to maximize its potential, the industry seeks investors to expand production and satisfy rising demand.

In the domain of energy transition "French Polynesia aims for 75% renewable energy by 2030, primarily through solar projects. Currently, 35-37% of Tahiti's energy comes from hydroelectricity" states Didier Pouzou, CEO of EDT Engie. French Polynesia has been at the forefront of implementing Sea Water Air Conditioning



© Héléne Havard, Tahiti Tourisme.

technology (SWAC) since 2006, utilizing deep ocean water for cooling and emitting far less CO2 than conventional methods. Three SWAC systems are installed at prestigious sites like the Intercontinental hotel in Bora Bora and The Brando hotel on Tetiaroa atoll.

Moreover, French Polynesia is poised to capitalize on the digital economy with Google being set to lay five submarine cables connecting Tahiti to key global destinations, including the US West Coast, Chile, Guam, Fiji, and Australia. The country also aims to attract major film productions and leverage its cinematic landscapes for iconic experiences.

With its pristine landscapes, vibrant culture, and strategic vision for development, this South Pacific gem invites the world to embark on a journey of discovery and possibility. ■

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

- **Stable political environment:** Recent reforms ensure governance continuity, encouraging sustained investment.
- **Advanced infrastructure and amenities:** Robust healthcare system and top-notch facilities offer peace of mind for residents and investors.
- **Favorable regulations:** Tax incentives and land ownership mechanisms attract foreign investment, especially for tourism development.
- **Tourism growth opportunities:** International tender invites investors for hotel construction on prime sites, fostering strategic partnerships.
- **Digital revolution:** Collaboration with Google to lay five submarine cables promises a significant connectivity leap, positioning the country as a hotspot for digital innovation.



Bora Bora: Preserving paradise, pioneering sustainability

Balancing luxury and sustainability in the Pearl of the Pacific. A tale of innovation and conservation in French Polynesia's premier destination.

Bora Bora, often hailed as the “Pearl of the Pacific,” holds a unique position as not only a breathtaking destination but also a beacon of sustainable development in the heart of French Polynesia. Nestled amidst crystal-clear waters and embraced by lush landscapes, Bora Bora's charm transcends its natural beauty; it exemplifies a dedication to responsible tourism and environmental stewardship, aspiring to become a 100% green, carbon-neutral destination.

In a recent interview with Mayor Gaston Tong Sang, the rich history of Bora Bora's evolution emerged. Since his election in 1989, Mayor Tong Sang has spearheaded transformative initiatives to address the island's pressing challenges. These include not only pioneering wastewater sanitation systems but also innovative solutions for providing clean drinking water through advanced desalination technologies. Moreover, Mayor Tong Sang's administration has prioritized modern waste management facilities, ensuring that the island remains clean and attractive to visitors. Embracing renewable energy solutions has been another cornerstone of Bora Bora's sustainability efforts, with ambitious projects underway to transition



*
GASTON
TONG SANG
MAYOR OF BORA
BORA

“We want people who set foot on our island to be considered not as tourists or visitors, but as our guests, our hosts, with all that implies in terms of exchanges, sharing, and mutual respect.”

towards greener energy sources. Mayor Tong Sang aptly emphasizes, “Responsible resource management is the key to success.” Furthermore, Mayor Tong Sang's vision

extends to future endeavors such as the utilization of ocean thermal energy (OTEC) to propel Bora Bora towards a 100% carbon-free destination, a project undertaken in collaboration with the IANOS european consortium (H2020).

Despite the island's enduring charm, Bora Bora faces contemporary hurdles, as highlighted by President of the Tourism Committee, Rainui Besineau. With fluctuating tourist numbers and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining a delicate balance between economic development and environmental preservation is paramount. Rainui Besineau underscores the importance of sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that the island's natural wonders remain unspoiled for generations to come.

Looking ahead, Director General of Services, Maireraurii Leverd, paints a visionary picture of Bora Bora's future. Through ambitious projects like the Vaitape (town) development and innovative environmental programs, Bora Bora seeks to redefine luxury tourism while staying true to its cultural heritage. Leverd's

emphasis on sustainability and conservation reflects a steadfast commitment to safeguarding the island's unique ecosystem.

