

WDSU TV
New Orleans, LA

COMMUNITY NEEDS AND ISSUES

January 1, 2020- March 31, 2020

1st Quarter 2020

Based upon WDSU-TV's involvement in its community and input from community leaders and civic organizations, WDSU-TV has determined the following issues are the chief concerns of the New Orleans Community:

•Crime

In the city of New Orleans, non-fatal and fatal shooting incidents averaged 10 per week in 2016. In a third of the cases someone was killed. That fact equates to more shootings, per capita, in New Orleans than the Chicago. As a result, in 2017 the City announced a \$40 million safety plan that includes new police cars, security cameras and additional policing of the streets.

•Education

In a school system that had few charter schools before Hurricane Katrina, 62% of student in New Orleans were enrolled in a "failing" school. And half did not graduate. Today, 90% are enrolled in Charter Schools, 75% are graduating on time, and the percentage of students testing at grade level increased by 77%. Now, charters schools are being returned to the control of the Orleans Parish public school system. What will happen to the improvement trend?

•Housing

More than a decade since Hurricane Katrina, blight still exists in parts of New Orleans, while brand new gleaming condominium developments rise. Has the promise of a 46% increase in home values since Hurricane Katrina been extended to all residents? More than 20,000 low-income families are on a waiting list for federally funded rental housing vouchers in New Orleans. HUD supported redevelopment of several housing projects in New Orleans has created more mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhoods. Are these new communities locking former resident out? Or, are they creating safer and more promising environments its residents. Which is best for New Orleans?

•Economy/Jobs

The confluence of four factors, misfortunes that have all come in rapid succession, has created a perilous economic reality for New Orleans and the state of Louisiana. (1) The over-production of oil, while generally a good outcome for consumers at the gas pump, has had a profoundly negative impact on the state's economy. As of September 2016, Louisiana has lost more than 20,000 oil industry workers as the number of active rigs in the state declined more than 70 percent (2) Louisiana is in a budget crisis, facing a \$300M deficit. The remedy for this crisis led to factor (3), tax increases. Effective April 1, 2016 Louisiana residents and tourist who shop in the state, began paying more in taxes. The majority of the taxes have fallen on individual consumers and less on the business community. The state now has the highest average sales tax rate in the entire country. And finally, (4) the effects of the 2016 August floods has caused significant distress to residents and the state.

Drug/Opioid Addiction

WDSU and Hearst Television will examine the effects of opioid addiction in Southeast Louisiana. This epidemic, sweeping the nation, is having devastating effects in Southeast Louisiana. A series of stories, town hall meetings and aggressive rotation of public service announcements will bring greater attention to resources and tips to address this disease. -

Date	Program	Time/ Duration	Issue	Description
1.2.20				
1.1.20	6pm Newscast	6:06 1:45	Crime	Residents in the Lakeview area have several of their cars broken into over the New Year's holiday, with windows smashed and items stolen from their vehicles. Vehicle break ins in the area have increased considerably and juveniles are believed to be behind the break ins.
1.2.20	12pm Noon Newscast		Commitment 2020	Former Housing Secretary, Julian Castro, ends his Presidential campaign, after failing to get enough support in polls to continue. Castro was the only Hispanic candidate in the Democratic field for President.
1.6.20	12pm Newscast		State of Addiction	According to a new study, teens who misuse opioids are more likely to engage in other dangerous behaviors, including becoming sexually active at an early age and more likely to attempt suicide.
1.7.20	4pm Newscast	4:03 1:30	Crime	When police officers try to stop a group breaking into cars along the Lakefront area. The area had been repeatedly victimized by groups of suspected juveniles who have broken into cars for weeks in the area. This time, one of the suspects attempts to escape by running over an officer, causing the officer to open fire. Two of the three suspects are arrested while neighbors in the area talk about the increasingly dangerous problem with juveniles.
1.8.20	12pm Noon Newscast		Commitment 2020	The qualifying period for Louisiana's April election begins. The April election is the Presidential Preference primary and municipal primary.
1.10.20	5pm Newscast	5:05 1:15	Crime	On the Northshore, a verbal argument between a father and his reportedly troubled son, ends with the son stabbing his father to death. The

				neighbors in the usually quiet area are stunned that something that violent happened.
1.12.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:40 14:35	Hot Seat/ Commitment 2020	Two state lawmakers discuss the second term of newly reelected Governor John Bel Edwards.
1.13.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:02 :25	Commitment 2020	After polling and fundraising struggles, Democratic presidential candidate Cory Booker drops out of the race.
1.14.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:43 3:00	Housing/ Homeless	The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center now has a new name and expands their services regarding housing and housing issues in the New Orleans area.
1.15.20	6pm Newscast	6:18 1:00	Health/Hospitals	Another spike in flu cases in Louisiana has many parents worried and questioning the effectiveness of this year's flu shot in protecting their kids against the flu. Medical authorities say still get the flu shot because it is still protection and even if your child does come down with the flu, the symptoms won't be as severe.
1.16.20	4pm Newscast	4:09 1:30	Crime	A fraudulent contactor on the Northshore is arrested after scamming an elderly man out of over \$100,000 for work that was not done on the man's home. His family warns others of scams and how to avoid them.
1.17.20	6pm Newscast	6:12 :30	Housing/ Homeless	More than \$50 million dollars in grants is being given to the state to support homeless assistance programs, with \$21.3 million dollars going to Orleans and Jefferson Parishes.
1.21.20	12pm Newscast	12:22 :30	State of Addiction	The nation's drug addiction crisis has been turning in a new and deadly direction as more Americans are struggling with meth and cocaine addictions. The government will now allow states to use federal money that had been earmarked for the opioid crisis and will now be used to also help those addicted to other drugs.

