



Issues and Programs List  
Quarterly Report

**January – February - March, 2020**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter**

**Radio**

**Top 5 Issues Addressed:**

1. Health
2. Politics
3. Economy / Jobs
4. Environment
5. Race / Civil Rights

## Representative Programs That Addressed Issues:

### 1. Health

#### **Live News Conferences / Policy Updates / Town Halls**

March 11, 9pm, March 12, 3pm, March 13, 3:30pm, March 16, 3:30pm, March 17, 11:30am, March 18, 11:30am, March 19, 11am, March 20, 11:45am, March 21, 12:20pm, March 22, 6pm, March 26, 8pm/

With the Coronavirus infestation dominating the news during the quarter, GPB Radio devoted numerous hours to coverage of the increase in cases and ways for the public to protect themselves. As part of our coverage, we carried numerous Presidential addresses, updates from the White House Coronavirus Task Force, news conferences and live addresses from Gov. Brian Kemp. We also carried a live Governor's Town Hall on the crisis that aired on TV and radio stations statewide.

#### **Political Rewind**

**GPB**

Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 9am, repeated each day at 2pm.

GPB Radio's popular statewide broadcast focusing on politics devoted NUMEROUS hours to coverage of the COVID-19 virus and its affect on the state of Georgia. The March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> editions of the program focused entirely on the state's response to the Coronavirus epidemic. The March 17<sup>th</sup> edition featured an hour with Dr. Kathleen Toomey, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health. The March 20<sup>th</sup> edition focused on the rapid rise in cases of the disease in Georgia, particularly in Southwest Georgia near Albany. And the March 26<sup>th</sup> program focused on the medical aspects of the Coronavirus epidemic with Dr. Mark Rosenberg, retired CEO for the Task Force for Global Health, Dr. Joshua Weitz, Professor of Biology at Georgia Tech and Atlanta Journal-Constitution Editor Kevin Riley.

#### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

March 20, 2020, 11am.

As the United States tries to slow the spread of coronavirus, social distancing has become the new normal. Millions of Americans are shuttering indoors and spending more time behind screens — and the memes have flourished. Tweets, TikToks, and more viral content have picked up on major themes of the coronavirus pandemic, like the importance of washing your hands, the scarcity of hand sanitizer and toilet paper, and how boring quarantine can be. Dr. Andre Brock, Associate Professor at Georgia Tech studying digital culture, and Emma Grey Ellis, staff writer at Wired magazine who specializes in internet culture and propaganda, joined *On Second Thought* host Virginia Prescott to talk about what online meme culture reveals about how we're processing anxiety during this unprecedented pandemic.

#### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

March 13, 2020, 11am.

The coronavirus pandemic has led to travel restrictions, canceled events, school closures, consumer panic, and mayhem in stock markets across the world. The spiraling fears and slow access to tests for the virus in the U.S. have exposed weak points in government and health care systems, as well as the social fabric upon which we rely — especially for the most vulnerable.

Dr. Keren Landman, a doctor, epidemiologist and journalist, joined *On Second Thought* to discuss how existing inequities play into the risks — and outcomes — of a global pandemic. She pointed out that people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may not be able to work from home, are less likely to have sick leave or paid time off, and are more likely to live paycheck-to-paycheck. And for them, self-quarantining is not a realistic option, which could lead to even more spread of the virus.

"People who are lower income generally live with more people in a household," she explained. "They have fewer bathrooms per household. They share more space, so disease is going to spread more easily in that kind of environment — and then go back into the workplace with all the other people who live in that household. So it's a recipe for more spread among people with lower incomes and less access to sick leave."

Dr. Carlos del Rio, chair of the Department of Global Health and professor of epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, where he's also professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases, also joined the conversation. He pointed to how epidemics reveal weak points in public policy.

"We were saving money by not having access to healthcare, by not having social programs," he said. "And now we're going to pay, right? So being cheap, it's going to cost us a lot, and we need to remember that. Going forward, I would think that, as a nation, we start thinking better about preparing for these kinds of events."

## 2. [Politics](#)

### **Political Rewind**

**GPB**

Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 9am, repeated each day at 2pm.

An insatiable appetite for Georgia-focused political news led GPB Radio's popular Political Rewind to finally expand to EVERY weekday at 9am, with a repeat airing at 2pm. Hosted by longtime political reporter Bill Nigut, the program focused on the national Presidential race along with two Senatorial races in Georgia. Guests included Senatorial candidate Doug Collins, former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, and a team of Political Science professors who came on the show following each of the Presidential primaries to discuss the results. Starting March 16<sup>th</sup>, the program was produced with the host and all guests broadcasting remote from the studio to avoid social contact in the wake of the Coronavirus epidemic. On February 28<sup>th</sup>, the program aired live from the annual Georgia Bar, Media & Judiciary Conference at the State Bar of Georgia in downtown Atlanta.

### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

January 17, 2020, 11am.