At the heart of Bora Bora's ethos lies a profound dedication to preserving its pristine environment and cultural identity. Through collaborative efforts and forward-thinking initiatives, Bora Bora sets a global benchmark for sustainable tourism. As Mayor Tong Sang aptly states, “With vision and perseverance, everything is possible.”

As Bora Bora welcomes guests from around the world, it extends an invitation not merely as tourists but as honored guests. Mayor Tong Sang's sentiment resonates deeply: “We want people who set foot on our island to be considered not as tourists or visitors, but as our guests, our hosts, with all that implies in terms of exchanges, sharing, and mutual respect.”

With each passing year, Bora Bora continues to evolve, driven by a commitment to sustainability and a reverence for its natural wonders. From innovative environmental programs to responsible tourism practices, the island charts a course towards a future where paradise remains unspoiled, and every visitor becomes a custodian of its beauty. As the world seeks models of sustainable development, Bora Bora shines as a beacon of hope, proving that preserving paradise is not just a dream but a shared responsibility. 🌿



The Westin Bora Bora Resort & Spa: The Dream Like Never Before

Well-being, sustainability, and cultural immersion converge in a luxurious paradise.

Nestled amidst the breathtaking landscapes of French Polynesia, The Westin Bora Bora Resort & Spa offers an elevated wellness experience amidst a luxurious paradise. With its azure lagoons and lush greenery, Bora Bora stands as a premier destination for travelers seeking a rejuvenating escape.

"French Polynesia is synonymous with peaceful and relaxing vacations, where one can enjoy true serenity," says Melinda Wane, General Manager for the Hospitality Division of the Wane Group, emphasizing the allure of the destination.

Mr. Cesar Marques, General Manager at The Westin Bora Bora, highlights the resort's commitment to providing guests with a unique and unforgettable experience. From the Eco Center Bora Bora promoting environmental awareness to the holistic spa treatments at Heavenly Spa rooted in local traditions, every aspect of the resort reflects a dedication to sustainability, cultural immersion and wellness.

The planned opening in summer 2024 marks the beginning of a new chapter for The Westin Bora Bora. Positioned facing the majestic Otemanu mountain, the resort promises breathtaking views and a serene atmosphere for guests to unwind and recharge.

With a focus on catering to diverse travelers, from honeymooners to families, The Westin Bora Bora offers an array of amenities and activities to suit every preference. Whether it's participating in yoga sessions overlooking the crystal-clear waters, indulging in nutritious cuisine made from locally sourced ingredients, or enjoying holistic spa treatments inspired by tra-



O'A Bar

"French Polynesia is synonymous with peaceful and relaxing vacations, where one can enjoy true serenity."

ditional Polynesian practices, guests are invited to immerse themselves in a culture of wellness and relaxation.

As travelers consider their next tropical getaway, The Westin Bora Bora emerges as a premium destination, where wellness, sustainability,

and cultural immersion combine to offer an unparalleled experience. With its unwavering commitment to providing an unforgettable journey that nourishes the body, mind, and spirit, the resort invites guests to embark on a transformative retreat amidst the luxurious paradise of French Polynesia.



Overwater Villas.



Eco Center Bora Bora: Protecting French Polynesia's Precious Marine Heritage

In the midst of French Polynesia's enchanting Bora Bora lies a sanctuary unlike any other: the Eco Center Bora Bora, located at the heart of The Westin Bora Bora Resort, where a dedicated team is on a mission to safeguard one of the ocean's most cherished inhabitants—the sea turtle. "Sea turtles are not just creatures of the sea; they are ambassadors of our planet's health and vitality," says Ms. Bonfanti, the center's manager, who has dedicated her life to their conservation.

Originally developed in 2000 by the owners of the hotel, who are committed to investing, supporting, and

protecting all ocean activities, this haven serves as a lifeline for these majestic creatures, offering refuge, rehabilitation, and a renewed lease on life. The dedicated team at the Eco Center shares insights into their tireless efforts and the challenges they face in preserving the region's marine heritage.