1.24.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:15 :30	State of Addiction	Sheriff's officers in Terrebonne Parish will become some of the first law enforcement offices to use a new device that will protect officers from being stuck by needles possessed by suspects or gathered in drug raids.
1.27.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:02 1:15	Education/ Crime	Student and parents protest school violence and lack of leadership at Einstein Charter School in New Orleans. The school has been the scene of numerous fights and parents are saying that the school is not doing enough to control the violence.
1.27.20	12pm noon Newscast	12:23 :30	State of Addiction	The American Society of Anesthesiologists is urging everyone to know the signs of a drug overdose so they can intervene and possibly save the person's life.
1.30.20	4pm Newscast	4:02 :50	Health/Hospitals	The World Health Organization declares a public health emergency of international concern over the Coronavirus outbreak with a second case reported in Chicago.
1.30.20	4pm Newscast	4:37 :30	State of Addiction	The White House announced that the number of opioid deaths has dropped for the first time in almost twenty-years. Health policy leaders say that treating the epidemic as a public health crisis is the key.
1.30.20	6pm Newscast	6:11 :20	Housing/ Homeless	The state is getting 18-million dollars for the state's Continuum of Care to provide housing and support services for homeless.
2.2.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:31 1:20	State of Addiction	A St. Bernard Parish man's story of how he fought for justice in his son's murder is turned into a national series on Netflix. His son's death in a drug deal not only led him to solve his son's murder, but also led him to help lead the way in exposing the opioid crisis locally.
2.3.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:09 :25	Flooding/ Levee Protection	St Tammany Parish leaders have the first meeting of a group the council

				created to focus on flooding issues in the parish. The group consists of council members, citizens and representatives of the Home Builders Association of the North Shore.
2.6.20	4pm Newscast	4:03 1:20	Education	The Superintendent of Jefferson Parish schools announces plans for major changes in the school district, including closing some schools and expanding other schools in the district.
2.9.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:41 13:30	Hot Seat/ Commitment 2020	An interview with new Jefferson parish Council President Cynthia Lee Sheng and what she would like to accomplish with the new council.
2.13.20	Saturday 6pm Newscast		State of Addiction	Opioid workforce act.
2.16.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:47 7:05	Hot Seat/ Crime	Officials from the local Homeland Security office discuss some of the major problems that come with the Mardi Gras season. Some of the crimes that officials are trying to stop are human trafficking and drugs.
2.18.20	Morning News 6am Newscast	6:04 1:15	Education	The safety of school buses is examined after it was discovered that almost half of the school buses for New Orleans schools, had not cleared inspection and only a small number of bus drivers had passed new requirements.
2.19.20	5pm Newscast	5:07 1:15	Health/Hospitals	The Tulane National Primate Research Center is starting a program to develop a coronavirus vaccine and other treatment options.
2.23.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:15 1:40	Commitment 2020	Senator Bernie Sanders becomes the Democratic frontrunner after winning the Nevada caucus, even though some Democratic moderates fear that Sanders is too liberal to beat President Trump in the general election.
2.23.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:43 11:20	Hot Seat/ Economy/Jobs	The safety of Mardi Gras parades is the focus of discussion. The city's biggest and most famous event, bringing in

				millions of dollars to the city and the rest of the metro area, is under scrutiny after two parade goers are killed along the parade route when they fell under parade floats.
2.25.20	10pm Newscast	10:13 1:40	Commitment 2020	The remaining Democratic candidates have a final debate before the all-important South Carolina primary.
2.25.20	10pm Newscast	10:17 2:00	Economy/Jobs	The 2020 Mardi Gras season begins to wrap up as late night crowds still fill Bourbon Street and surrounding areas. Local officials are happy with a successful Mardi Gras for the area.
2.26.20	4pm Newscast	4:03 1:30	Health/Hospitals	Local health leaders in New Orleans discuss what measures they are taking as the threat of the Coronavirus grows. The Director of the New Orleans Health Department says that the risk to residents is low by the city must still be prepared if the virus makes it way here.
2.27.20	6pm Newscast	6:06 1:15	Health/Hospitals	The LCMC Health group could be one step closer to buying East Jefferson General Hospital. The hospital, one of the largest in the area, has been struggling financially for some time and had been seeking a buyer. Many who attended a community meeting believe that handing the troubled hospital to a stable company will benefit everyone.
2.28.20	4pm Newscast	4:18 :30	State of Addiction	According to a report from the University of Rochester, the country's opioid crisis could be far worse than originally thought. The report shows that the number of opioid-related deaths could be up to 28% higher than originally reported because of incomplete death records.
2.28.20	6pm Newscast	6:02 1:15	Health/Hospitals	There are almost 70 cases of the reported Coronavirus in Louisiana, but no reported cases in the city and health leaders in the city want to keep it that way, especially were the city's jail is concerned. Precautions are now in place to screen all potential inmates

				and employees for illness.
2.29.20	Saturday 6pm Newscast	6:02 1:30	Health/Hospitals	Officials confirm the first U.S. death from the Coronavirus. A man, that officials say was a “high risk” patient, dies in Washington state.
2.29.20	Saturday 10pm Newscast	10:00 :50	Commitment 2020	Former Vice-President Joe Biden comes out on top in the South Carolina primary by a large margin.
3.1.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:35 13:35	Hot Seat/ Health/Hospitals	Health officials from both the city and the state discuss the Coronavirus and precautions residents can take to stop the spread of the virus.
3.2.20	5pm Newscast	5:01 1:20	Health/Hospitals	Governor John Bel Edwards announces that a newly formed task force is ready to respond to the advancing Coronavirus. With six deaths in the U.S. so far, and the death toll in other countries climbing, Governor Edwards says that it is not a matter of if the coronavirus gets to the state, it is only a matter of when.
3.4.20	Early Morning 6am Newscast	6:06 1:15	Commitment 2020	Former Vice-President Joe Biden pulls out wins in 9 of 14 states for Super Tuesday in the Democratic primaries.
3.4.20	5pm Newscast	5:05 1:30	Health/Hospitals	Two local school faculty members are now under “self-quarantine after school officials find out the employees traveled overseas during the Mardi Gras break. Though the employees show no signs of the Coronavirus, the quarantine is due to an abundance of caution because of the virus outbreak.
3.5.20	6am Early Morning News Cast	6:35 1:00	Education	Jefferson Parish School Board members decide to move ahead with the 2020 Infrastructure plan which includes consolidating some schools and creating new K through 8 th grade schools.
3.7.20	5pm Newscast	5:04 1:15	Economy/Jobs Health/Hospitals	Fear of the coronavirus begins to impact the local hotel and restaurant industry in the New Orleans area. The growing concern is leading to fewer people in restaurants and more deliveries. Restaurants say that they are taking all precautions to protect staff and customers. But hours and staff may