Spreading lies is not new in politics. However, slickly packaged fictions can move faster, wider and deeper in the digital age.

After the election of President Trump in 2016, concepts like "alternative facts" and "post-truth" became buzzwords. Increasingly, calling something "fake news" became a blunt instrument for discrediting stories, whether based in fact or not. The term is also being used to educate students at Emory University. *History 190: Fake News* is one of dozens of "evidence-focused seminars" intended to prepare first-year students for college-level research.

Dr. Judith Miller, associate professor at Emory University, and first-year student Natalia Thomas joined *On Second Thought* host Virginia Prescott to share more about the impact of the class on students. Miller, whose research focuses on 18th century France, explained that the parallels between the French revolution and modern cries of false journalism aren't too far off. While she originally

planned on starting off the course with the French revolution, Miller noticed that Emory students were more interested in 20th century events.

"So here I am, a French historian teaching 20th century U.S. history," Miller joked.

Thomas, who just finished her first semester at Emory, said she came to college interested in learning more about what fake news meant. "I really wanted to take a course on what fake news is, [and] why and how it spreads," she shared. Through the course, she was able to explore stories and myths about illegal immigration as well as the Central Park Five.

Thomas reflected that she consumes news differently after finishing the course.

"I used to just take what I read at face value," she explained. "I've learned to be more cautious about what I'm consuming, and make sure to check multiple news sources and see what they're saying about certain issues."

Miller noted that while not everyone has access to a university course on news literacy, there are tangible ways concerned citizens can stay informed without falling for false information traps. "I would say, start by reading more," she advised. "It's a personal decision, and who knows who has time to do that. But ... being more curious about the world is so important."

### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

January 31, 2020, 11am.

Georgia is one of four states without a hate crime law. In 2000, state legislators passed a law forbidding acts targeting victims due to "bias or prejudice," but the state Supreme Court struck it down four years later for being too vague. Repeated efforts to bring a new hate crime law since have failed. Last year, a bill brought by Chuck Efration, a Republican Representative from Dacula, passed in the Georgia House. It's now up for debate in the state Senate. There are arguments for and against the legislation. But what exactly does a hate crime law do, and how is it employed in policing and the judicial system?

Rachel Glickhouse is a journalist for ProPublica. She served as partner manager for the publication's "Documenting Hate" project, which published a series of investigative reports about hate crimes in America. She joined *On Second Thought* host Virginia Prescott to provide a general overview of how hate crime laws work — and how the processes could be improved.

### **3. Economy / Jobs**

#### **Morning Edition**

**NPR**

March 6, 2020, 9am.

Fear of the coronavirus doesn't appear to have infected the U.S. job market yet, despite sending shivers through Wall Street, according to a report from NPR's Economics Editor, Scott Horsley.

A new report from the Labor Department says employers added 273,000 jobs in February — the same as in January. The February increase was about 100,000 more than private analysts had forecast. The unemployment rate dipped to 3.5%, matching a 50-year low.

Job gains for December and January were revised up by a total of 85,000.

The evident resilience in the jobs report may be an artifact of timing. The report is based on surveys conducted three weeks ago, before the sharp jump in reports of coronavirus cases outside of China, where the outbreak began.

"The February jobs report showed remarkably healthy labor market fundamentals prior to the coronavirus outbreak," said Gregory Daco of Oxford Economics. "But while strong employment and steady wage gains have boosted consumers' immune system, the virus is all but certain to infect their willingness to spend."

He warned that business and consumer caution about the virus is likely to weigh on job growth in the months to come.

**1A**

***NPR***

March 23, 2020, 10am.

As coronavirus continues to spread in the United States, more and more businesses have to close their doors or cut back hours, spelling trouble for employees. From restaurant and hotel workers to musicians and retail staff, hundreds of thousands of jobs are being impacted by the crisis.

The Trump administration warned Senate Republicans in a closed-door meeting that COVID-19-related unemployment levels could reach as high as 20 percent. While this is a controversial estimate, the rise in unemployment is one sign that the American economy is in serious jeopardy.

President Trump signed into law a relief bill that expands unemployment assistance and provides paid sick and family leave for some for U.S. workers impacted by the crisis. Lawmakers are now working on a third, even larger, package that could include direct payments to Americans in need.

What relief is available to workers who face layoffs? What can be done to help those suddenly without a paycheck, gig work or tips because of the coronavirus crisis? Today on 1A, host Todd Zwillich discussed this issue with Ben White, chief economic correspondent for "Politico," Emanuele Nigro, owner of Osteria 57 restaurant in Manhattan, Alexa Jarvia, former chorus member with the New York Metropolitan Opera and Amy Putens, a hair stylist based in Washington, D.C.

#### **4. Environment**

**GPB News**

***GPB***

January 30, 2020, 7:44am. Repeated at 5:44pm.

Gloria Hammond remembers the day the man from Georgia Power came to talk about buying the home she shared with her husband Cason. They were just back from the hospital. The man had gone no farther than the front yard.