Sea turtles face perilous threats, ranging from plastic pollution to relentless poaching. The Eco Center Bora Bora champions conservation measures and raises awareness among both locals and visitors.

Since its inception, the Eco Center has cared for over 700 sea turtles,

highlighting the critical need for conservation efforts. With a release rate of 74%, the center's impact offers hope for the future of these majestic creatures.

From state-of-the-art hospital facilities to groundbreaking research initiatives, the center stands at the forefront of marine conservation. As the center undergoes a transformative renovation, it will emerge not just as a sanctuary for sea turtles, but as a beacon of sustainability and ecological stewardship. The reimagined Eco Center Bora Bora promises to protect not only sea turtles but the entire Polynesian marine ecosystem.



Moorea's mountain skyline with Mount Tohi'ea on the left and Mount Roa in the center.

Unveiling Moorea's Natural Treasures: An Expedition of Discovery and Adventure

In the embrace of French Polynesia, lying close to the shores of Tahiti, lies the enchanting island of Moorea, a hidden gem waiting to be explored. With its pristine lagoons, lush valleys, and rich cultural heritage, Moorea offers a paradise for tourists and a promising landscape for responsible investment.

In a recent interview with Mr. Evans Haumani, Mayor of Moorea-Maiao, we delved into the economic dynamics, sustainable initiatives, and tourism prospects of Moorea.

"Tourism is the backbone of our economy," Mr. Haumani stated. Despite facing economic challenges exacerbated by the closure of upscale hotels due to the Covid-19 crisis, Moorea remains resilient. Its population, which nearly doubles on weekends, relies heavily on tourism-related jobs. "Our goal is to create employment opportunities for our youth while preserving our environment". With initiatives such as infrastructure improvements and the establishment of a tourism committee, Moorea aims to

enhance its attractiveness to visitors while ensuring the sustainable development of its resources.

A significant aspect of Moorea's appeal lies in its natural beauty, which is carefully preserved through regulatory tools like the PGEM (Maritime Space Management Plan) for lagoon protection and the promotion of bi-climatic constructions. "We are proud that Moorea is devoid of electric pylons, as electricity is transmitted underground," Mr. Haumani noted, emphasizing the commune's dedication to environmental conservation. Additionally, the municipality has implemented decisive measures to preserve its forests through rigorous policies and partnerships with conservation organizations.

Tourism in Moorea has experienced significant growth in recent years, with over 130 cruise ship stops recorded, attracting visitors from around the globe. "Out of the 90,000 tourists received last year, approximately 70% were American," shared Mr. Haumani. American visitors, in particular, appreciate Moorea's natural splendor and warm hospitality, making them a vital market for the commune's tourism sector.



*
EVANS
HAUMANI
MAYOR OF
MOOREA-MAIAO

"Our goal is to develop sustainable and inclusive tourism."

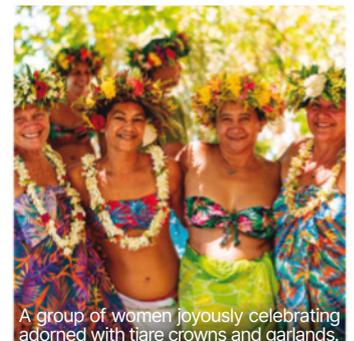
To cater to the growing demand for authentic experiences, Moorea offers a plethora of activities, from diving in the crystal-clear lagoon to exploring lush valleys and cultural landmarks. "We aim to offer an authentic and memorable tourist experience," affirmed the mayor. Moorea's allure lies in its ability to encapsulate the diverse range of tourist activities found across Polynesia within its shores. From exhilarating water sports to immersive cultural encounters, Moorea offers a comprehensive showcase of Polynesian hospitality and adventure.

Furthermore, Moorea's proximity to Tahiti and its unspoiled environment are highly valued by neighboring islands, fostering a commitment to local tourism. By preserving its natural splendor and cultural heritage, Moorea ensures that visitors and locals alike can continue to bask in its splendor for years to come.

For investors eyeing Moorea's potential, the message is clear: responsible investment aligned with sustainable development is key. "Our goal is to develop sustainable and inclusive tourism," Mr. Haumani stated, extending a warm invitation to American investors interested in Moorea's offerings. Moorea stands as a testament to paradise preserved, where natural beauty meets cultural heritage in perfect harmony. ●



A young boy playing the toere, symbol of Moorea's rich cultural heritage.