				be cut due to the decrease in customers.
3.8.20	Sunday Morning 8am Newscast	8:38 :25	Flooding/ Levee Protection	St. Bernard Parish government officials announce a partnership with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana to recycle oyster shells from local restaurants by using them to build oyster reefs that will help protect the state's eroding coastline.
3.10.20	4pm Newscast	4:08 1:15	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	The governor announces the first presumptive case of Coronavirus in Louisiana. Local officials say that they have not been given a lot of information about the case, but residents should continue to use precautions.
3.10.20	10pm Newscast	10:00 1:00	Health/Hospitals Economy/Jobs COVID-19	Several large public St. Patrick's Day parades and other events are cancelled after it is announced by state and local officials that there are now three presumptive cases of Coronavirus in the state.
3.11.20	10pm Newscast	10:04 1:15	Health/Hospitals Economy/Jobs COVID-19	The NBA announces that a player on the Utah team has tested positive for the Coronavirus and that the NBA will immediately suspend the basketball season until further notice. Those who staff the home games at the Smoothie King Center are now concerned about their jobs and how they will get paid.
3.12.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:00 1:20	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Governor John Bel Edwards announces that there are now 14 positive cases of Coronavirus in the state, most of which are in Orleans Parish. The governor also issued a Public Health Emergency and announced restrictions for visitors to nursing homes.
3.12.20	5pm Newscast	5:04 1:15	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	The Louisiana Department of Health issued new restrictions for all healthcare facilities in the state. Every person entering the facility must be screened prior to entry.
3.12.20	5pm Newscast	5:06 1:45	Economy/Jobs Health/Hospitals COVID-19	The NCAA announces that both the Men's and Women's Basketball Tournaments have been cancelled. The Women's Final four was scheduled to be played at the Smoothie King Center

				on April 3 rd and April 5 th . Also cancelled was the College World Series for college baseball and it was also announced that the MLB was cancelling spring training.
3.13.20	12pm Noon Newscast	12:05 :30	Education Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Local universities announce that they are suspending in-person classes and moving to online classes within the coming days because of the threat from Coronavirus.
3.13.20	5pm Newscast	5:04 1:15	Education Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Governor John Bel Edwards declares an emergency and cancels all public and private schools until April 14 th because of the Coronavirus spread in the state. Many of the schools are trying to make the shift to online.
3.14.20	Saturday 5pm Newscast	5:00 1:15	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Louisiana officials confirm the state's first death related to the Coronavirus. The patient was a 58-year-old who was a patient at Touro Hospital in New Orleans.
3.15.20	Sunday 5pm Newscast	5:02 :40	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Louisiana officials report a second Coronavirus-related death in the state. Officials also report that there are 91 reported cases in the state with 65 in Orleans Parish, the most cases in the state.
3.15.20	Sunday 10pm Newscast	10:01 2:00	Economy/Jobs Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Mayor LaToya Cantrell issues new guidelines for bars and restaurants in the city. Full-service restaurants will close at 9 p.m. everyday and bars will close at midnight. All must limit their capacity to 50% of patron limit.
3.16.20	6pm Newscast	6:16 1:30	Economy/Jobs Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Casinos throughout the state and the three casinos in the metro area are forced to shut down due to the coronavirus impact.
3.18.20	4pm Newscast	4:11 :45	Education COVID-19	Local students begin online instruction this week as students and parents adjust, some students in the area are able to get videos recorded by their teachers.
3.18.20	Early Morning 6am Newscast	6:12 1:30	Commitment 2020	Former Vice-President Joe Biden sweeps three primaries, doubling his delegate lead over Senator Bernie Sanders. Because of the coronavirus

				outbreak, the next significant primary will not be held until April.
3.19.20	4pm Newscast	4:15 1:30	Economy/Jobs Health/Hospitals COVID-19	In the past three days, unemployment claims with Louisiana's Workforce Commission soared after receiving over 30,000 claims.
3.24.20	6pm Newscast	6:03 1:15	Economy/Jobs COVID-19	Only a short time after New Orleans' multi-billion-dollar airport opened, the disruption in the flight industry, leaves many of the new business at the airport struggling or closing altogether. The usually busy airport has become, what remaining business employees say, is a "ghost town."
3.26.20	6pm Newscast	6:18 2:20	Housing COVID-19	The outbreak of COVID-19 has intensified what many have said is already a crisis in the New Orleans area, which is the lack of affordable housing. Housing advocates say that some of the current problems were created in the past few years with short-term rentals.
3.28.20	Saturday Morning 9am Newscast	9:07 :20	Health/Hospitals COVID-19	Oschner Health begins offering virtual doctor visits over smart phones, tablets and computers for anyone for small cost of \$10 in a temporary program called "Oschner Anywhere."
3.31.20	10pm Newscast	10:09 1:20	Economy/Jobs COVID-19	After President Trump signs the stimulus package that will give citizens relief checks to help with the economic turmoil caused by COVID-19, local residents have questions regarding when they can expect the financial assistant checks to arrive and how much residents can expect.
10.1.2019- 12.31- 2019	PSA'S		All	Station airs various PSA's throughout the quarter providing community awareness of various topics and services.

				Station supported the following campaigns during the quarter. Fisher House, home away from home” where military and Veterans’ families can stay at no cost while a loved one is receiving treatment. UNCF Mayors Masked Ball,ACLU and Second Harvest.
--	--	--	--	---

1st QUARTER MATTER OF FACT TOPICS
SOLEDAD O'BRIEN HOST
MATTER OF FACT AIRS ON SUNDAY'S FROM 530A-600A CST,1100p-1130p AND AGAIN ON WDSU 6.2 MULTICAST SUNDAY'S 300A-330A

January 5,2020

This week on MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, we look at the "Fight to Vote." We go inside the Rightfully Hers Exhibit at the National Archives. The exhibit puts a spotlight on a nearly century-long struggle to give women the right to vote. The historians – Ann Gordon, Marcia Chatelain, and Maggie Blackhawk, join Soledad for a discussion about the 19th Amendment.

From the past to the future, how are young women inspired to vote today? Two students, Naba Rahman, a Republican, and Allison Tovar, a Democrat, talk about how the 19th Amendment shapes their political engagement today and what role gender plays in the upcoming 2020 election.

With millions of documents available, how do you choose which ones make the exhibit? Soledad gets a special look at some of the most interesting items with Exhibit Curator, Corinne Porter. They include the patent for a special "gendered" voting booth and details on which women got to vote before the 19th Amendment.

Plus, how a "Night of Terror" at a prison just outside of Washington, D.C. Changed history. We go inside the transformation of a former prison of suffragists turned Arts Center.

And is it suffragist and suffragette? Depends on where you live. Why did the United States reject the term suffragette while other countries embraced it?

Those stories, this week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien.

January 12,2020

This week on MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, a reality check on a new rule from the Trump Administration. Nearly 700,00 people will lose access to SNAP- the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The administration says the new rule is a launching pad out of poverty, critics say it punished people who can't find jobs. We dig deep to examine the new rule, who it affects, and why this may not be the end of the President's plan to cut benefits for America's poorest residents.

Plus, seek and destroy asteroids before they hit Earth. Movie plot? Of NASA's next mission? NASA's Chief Scientist, James Green, returns to Matter of Fact to reassure Soledad that while NASA is tracking 20,000 asteroids (also called NEO – Near Earth Objects) it is also working on new methods to protect the planet.

And a picture is worth a thousand words, but sometimes it speaks one whole truth. "Dear World" is a collection of more than 100,000 photos taken around the world with heart wrenching, inspiring, and occasionally funny messages. Soledad O'Brien sits down with Robert X. Fogarty who transforms his passion project into something much bigger.

Plus, the current state of the United States-Iran relations is on the front page, but in our weekly segment, "we're paying attention even if you are too busy," we offer up some historical context. We go back more than 60 years to find out what set the United States and Iran on a path that has led to frequent conflict and increasing tensions.

And finally, as if the sidewalks weren't crowded enough with rentable scooters and bikes. Segway is adding to the mix their new, S-POD. The S-POD is like your favorite lounge chair on wheels. And it's fast. Zipping people around at 24 miles per hour. The company says it makes getting around cities, theme parks, and other crowded places easier for people with mobility issues. But 24 miles per hour; why so fast?

That's it for this week's Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien.

January 19,2020

This week on MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, budget cuts threaten the "American Dream" on one college campus. The "American Dream" rests on the idea that each generation will do better than the last. But fewer Americans earn more than their parents. Even with more education. So, besides awarding degrees, should colleges focus on social mobility? Soledad heads to Stony Brook University to look at its groundbreaking program focused on creating upward social mobility for lower-income students.

Award-winning Journalist Andrea Bernstein traces the rise of the Trump and Kushner families from their arrival as immigrants to the United States to their position at the pinnacle of politics, in her book, "American Oligarchy." Is the families' ability to blur the lines between public and private interests pushing America to the brink of oligarchy?

Plus, what do you get when you mix singing laptops with chatbots on stage? An "algorithmic" take on Shakespeare. Theatre Director Annie Dorsen uses artificial intelligence to create a unique experience for the audience. Is this "Much Ado About Nothin," or could Artificial intelligence replace actors?

It's one of the rarest jobs in Washington, an impeachment manager. A look at the 7 lawmakers in charge of prosecuting the case against President Donald Trump.

What can the migration pattern of monarch butterflies teach us about climate change? They travel 3,000 miles from the northern United States and Canada, to Mexico. But each fall fewer make the trek. Are colder winters in Mexico keeping them away? And is this why so many monarchs have vanished? That's it for this week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien.

January 26,2020

This week of MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, one issue that's important to younger voters is student debt. That's especially true in Pennsylvania which has the highest average student debt in the country, more than \$36,000 per graduate. Millennial voters in Philadelphia tell our Correspondent Jessica Gomez, they are looking for candidates who have concrete plans to fix the debt crisis impacting millions of voters.

Plus, we meet National Geographic Photographer Joel Sartore. For the past decade he's been on a mission to photograph every endangered animal before they are extinct. The photos are breath taking and he's assembled them into a new book called "The Photo Ark". He shares some of his favorite photos with Soledad and explains why he thinks these simple, yet haunting images can get more people to care about the extinction crisis.

And a new rule by the Trump Administration could mean nearly 700,00 people will lose their access to SNAP – the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. We personalize this policy by talking to a young man who may lose his benefits and access to job training that he receives because of SNAP.

Also, we are paying attention to social media ads and politics. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg says the social media giant won't ban false or misleading political ads. Google has decided to limit targeting of political ads while Twitter has banned them outright. Find out how candidates are using these changes to their advantage.

And finally, a giant 'leap' for science. A so-called 'living robot' doesn't need bolts or software, instead it's made up of stem cells from the African Clawed Frog. The cells are tiny, but mighty, and could eventually be used to clean up pollution or change how we fight heart disease.

February 2,2020

This week on MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, we are taking a listening tour to Miami for a special show on Florida. Fleeing Hurricane Maria's devastation, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans found refuge in Central Florida. Angered by Washington's inattention to their tragedy, the new Floridians

lost their homes, but gained the opportunity to cast influential ballots in 2020. Now, a question: will this enormous potential voting block swing Florida away from President Trump?

Plus, when NASA retired its Space Shuttle program in 2011, Brevard County, or the Space Coast of Florida, took a devastating hit. Home values plummeted, the unemployment rate soared to 12 percent and county leaders were asking the Salvation Army if it could handle the demand of helping the community. Now the area is known as the comeback coast. Private space companies are bringing the area back to life. Does this mean the United States can stop hitching rides to space on Russian rockets?

And why is Florida such a political conundrum? Look no further than Interstate 4. For decades, political scientists, journalists, and politicians have studied the now 132.2-mile swath of Florida between St. Petersburg and Daytona Beach, weighing the ever-changing impulses of swing voters in America's most fought-over battleground. We dig into the demographics to help explain how this highway picks Presidents.

Also, the Iowa caucuses have been the first major electoral event of the presidential election cycle since the 1970's, and today serve the role of winnowing the field and helping anti-establishment candidates pick up steam. Now the question is, should Iowa have that much political power? The state is 90% white. Not very reflective of the country. And when it comes to choosing the general election winner, Iowans have predicted correctly twice: Jimmy Carter in 1976 and Barack Obama in 2008. Julian Castor cited the lack of diversity in Iowa as one reason he ended his campaign. But African American State Representative Phyllis Thede says the caucuses will remain first, but Democrats must work harder to support diverse candidates.

Does Florida have a modern-day poll-tax? Felons won the right to have voting rights restored ahead of the 2020 election. The Florida Supreme Court sided with Republican Governor Rick DeSantis, saying in an advisory opinion that the state's 2018 constitutional amendment restoring voting rights to about 1.4 million people with felony records would require them to pay an outstanding financial obligation.

And finally, we take you inside the Pro Football Hall of Fame for some gridiron glory. The exhibit presents a panoramic view of the story of professional football – from its humble beginnings in the early 20th Century to the cultural phenomenon it is today. Artifacts include the 7-pound sterling silver Lombardi Trophy and items from legends of the game.

This on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien.

February 9,2020

This week on a MATTER of FACT with Soledad O'Brien, the Fight to Vote. After the caucus catastrophe in Iowa, all eyes turn to New Hampshire. What's behind a push to keep tens of thousands of students away from the polls. As part-time residents, should they weigh on decisions that wouldn't affect them after they leave the state?

Is it time to make the race to the White House a real popularity contest? Rob Richie of Fair Vote wants to shake up how Presidents are really elected. He says changing the structure of Electoral College wouldn't take a Constitutional Amendment. He details a plan that ensures the winner of the popular vote becomes the POTUS.