A group of women joyously celebrating adorned with tiare crowns and garlands.

Robert Wan: A Legacy of Pearl Excellence and a Symbol of French Polynesia

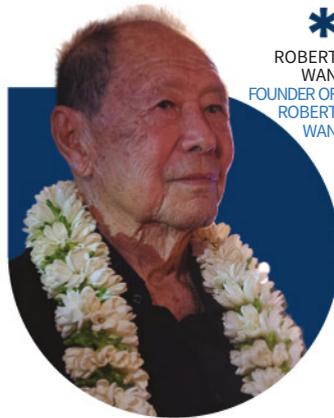


French Polynesia is home to a thriving pearl industry led by Robert Wan, focusing on quality, sustainability and global market adaptability.

In today's world flooded with artificial products, natural treasures like pearls stand out for their rarity and enduring value, cultivated sustainably and with generational expertise. Graded for size and luster, pearls symbolize prosperity and purity, appreciating over time due to limited supply and rising demand. Investing in pearl jewelry offers both aesthetic appeal and potential financial rewards.

For five decades, Robert Wan has been a stalwart in pearl cultivation, a beacon of innovation and resilience amidst the shifting tides of the industry. In an exclusive interview, Mr. Robert Wan, the visionary behind the renowned brand, provides insights into the present condition of the pearl sector, discussing its hurdles and prospects.

The pearl market was valued at USD 10.5 billion in 2022, and it is projected to soar to USD 25 billion by 2030. The exports of raw black pearls, which account for more than half of local product exports in French Polynesia, brought in USD 150 million in 2023 (+182% com-



*
ROBERT
WAN
FOUNDER OF
ROBERT
WAN

“Come, let the allure of pearls guide you on a journey where luxury meets sustainability.”

pared to 2022). Historical buyers of Tahitian pearls, Hong Kong and Japan remain the top two customers in 2022: together, they account for 92% of the pearls exported, followed by the United States. “While the United States and Japan have traditionally been our mainstays, the rise of Asian economies, particularly

China, has ushered in a new era of demand” explains Robert Wan.

During our visit to the Robert Wan Pearl Museum in Papeete, Richard Wan, Manager of Wan Group boutiques, kindly explained the process of creation of the French Polynesia's black pearl. “It starts with nurturing black-lipped pearl oysters in the region's pristine lagoons. After two to three years, skilled divers collect and carefully graft the oysters, stimulating pearl formation. Over time, layers of nacre develop around the nucleus, resulting in the pearl's formation. After two additional years, pearls are harvested, cleaned, sorted, and crafted into exquisite jewelry, highlighting their distinctive allure.”

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, Wan provides a compelling narrative of the pearl market's evolution. From its humble beginnings in 1973 to its current prominence on the shores of Marutea, Robert Wan's journey is one of resilience and adaptation. It began in Gambier before expanding to Marutea in 1984. “In 2006, our production soared to a staggering 4 million pearls, a testament to our



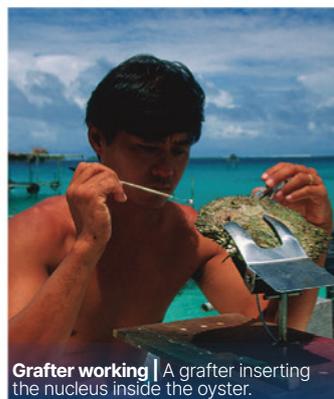
commitment to excellence”. However, he acknowledges the challenges of recent years, noting a decline in production to around 600,000 large-sized pearls by 2023, emphasizing the imperative of quality over quantity in today's market.

In a candid exchange, M. Bruno Wan, Director of Robert Wan, discusses the industry's resilience in adversity. Bruno Wan reflects on COVID-19's impact, emphasizing the company's adaptability. Despite challenges, Wan remains committed to sustainability, exemplified through educational initiatives and community engagement, showcasing Robert Wan's dedication to environmental stewardship and cultural preservation.