Plus, the doctor will see you now. For \$35 dollars. Dr. Timothy Wong, a primary care physician from Pittsburgh said dealing with insurance companies became a nightmare for him and his patients. So, he quit a big practice to open a clinic that doesn't require insurance. Instead he charges a flat fee of \$35 dollars. Is this prescription to fix America's health care system?

Fireflies face extinction. Why? Well one reason, scientists say humans are ruining their mood for mating. Besides pesticides and pollution, LED light bulbs interfere with their ability to light up and attract mates. No mating, no population.

Finally, we take you inside Sankofa Children's Museum of African Cultures in Baltimore. It's the first African American museum for children. The owner says the goal is to teach children that African American history doesn't begin with slavery.

That's all on this week of Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien.

February 16,2020

This week on Matter of Fact Season 5 episode 24:

Where have all the deficit hawks gone? Budget hawks used to run the GOP, but now the deficit is on course to top one trillion dollars this year. Has the party of "fiscal responsibility" abandoned one of its biggest principles? Soledad talks to economist Joelle Gamble about which party's presidents grew the economy and shrank the debt...or shrank the economy and grew debt.

Plus, a state-of-the art farm grows food and stability in Jackson Hole, WY. Correspondent Leone Lakhani shows us how Vertical Harvest provides upward mobility for an underserved population: people with disabilities.

The Trump administration wanted to add a controversial citizenship question to the 2020 Census. It failed. But is the damage already done? Despite the question not appearing on the Census, a new poll shows 50% of Latinos think it will. And More than 70% think the Trump administration will use the Census against them or their family. Soledad talks to Lizette Escobedo, of NALEO, The National Association of Latino Elected Officials, about her mission to stop the spread of misconceptions about the Census and make sure every Latino is counted.

And you're not as hot as you think you are. What's behind a mysterious drop in the temperature? Not outside, but in your body. We've been told our normal temperature is 98.6 degrees. But modern studies have found it's 97.9 degrees. Why are we cooling off?

And finally, message from the past resonates in the present. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. explains the meaning of love in a rare note now up for auction. Why he said, "love is the greatest force in the universe."

February 23,2020

This week on Matter of Fact, Season 5, Episode 25:

The road to the White House heads south where Democratic candidates face a different demographic in the Palmetto State Primary: African American voters. Soledad talks to H. Gibbs Knotts and Jordan Ragusa, both political science professors at the College of Charleston, and authors of "First in the South: Why South Carolina's Presidential Primary Matters." South Carolina is more diverse than Iowa and New Hampshire, so why is its presidential nominating contest last instead of first?

Plus, climate change is now a key issue for Democratic voters as rising sea levels threaten more homes in the coastal city of Charleston, S.C. Correspondent Jess Gomez talks to homeowners facing a \$400,000 decision: Raise their homes or walk away. But what do you do if you can't afford that hefty price tag?

And growing up Gullah. A history lesson from the lowcountry shows us how a community descended from slaves more than 400 years ago endures today. Joie Chen talks to Gullah artists and chefs who preserved their culture's past to protect its future.

Can South Carolina avoid an election night cliffhanger? That depends on how many days it gets to count absentee ballots. More on a push to extend the deadline.

And finally, we settle an agricultural argument once and for all. It's pitted South Carolina against its neighbor Georgia. Which state really produces the most peaches in the south? October 13, 2019

March 1,2020

This week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien Season 5, Episode 26:

It's make-or-break for Democrats on Super Tuesday. Fifteen states and territories head to the polls on Tuesday, March 3rd. Virginia is one of those states with 99 delegates up for grabs. How the state is handling gun control measures could give us a glimpse into what the commonwealth wants in a candidate. Democrats won control of the state legislature in November for the first time in 24 years, and they campaigned heavily on gun control. Correspondent Jess Gomez takes us to the NRA's home turf to show us how the state is changing, but not without a fight.

Plus, another test for Democrats on Super Tuesday: can they appeal to voters in states with large populations of African Americans? A rare, in-depth poll gives a different take on how African American voters feel about the election and what they want in a candidate. Tatishe Nteta is a professor at UMass Amherst and conducted the poll, he tells Soledad voters are putting their hopes of winning the White House into Joe Biden.

And when it comes to presidential candidates is "likeability" a litmus test only applied to women? Kelly Dittmar, a professor of political science at Rutgers University- Camden and a scholar at the Center for American Women and Politics tells Soledad how some political pundits help drive negative narratives about women on the campaign trail.

So, what makes Tuesday, Super? Math. We dig into the numbers a candidate needs to capture delegates. Will the formula trim the Democratic field, or extend the race until the summer? And finally, NASA's next challenge gives new meaning to the phrase, "hot wheels." It's asking the public for help designing a rover to explore the "hellish" landscape of Venus.

March 8,2020

This week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien, Season 5, Episode 27:

Democratic candidates set their eyes on six more states to collect delegates in the race to the White House, including Michigan. President Trump flipped the reliably blue state by the slimmest of margins, beating Hillary Clinton by less than one percent. He had a lot of help from rural voters. But some farmers tell our correspondent Jessica Gomez his trade policies pushed them to the brink of bankruptcy.

To the left to the left! Will a pull on the party to the far left help Democrats win the White House? Or should they play it down the middle with a moderate? Democratic Strategist and Pollster Roshni Nedungadi tells Soledad whoever comes out of the primary will have to make ideological changes if they want to win the White House.

And Californians struggle with some of the highest home prices in the country with a median price that tops half a million dollars. We travel to the Bay Area to find out how people with six figure salaries are struggling to make ends meet.

Plus, could a legal loophole lead to "Nobamacare?" The Supreme Court will decide the fate of the Affordable Care Act, once again. Even though the justices will likely take it up after the election, you can expect politicians to say, health care is on the ballot in 2020.

And finally, who says there's no such thing as a free launch? NASA's seeking applications for new astronauts. While the job has perks out of this world, the competition is stiff. The last time the agency solicited applications, more than 18,000 applied and only 11 made the cut. This time, only two will get the job

March 15,2020

This week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien, Season 5 episode 28:

Once described as a "Garden of Eden," how did the Altgeld Gardens housing projects in Chicago, later earn the nickname, the "Toxic Doughnut?" Special Correspondent Joie Chen shows us how this environmental nightmare could haunt democratic candidates in 2020.

Plus, paying for college continues to be one of the persistent political questions facing state and federal governments. Many states offer financial assistance to students, but it doesn't always end up helping those who need it the most. That's the case in Louisiana where some state financial scholarships are given to

students regardless of income. Soledad travels to Nicholls State University to see how students are impacted.

And 11% of Washington, DC is considered a food desert. Those are neighborhoods without a nearby supermarket. These areas are predominantly low income with mostly minority residents. It makes getting healthy, affordable food difficult. We travel to the Three-Part Harmony Farm in one such area, to meet Gail Taylor. She's working to create community operated, urban farms to improve the health of all residents.

In our weekly feature, "We're Paying Attention Even If You're Too Busy," we look at a move to Department of Justice now has an office dedicated to denaturalizing citizens. Is this the Trump administration's latest attempt to curb immigration in America, even legal immigration?

And finally, nuisance or nostalgia? New York City still has thousands of payphones, but not for much longer. A look at the long goodbye to an urban relic.

March 22,2020

This week on Matter of Fact, Season 5, Episode 29 we look at the "Fight to Vote." We go inside The Rightfully Hers Exhibit at the National Archives. The exhibit puts a spotlight on a nearly century-long struggle to give women the right to vote. Three historians -Ann Gordon, Marcia Chatelain, and Maggie Blackhawk-join Soledad for a discussion about the 19th Amendment.

From the past to the future, how are young women inspired to vote today? Two students, Naba Rahman, a Republican, and Allison Tovar, a Democrat, talk about how the 19th Amendment shapes their political engagement today and what role gender plays in the upcoming 2020 election.

With millions of documents available, how do you choose which ones make the exhibit? Soledad gets a special look at some of the most interesting items with exhibit curator, Corinne Porter. They include the patent for a special "gendered" voting booth and details on which women got to vote before the 19th Amendment.

Plus, how a "Night of Terror" at a prison just outside of Washington, D.C. changed history. We go inside the transformation of a former prison of suffragists turned Arts Center.

And is it suffragist and suffragette? Depends on where you live. Why did the United States reject the term suffragette while other countries embraced it?

.

March 29,2020

This week on Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien, Season 5 Episode 30, it's a shocking statistic: 22 veterans commit suicide each day in America. The military says financial instability and lack of support transitioning off of active duty play a big role in the epidemic. Soledad is joined by Mike Haynie, founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University which works to empower veterans. Among those who say the IVMF program is a life changing experience is veteran David Sharpe who says the support from IVMF helped pull him back from the brink and prepare him for life as a successful small business owner. He joins the conversation with Darby his service dog.

Plus one in eight Americans, mostly women, say they've been the victim of online sexual abuse. This includes stalking, revenge porn, and in some cases violent attacks. Unfortunately, laws aimed to protect victims were created before the social media boom and they don't hold tech companies accountable. Carrie Goldberg is a Brooklyn based attorney who is trying to change that. She joins Soledad to talk about her advocacy, her own story of survival, and her new book Nobody's Victim: Fighting Psychos, Stalkers, Pervs, and Trolls.

And Soledad interviews one of the stars of *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Gbnega Akinnagbe plays Tom Robinson, the black handyman falsely accused of raping a white woman. Akinnagbe tells Soledad how this latest version of the story differs from the past and is made even more relevant for today.

In our weekly segment, "we're paying attention even if you're too busy", Illinois became the second state to protect the housing rights of undocumented immigrants. The new law is called the Immigrant Tenant Protection Act. It means that tenants, regardless of their legal status, can sue landlords who try to blackmail them into silence over housing violations. California was the first state to pass similar legislation.

Finally, there's an app showcasing Washington, DC's history from a Native American perspective. The app is called the Guide to Indigenous DC. It was created by the Assistant Director at the AT&T Center for Indigenous Politics and Policy at George Washington University. She says Native American stories are too often erased from Washington's history.

2020 1st QUARTER MEET THE PRESS TOPICS

**Chuck Todd NBC News Political Director and the moderator of "Meet the Press," the flagship Sunday Morning public affairs program and longest-running broadcast in television history.
MEET THE PRESS AIRS ON WDSU ON SUNDAY'S AT 10AM AND AGAIN AT 1130PM**

Chuck Todd is NBC News Political Director and the moderator of "Meet the Press," the flagship Sunday Morning public affairs program and longest-running broadcast in television history.

"Meet the Press" is seen on the NBC Television Network from 9-10 a.m. ET in most markets. In New York City and Washington D.C., the broadcast is seen from 10:30-11:30 a.m. ET.

The program re-airs on MSNBC Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. ET/11 a.m. PT and again at 2 a.m. ET/11 p.m. PT and 4 a.m. ET/1 a.m. PT Monday. At these times, "Meet The Press" will also air on SIRIUS channel 90 and XM channel 120.

Please check local listings or the "Meet the Press" website (<http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press>) for television and radio broadcast times in your area or to get transcripts of the show. Follow us on Twitter @MeetThePress and @NBCNewsPR.

January 5,2020

Well, a good Sunday morning and a happy New Year to everyone. President Trump begins 2020 facing three challenges: impeachment, an emboldened North Korea, and of course, most urgently, Iran. Where a week of hostilities that included Iranian-backed militants laying siege to the US embassy in Baghdad ended with the US killing Iran's chief security and intelligence commander, General Qasem Soleimani. The immediate result has been the deepest crisis with Iran since the seizure of 52 American hostages in 1979. Iran has promised a "harsh revenge" at a time and place of its choosing. The US is sending even more troops into the region, while urging American citizens to get out of Iraq. And President Trump is warning that the US has targeted 52 Iranian sites in case Iran does retaliate. US officials are warning an attack in the homeland may come with little or no warning. Less immediate is the impact in a number of other areas for President Trump. In 2012, he accused then-President Obama of somehow seeking war with Iran as a way to help his reelection chances. Well, Thursday's strike could be seen as an effort to overshadow impeachment, it has, and help the president in November. We don't know. In the Democratic race, could this now mean Joe Biden's foreign policy experience becomes a bigger asset? Or could Bernie Sanders benefit from his consistent opposition to overseas conflicts? And how will voters themselves react to President Trump escalating tensions again in the Middle East, given that he, as a candidate, promised to pull America out of endless Middle East conflicts? We begin our coverage in Iraq, with our chief foreign correspondent, Richard Engel, who is in the northern city of Erbil. Richard, you're in Iraq, where the attack took place, but I want to go to the other side of that border to Iran. From our reporting, what you've gathered, the mood in Iran two weeks ago, they had domestic political issues. They were divided in that country. How divided do they seem today?