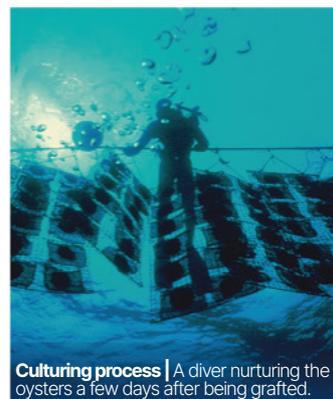
As the interview draws to a close, Wan extends a warm invitation to Newsweek readers, welcoming them to explore the enchanting shores of French Polynesia and immerse themselves in its rich tapestry of culture and natural beauty. “Come, let the allure of pearls guide you on a journey where luxury meets sustainability.”



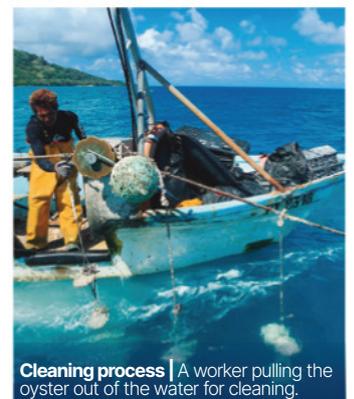
Pearl Farm | Robert WAN Pearl farm in the Gambier archipelago.



Grafter working | A grafter inserting the nucleus inside the oyster.



Culturing process | A diver nurturing the oysters a few days after being grafted.



Cleaning process | A worker pulling the oyster out of the water for cleaning.

Transport and Infrastructure Advancements Pave the Way for Tourism Growth in French Polynesia

French Polynesia is poised for significant advancements in its transport and infrastructure sectors, aiming to bolster its tourism appeal and enhance connectivity both regionally and internationally.



Paul Gauguin navigating the waters of Moorea Island.

President Moetai Brotherson highlights the substantial increase in international flight capacity, with a 40% rise witnessed in recent years. Established carriers like Air France and

newcomers such as French Bee, Delta, and United are expanding their frequencies, complementing the local international airline, Air Tahiti Nui.

Moreover, plans for a second international airport in the Marquesas Is-

lands, particularly on Nuku Hiva, are underway, promising enhanced tourism potential and vital security measures. Minister of Public Works, Jordy Chan emphasizes the importance of the Marquesas Islands' International Airport project, envisioning it as a gateway to tap into tourist traffic from Hawaii. Feasibility studies explore options ranging from a full-fledged international airport to upgraded local facilities, requiring substantial investments and potential public-private partnerships.

In the cruise sector, significant developments are on the horizon. Tahiti Tourisme's CEO, Jean Marc Mocellin, discusses the upcoming new cruise ter-

minal designed to accommodate more passengers comfortably, with facilities akin to those found in airports, ensuring seamless arrivals and departures. According to Bud Gilroy, Chairman of Tahiti cruise tourism represents 25% of tourism revenue and 30% of air arrivals.

Belinda Hindmarsh, Group Deputy CEO Global Business at Ponant, notes the post-COVID growth in cruise passenger numbers, signaling promising demand. The acquisition of the Paul Gauguin vessel and its success in the region underscore the allure of luxury cruise experiences in French Polynesia. Ponant will further expand its fleet in French Polynesia by introducing another vessel, the Jacques Cartier, during the winter of 2026-2027.

With these strategic initiatives, including the Aranui luxury cruise offering immersive journeys through the Marquesas, French Polynesia is set to elevate its status as a premier destination, blending natural beauty with modern amenities and unparalleled hospitality. ●

Air Moana: Navigating the skies of French Polynesia

Amidst the azure waters and lush landscapes of French Polynesia, Air Moana emerges as a beacon of excellence in the domestic airline sector.

French Polynesia is currently experiencing a transformative phase in its domestic airline industry, led by the rapid ascent of Air Moana, a recently established carrier that has quickly solidified its position since its inception in 2023. Olivier-Jean Breaud, CEO of Air Moana, describes their journey as "remarkable, marked by resilience and unwavering commitment to excellence."