January 12,2020

Good Sunday morning. Think of this as a three "I" morning: Iran, impeachment and Iowa. On Iran, you can argue that President Trump's killing of Qasem Soleimani was either reckless or bold, but the administration now finds itself struggling to justify its evolving and contradictory explanations of whether Soleimani posed an imminent threat. At the same time, anti-government protests broke out in cities across Iran after officials there finally admitted that it was the Iranian military that shot down a Ukrainian passenger jet, killing 176 people. Next, there's impeachment. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi moved, finally, to send over articles of impeachment for a Senate trial that could begin as early as this week. That was a victory for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who resisted Pelosi's delay tactics and refuses still to commit to allowing new witnesses or the introduction of new evidence. And on Iowa, a Des Moines Register poll released this weekend shows one more reshuffling at the top of the caucus race, now just three weeks away. Bernie Sanders has jumped to the lead for the first time in this poll, with Elizabeth Warren, Pete Buttigieg and Joe Biden all still within striking distance -- no one else really that close. By the way, each of those top four candidates has now led the Des Moines Register's poll at least once at some point in the last year. And

that gap between first and fourth, as you saw there, is well within the margin of error. Typically, Iowa would be our lead Sunday story three weeks before the caucuses, but this race has been overshadowed by events in Washington and overseas.

January 19,2020

Good morning, everyone. Last week we witnessed the dignified and solemn rituals that played out on Capitol Hill, with terms like "Hear ye, hear ye", "do impartial justice", and "on pain of imprisonment" marking the occasion. But beneath the 18th century rules and 19th century pageantry was corrosive 21st century partisan politics. Republicans accuse Democrats of doing anything they can to remove a president they despise. Democrats accuse Republicans of defending the president no matter how clear the evidence against him. Democratic trial managers and the president's legal team released filings last night outlining their arguments. A source working with the president's impeachment team says they will argue the Articles of Impeachment allege, "no violation of law" that impeachment is the result of a "flawed process in the House" and they insist that the Democrats' case collapses on the facts. "We will take it head on," the source claims. Still, we're left to wonder about another jury, similarly divided between supporters and opponents of Mr. Trump. That's the one watching at home. That jury remains as divided as the Senate. The question is: Are they still open to being persuaded one way or the other?

January 26,2020

Good Sunday morning. Even without impeachment, it was not hard last week to find examples of how divided as a country we have become. There was last Saturday's fourth annual women's march here in Washington, inspired by opposition to President Trump. Then there was Monday's pro-gun rally in Richmond, Virginia: that's in the former capital of the Confederacy, on the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. And there was the annual anti-abortion "March for Life" on Friday, with Donald Trump making a first-ever appearance by a sitting American president. Then for pure absurdity, there was a red-blue shoving match with Oklahoma banning state-funded travel to California, after California did the same to Oklahoma. All this, of course, was the undercard to the main event, the first full week of President Trump's impeachment trial. Over three days, Democratic impeachment managers methodically laid out their case that President Trump abused power and obstructed Congress. But Democrats made that case needing at least 20 votes from Republican senators who seem as indifferent to their arguments as Democrats were passionate in making them. As the events around the country last week suggest, the Democratic - Republican stalemate on Capitol Hill was less a cause than a reflection of our national divide. And that divide may grow even wider, as it appears Republicans may bring a quicker end to the impeachment trial than Democrats want.

FGood Sunday morning from Des Moines, Iowa, where tomorrow night -- caucus night -- Democratic voters will finally get their first say on who they want facing off against President Trump in November. We're back again at the West End Architectural Salvage, a coffee shop that also sells all kinds of great custom and vintage furniture. The other big story is in Washington, where Senate Republicans voted to block new witnesses in President Trump's impeachment trial, clearing the way for the president's all-but-certain acquittal on Wednesday. Both parties will plan to leverage impeachment in November, the president insisting he's been exonerated, Democrats arguing the witness-free trial was a sham. The turning point came Friday night with Tennessee's Lamar Alexander's no vote, effectively ending the Democrats' hope of introducing new evidence, or new witnesses like John Bolton. You'll see my exclusive interview with Senator Alexander in a few minutes. Here in Iowa, Democratic candidates have been making their last-minute pitches to Iowans leading up to what is really opening day of the 2020 presidential campaign. Normally, this morning we'd have the results of the highly anticipated Des Moines Register poll, but its scheduled release last night was canceled because of problems with its methodology. Welcome to 2020. Meanwhile, our new NBC News - Wall Street Journal national poll shows the top four Democratic candidates all leading President Trump, with Joe Biden holding the largest advantage at six points. But first, the candidates need to get past each other, starting right here in Iowa.ebruary 2,2020 –

February 9,2020 –

And a good Sunday morning from Manchester, New Hampshire. We're back again at our better-than-ever headquarters in New Hampshire where two days from now voters will either untangle the mess created in Iowa or more likely further complicate the Democrats' path to the White House. One thing we did learn this week: Iowa may not be able to count, but it still counts. Pete Buttigieg's strong showing and Joe Biden's fourth-place Iowa finish have sent their candidacies in opposite trajectories. The latest WBZ - Boston Globe - Suffolk tracking poll out this morning shows Bernie Sanders with just a two-point lead over Buttigieg, who has surged this week -- 24 to 22 -- with Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden and Amy Klobuchar trailing. Of note, Klobuchar picked up the most overnight, perhaps she is seeing a bit of a bump from the debate. Since Tuesday, Buttigieg has gained seven points overall while Biden has lost five overall in that poll. The other thing we learned is that matters could hardly be worse right now for Democrats. The Iowa vote count fiasco is a national embarrassment. The Democratic Party is divided against itself, left versus center-left. The candidate once seen as having the best chance of beating President Trump is in a polling free fall and low on money. The party establishment is terrified of a Sanders nomination, but at a loss for how to stop him. And through it all, President Trump was acquitted of impeachment charges, his poll numbers are improving and he's feeling as confident as ever. So Tuesday's primary may be among the state's most consequential in quite some time, as voters clarify the direction of the Democratic race or not.

February 16,2020 –

Good Sunday morning. When you're thinking about the Democratic presidential race, it's helpful to remember a line from the movie "No Country for Old Men". No, I'm not going where you think I'm going. Paraphrasing here. "If this ain't a mess, it'll do 'till the mess gets here." Bernie Sanders has a plausible path to the nomination, leaving the Democratic establishment grasping for an alternative. Two alternatives, Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar, are splitting the center-left vote for now, while another, Mike Bloomberg, stands ready to divide the non-Sanders wing even more come March. And then there's Joe Biden, the one-time presumed front-runner. Fourth and fifth place finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire have raised serious doubts about whether his campaign can survive. In just a moment, you'll see my exclusive sitdown with the former vice president. And against that backdrop has come what one Democratic senator called President Trump's retribution tour. Mr. Trump sacking or attacking perceived enemies, including those who testified at the House impeachment hearings and then, of course, trying to protect his friends. It all suggests that the lesson Mr. Trump learned from impeachment is to just be himself, only more so. It's left Democrats feeling an even greater urgency to find the right candidate to take on Mr. Trump while being no closer to figuring out who that candidate is.

February 23,2020 –

Good Sunday morning. If there was any question about who the Democratic front-runner is, Bernie Sanders has put that to rest. Sanders won a smashing victory yesterday in the Nevada caucuses, lapping the competition. With the votes, with more votes still being counted, here's where the Nevada caucus stands right now, with Sanders more than doubling the competition. This powerful showing in a diverse state will give Sanders huge momentum as the race moves to South Carolina on Saturday and then to the Super Tuesday states in just nine days. Sanders was already thinking ahead last night, in the Super Tuesday state of Texas.

March 1,2020 –

Good Sunday morning from our election headquarters right here at Rockefeller Center in New York City. We have so much to talk about. Yesterday, the South Carolina primary, our look ahead to Super Tuesday, and of course the growing fears over the coronavirus, which has now claimed its first victim in the United States. So let's get right to it. We're going to start with presidential politics. While he's not yet the comeback kid, Joe Biden got the win he so desperately needed yesterday. Biden's South Carolina firewall held and then some. With almost all the votes counted, Joe Biden lapped the field with 48% of the vote, winning every single county in the state, crushing Bernie Sanders by more than a two-to-one margin, with everyone

else trailing badly. Biden's big win helped him close the delegate gap considerably with Sanders. With six South Carolina delegates still to be allocated, it's very close.

March 8,2020

We have two stories dominating the news this week, the coronavirus and the Democratic race for president. The coronavirus is now spreading rapidly around the world in two distinct and interconnected ways. People in more than 100 countries have been infected, with more than 100,000 reported cases and over 3,000 deaths. Italy has seen the worst outbreak outside of China, and overnight the government effectively shut down the northern part of that country and extended some restrictions even further. This morning, Pope Francis streamed his traditional Sunday blessings and simply waved to the people in St. Peter's Square. If the disease is not yet a pandemic, the economic fallout is. Here at home, the Dow has lost nearly 11 percent in the last two weeks. Some airports are already largely empty, transnational companies are training employees how to work from home and there are growing questions about how well the federal government has managed the outbreak. At the same time, the swiftness of the change in the political landscape has amazed even the most cynical of political observers. Just over a week ago it was hard to see how Joe Biden could win the Democratic nomination. Now it's just as hard to see how he could lose it. Biden's sweeping victories on Super Tuesday gave him a delegate lead over Bernie Sanders that no one saw coming. Four candidates dropped out, with three now endorsing Biden and the remaining contests largely tilt in Biden's favor. We're going to get to all the politics in a moment, but we're going to start with the coronavirus and the growing concerns over how well the federal government is doing to confront this public health crisis.

March 15,2020

America's recognition of the coronavirus crisis we now face seems to have grown about at the same pace the virus has spread: slowly at first, then exponentially. As of this morning, there were roughly 3000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. resulting in 60 deaths but there has been very limited testing so those numbers may be way off. Gone is the nonsense that this is a hoax. Gone -- mostly -- is the disinformation that this is nothing worse than the flu. And gone, too, is the myth that we're in for mere inconveniences. We're facing one of the most serious health crises in American history. President Trump's declaration of a national emergency on Friday calmed the financial markets but only after his teleprompter speech on Wednesday prompted Wall Street's worst day in more than three decades. In this morning's special edition of Meet the Press I'll talk to Dr. Anthony Fauci, two governors and two hospital executives at the front line of this crisis. And, of course, we have our political panel. So many questions remain: Why has the U-S reacted more like overwhelmed Italy, than like South Korea, where there appears to have been some containment? Why do health experts seem so much more alarmed than the federal government does? When will we have enough test kits to know how widespread the virus is? Will the healthcare system be able to handle the coming surge in cases? And, ultimately, are we doing enough right now to stop the epidemic? We do know this: life in America is changing, at least for the time being. And sadly, things are likely to get worse before they get better.

March 22,2020

Unlike with some crises this country has faced -- Pearl Harbor, the Kennedy assassination, 9/11 -- it's doubtful Americans are going to remember where they were when they first heard the news about the coronavirus. But this crisis has also done what those events could not do: empty the American landscape. New York State is essentially shutting down, and with it the nation's largest city. The same is true in Illinois, and the unofficial capital of the midwest, Chicago. And this is the scene at the iconic Santa Monica Pier outside of the nation's second largest city, Los Angeles. Other states are doing the same. Is it enough? Are Americans willing to endure a full national shutdown to stop the spread of the virus while we wait for much needed coronavirus tests, while we wait for front line medical workers to get the protective equipment they need to treat the population while we wait for hospital beds and ventilators to become available to treat the infected and while we wait to see if the federal government is up to the challenge? As of this morning, there have been more than 24,000 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the U-S, resulting in

roughly 300 deaths. Last Sunday, only 60 had died. Here is the front page of yesterday's New York Post, capturing the mood of the country. We are facing a Category-5 storm. The question is: Are we prepared to temporarily sacrifice enough of the freedoms we as Americans take for granted, to knock this menace down to, at least, a Category 3?

March 29,2020

As you can see, once again we look a little different this week. This morning, and for the foreseeable future, I'll be anchoring "Meet the Press" from my home office, as we here at NBC News practice social distancing. Two images illustrate the week we've just been through. These are nurses in hard-hit New York City wearing -- yes -- garbage bags because personal protective gear is unavailable. And this graph illustrates the almost incomprehensible rise in first-time unemployment claims to a record 3.3 million. On a week when the United States passed 120-thousand cases of Covid-19 and two-thousand deaths, when we appeared to pass China and then Italy for the most cases in the world. President Trump offered Americans mixed messages. Early in the week, the president said he'd like America to be open again for business by Easter, that the cure he said -- shutting down the economy -- could be worse than the disease. Mr. Trump seemed eager to play the role of optimist in chief, leaving it to scientists, governors and local officials to own the hard news about disease spread, shutdowns and forced lifestyle changes. But by the end of the week, Mr. Trump's tone had noticeably changed. Yesterday, he even floated the idea of quarantining the New York City region to prevent the spread of the virus, before eventually backing down. Tuesday marks the end of President Trump's 15-day coronavirus guidelines. Will he tighten them? Loosen them? Extend them? We shall see. It's helpful to keep in mind what Dr. Anthony Fauci said last week: "You don't make the timeline. The virus makes the timeline:"