Within just one year, Air Moana has secured a significant market share, amounting to around 20%. Raitini Rey, the airline's Deputy General Manager, stresses that their success goes beyond numbers, reflecting their focus on safety, innovation, and customer satisfaction. Operating with two leased ATR



72 600 aircraft and a team of 250 professionals, Air Moana has broken a long term monopoly in French Polynesia.

Setting itself apart with a dedication to modernization and digi-

talization, Air Moana ensures operational efficiency and passenger confidence through advanced technology and stringent safety protocols.

Looking forward, Air Moana aims to expand into the lucrative American market, recognizing the appeal

of French Polynesia to American travelers. With strategic plans in place, the airline seeks to strengthen its presence locally and improve regional connectivity.

Strategic partnerships are integral to Air Moana's growth strategy, exemplified by agreements with key players like Air Tahiti Nui. According to Mr. Breaud, partnerships are crucial for sustainable growth, allowing the airline to leverage expertise and resources for mutual benefit.

Beyond aviation, French Polynesia offers diverse investment and tourism prospects, with its natural beauty, cultural richness, and favorable economic policies. Mr. Rey invites both investors and travelers to explore the untapped potential of the territory.

As a pioneer in French Polynesia's aviation industry, Air Moana is poised to redefine travel experiences and explore new horizons. With the region promising opportunity, the airline invites the world to embark on a journey of discovery and prosperity. ●

Digital Economy and Telecommunications Sector: A Gateway to Innovation

French Polynesia is rapidly emerging as a hotspot for digital innovation and telecommunications advancements. Spearheaded by President Moetai Brotherson, the digital economy has been identified as a priority sector, with immense potential to drive economic growth and foster collaboration in IT, telecommunications, and film production.

A significant milestone in this endeavor is the partnership with Google, marked by the laying of five submarine cables connecting Tahiti to key global destinations, including the US West Coast, Chile, Guam, Fiji, and Australia. According to President Brotherson, this infrastructure upgrade not only meets Google's data needs but also unlocks vast bandwidth potential for local operators, multiplying current capacity by 50 times. Such a leap in connectivity elevates French Polynesia's appeal to foreign IT firms and cinema industry players, positioning it as a hub for digital innovation and collaboration.

Mme. Hina Delva, CEO of OPT.PF, shared insights into French Polynesia's telecommunications sector, valued at USD 222 million in 2023. With subsidiaries like ONATI and Tahiti Nui Telecom (TNT), OPT.PF plays a crucial role in shaping the digital landscape, boasting an 61.7% market share and serving 300,000 inhabitants with mobile, fixed-line, fiber optic, and postal services. The upcoming introduction of e-SIM technology promises simplified connectivity for international tourists. Additionally, OPT.PF is in discussions with Eutelsat, a major satellite operator, aiming to enhance telecommunications services across French Polynesia. This collaboration

“French Polynesia offers a unique blend of connectivity, innovation, and opportunity for those looking to invest or vacation.”

would leverage Eutelsat's satellite network to further improve connectivity for residents and businesses.

Moreover, investments in submarine cables and infrastructure development by OPT.PF have ensured widespread connectivity across the archipelago, with 32 islands connected by undersea cables and satellite coverage for remote areas. Notably, French Polynesia boasts 2 international submarine cables linking to Hawaii and Samoa, forming a vital loop for the security of international communications. Efforts are underway to enhance connectivity further, with discussions regarding the deployment of 5G technology in Tahiti.

As French Polynesia invites investors and tourists to explore its shores, it boasts not only natural beauty but also a robust digital infrastructure conducive to business and leisure. With a strategic location in the heart of the Pacific, French Polynesia offers a unique blend of connectivity, innovation, and opportunity for those looking to invest or vacation in this vibrant archipelago. ●

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Jacob Anderson

ANNE RICE'S NOVEL *INTERVIEW WITH THE Vampire* has a rabid fan base, intensely protective of the story and any adaptations of it. Thankfully for Jacob Anderson, who plays Louis de Pointe du Lac in the AMC original series based on Rice's novel, the fans seem to be on board. "I do get a sense that people feel like we did right by the characters." Now in its second season, this version, not connected to the 1994 film version starring Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt, looks deeper into the "mess" of Louis. "He's this jumble of contradictions...Louis is way more responsible for the tragedy of his own life than he would ever admit." For Anderson, he never once considered finding inspiration from the film. "I think that would have been the first step to ruin it. To try and compare or do anything in response to that, because that film is iconic in its way and what it represents and those two very powerful screen presences at that particular time." He went on to say, "Rolin [Jones, series creator] used to say this is a third thing. There's the book, the film and this is the third thing." —*H. Alan Scott*



JACOB SPEAKS ABOUT ...

“Season two is really picking the scab of these characters and the work they need to do on themselves.”

WHY THE SHOW APPEALED TO HIM ▶

"I didn't have a massive reference point to any other version in the beginning. At first I was like, 'Oh, it's another show based on a book that was made into a movie.' And then the script was just the most beautiful writing I've ever read. Like, I'm not sure I'll ever be able to say such beautiful words. And then I started to read Anne Rice, and it kind of just built from there."

WHY SENSUALITY MATTERS ▶

"I think it's really important. Vampires can't really be separated from touch and from the exchange of bodily fluids. It sounds a little bit grim, but in terms of talking about blood and that closeness, a vampire can't eat without physical contact. So it would be just be a little bit weird to not explore that. Sex is a really important part of their dynamic."

HISTORY'S IMPACT ON THE STORY ▶

"Louis grew up in New Orleans, but he grew up in this affluent Creole Black family who owned the plantation. It's a very ugly time in history, and his family was on the wrong side of that. Because of that, he never fit in anywhere. And he's chafing up against that all the time. I think that's really interesting. He kind of never finds his place."

Furnished Finder Creates a Sweet Spot for All in Mid-term Property Rentals

It is a win-win proposition: landlords make better returns from paying a small, flat subscription fee, while tenants do not pay any booking or service charges.



Jeff Hurst

President & CEO of Furnished Finder



Some people look for a place to stay for just a few days, and there are those who plan to lease a property for the long term. In between, there are tenants who need a place for a month or longer. Satisfying the unmet need in this mid-term property rental market is Furnished Finder, an online rental platform that delivers a win-win solution for both landlords and tenants in this particular property segment.

"We're thriving in the middle, which is between the short-term rentals, like Airbnb and Vrbo, and the longer-term players, like Zillow or Homes.com," says Jeff Hurst, President and CEO of Furnished Finder. "We're building a property rental category, and we think there is something truly magical here. Being able to communicate directly and having more control of the transaction gives landlords and tenants a lot of comfort. However, most of our value actually comes from being able to provide a truly affordable alternative for both parties. Landlords realize excellent returns from making a minimal subscription payment, while tenants don't pay any booking and service fees."

How It All Started

The bootstrapped company began its journey in 2014, initially created to help a medical device salesman rent out his extra home. The individual spent a lot of time in hospitals and realized that many nurses were looking for places to stay as well, so he rented out his spare apartment. Over time, that inventory of one unit grew to more than 275,000 paid listings on the Furnished Finder platform today.

However, what truly propelled the company was the recent pandemic. During the health crisis, there was a massive demand for traveling medical professionals amid a glut in available housing as people could not move around. In addition, aggressive local regulation of short-term rentals has created a necessity for landlords to rent for greater than 30-day stays or sell their homes. As a result, the Furnished Finder site developed its momentum and grew rapidly to help accommodate the growing audiences in need on the supply and demand side of the marketplace.

Excellent Value Proposition

The company's success comes as no surprise, considering its excellent value proposition for both landlords and tenants. For a subscription fee of only \$149 a year, property owners can make more than 100 times that investment over a year. Tenants, on the other hand, can choose from a large inventory of homes and save money since Furnished Finder does not charge a booking fee like many other rental platforms.

"It reminds me of the original Internet promise of making things more available and cheaper for everyone," says Hurst, a former Vrbo President and Expedia's COO. "We've got an opportunity that tenants and landlords truly love, and we're hoping the real estate community sees more and more through our value proposition."

For the price of only three lattes a month, property owners can access a growing market of tenants in need of stays of 30 days or more. Mid-term

rental opportunities abound not only for traveling medical professionals but also for business people, academics comprising professors and graduate students, and families needing a place to stay temporarily. Landlords thus have a chance to help these people needing a place for several months or so and make significant money along the way. Compared to short-term rentals, mid-term rental bookings offer durations of an average of 90 days, resulting in less wear and tear on the property vs. repeated nightly rentals. Landlords on Furnished Finder also enjoy the benefit of more extensive vetting and control as they decide who stays at their property every time and how they pay. Mid-term property owners also need not furnish their property like a resort for tourists. This is because their tenants only need a place where they can stay and work comfortably.

At the same time, renters also enjoy countless benefits. The savings from using Furnished Finder can be significant as tenants booking a \$2,000 unit for the next three months can save as much as \$600 in booking and service fees. In addition, with more than 275,000 paid listings on Furnished Finder, tenants have a wide array of places to choose from depending on their specific requirements. In contrast to short-term rentals, renters under a mid-term lease are often able to negotiate a lease extension when necessary since these rentals do not have a string of upcoming nightly rentals already on the books.

What to Expect

This year, Furnished Finder celebrates its 10th anniversary and looks forward to a far more exciting future. Landlords and tenants can expect a significantly improved online platform. The company has brought in a world-class team, including seasoned engineers and other experts in the field. This initiative is intended to modernize the customer experience by providing better map filters, seamless search processes, and more intuitive app handling.

Before shifting to larger property managers, the Furnished Finder team will focus on optimizing the product experience for individual landlords first. On the Tenant side of the marketplace, the team plans to continue expanding their partnerships with large organizations representing their common tenant categories like corporations, universities, insurance providers, and healthcare staffing agencies.

"If at the end of three years, we have managed to have a greater product experience, built twice as much inventory, and maintained our position as a low-cost, best-price leader, I would be thrilled," Hurst says. "My long-term vision is to make it easier for people around the world to access our inventory by removing any barriers that would keep them from enjoying our platform."



PARTING SHOT

Maya Hawke

▶ MAYA HAWKE WEARS MANY HATS: ACTOR, WRITER, SINGER. BUT FOR Hawke, everything comes down to words. “I just see myself as a person who likes to try to tell stories, who’s in love with language.” She’s doing that with several recent projects, including her third album *Chaos Angel* (May 31). “I don’t respond to vibes really,” she says, instead she focuses on the lyrics and how the words align with the melody. Speaking of those words, she says, “I don’t need anyone else to think that my lyrics are good, but I put a lot of work into them and they’re really important to me.” Another story she’s telling is that of the novelist Flannery O’Connor, who she portrays in the film *Wildcat*, directed by her father, Ethan Hawke. “He’s my biggest supporter and my toughest critic.” While she’s busy filming the highly anticipated fifth season of Netflix’s *Stranger Things*, you can next hear her voice the emotion Anxiety in *Inside Out 2* (June 14). “I just am so honored to be a part of this project. My joke about it is that it’s the only audition I’ve ever had where I cried. That’s how powerful the story is.”

“I just see myself as a person who likes to try to tell stories, who’s in love with language.”



What inspired your album?

Over the process of making my last two records there have been a couple of little melodies—little pieces of songs that I wrote that I didn’t want to scrap in order to fit it into the style of songwriting that I used. I was kind of waiting for my own brain to finish them. So I had these little skeletons and that, in some ways, was the inspiration for the album.

Does your background as an actor influence how you write music?

They come from the same place. It’s emotional storytelling. The reason music is such a more popular art form than poetry is because it’s putting blood into the words, it’s putting life, body and motion and feeling. That’s what excites me about both art forms.

What was it like working with your father on *Wildcat*?

I’ve been working with my dad my whole life. He’s been an extraordinary teacher. So, making a movie together felt like a very intuitive continuation of the same thing that we’ve always been doing.

What can you tell us about season five of *Stranger Things*?

It’s got all the stuff that people have liked about previous seasons but it’s even bigger. I’ve had a lot of questions like, “How does that actually work? Why did that happen? What does that mean?” This season is answering a lot of those questions. —H. Alan Scott

▶ Visit [Newsweek.com](https://www.newsweek.com) for the full interview

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