"I said, 'Look, I'm telling you right now, we're not selling nothing right now,'" Hammond said. "Because I already knew Cason was terminal."

By terminal she meant Cason was already sick with the cancer that eventually took his life. By then, most everyone else up and down Luther Smith Road in Juliette had already sold out to the utility.

"You see, it's just only two of us left on the road," Hammond told GPB Reporter Grant Blankenship.

The Hammonds sent the man packing from the property that had been in Cason Hammond's family for something like a hundred years. That was two years ago.

“They haven’t offered me nothing,” Hammond said of the man from Georgia Power. “He just told me, he said, ‘You know, I will be back.’”

While she’s sure Georgia Power still wants the house where she is helping to raise her grandchildren, what Hammond has never known is exactly why the utility has bought so many homes in Juliette in the first place. In an email exchange, Georgia Power spokesperson Holly Crawford said it’s been to establish a buffer around their coal ash pond at Plant Scherer. What she didn’t say is why they need the buffer. Like Gloria Hammond, many in Juliette wonder if it isn’t connected to illnesses that have afflicted their loved ones, like the cancer that killed Cason Hammond.

A new bill, **Georgia House Bill 756**, is aimed at forcing utilities to seal coal ash away from water, in part because of decades of unanswered questions about coal ash and health in Juliette.

"We know that our water testing is showing bad results in certain wells in certain areas of the state, and we have to be more protective of our water source," said Georgia House member Mary Margaret Oliver, (D-Decatur). Oliver is one of the sponsors of the bill.

In support of that bill and also to provide some answers to residents, Fletcher Sams of the Altamaha River Keeper is doing new testing. He’s taking water samples from kitchen sinks, at the Hammond place and at 99 other homes where people rely on wells for drinking water, wells drawn from groundwater that could be tainted with coal ash.

## **GPB News**

***GPB***

February 28, 2020, 7:44am. Repeated at 5:44pm. March 15, 2020, 7:44am. Repeated at 5:44pm.

In a 2-part series for the Pulitzer Center’s “Connected Coastlines,” GPB Savannah reporter Emily Jones looked at the environmental hazards of septic tanks along the Georgia Coast.

To get to Wanda and David Scott’s dock, you take a gravelly walkway that cuts through the marsh beyond their yard. Unlike their neighbors’ elevated, wooden walkways, it’s down close to marsh level, so sometimes it floods, which can make it tough to have friends over.

“Like today, I would have thought, are they gonna have to wade in water to get to the dock?” Wanda Scott said on a recent afternoon. “We knew that maybe two or three times a month [it would flood] before. Now it’s pretty regular.”

Like most people in their Whitemarsh Island neighborhood, the Scotts rely on a septic system. And the ever-encroaching tide has Wanda Scott worried.

“It makes sense to me that if septic is this close to the marsh and the marsh floods at high tide more regularly now, then the outflow of all these houses...it’s being part of the part of the outflow,” she said.

Water from the toilets, showers and sinks in the Scotts’ house all goes into a septic tank. The solids stay in the tank, where bacteria break them down. Then the still-contaminated water, called effluent, flows into specially-engineered pipes and soil, called a drain field.

“You have to maintain a certain level of separation between the septic drain field and the groundwater table so that the effluent flowing to the drain field has space to percolate through the soil and be treated by all the microbes in there,” said Scott Pippin of UGA.

But sea level rise will reduce the separation. “So the first impact is going to be less treatment of the effluent that comes out of the septic systems. So that’s going to translate into potentially pollution,” Pippin said.

Pollution, that is, of the waterway where the Scotts and their neighbors swim, and fish, and go boating. There is not water quality testing of that creek, so residents and officials alike don't actually know if it's polluted. Several residents are pushing to get regular testing.

But ten miles away, Marc Frischer with the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography has shown there is bacteria from human waste in the Vernon River. "We could distinguish E. coli bacteria that came from a septic system from those that came from the sewer system," he said.

So Frischer and his team simulated a leaky septic system. They found leaks probably end up in the waterway long before you would notice a problem at home. "And we don't see it. Out of sight, out of mind, right? Until there is a problem," he said.

David Scott on Whitemarsh Island said they have problems when it rains a lot. "Our drain field, which is in the backyard for our septic system, it gets saturated as well. It can't, it can't get rid of it, you know," he said. "So we back up and, you know, have to call a service to come pump the septic tank out."

Climate change promises more rainfall to back systems up, as well as higher water levels to compromise the filtration. Florida already sees regular issues with its failing septic systems. But the question is: how do you fix a problem that's out of sight, out of mind? Coastal Georgia communities and researchers are trying to find an answer before it's too late.

## 5. [Race / Civil Rights](#)

### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

February 7, 2020, 11am.

On June 12, 1963, President John Kennedy delivered his report to the American people on civil rights. Hours after his nationally televised speech, NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers was shot in the driveway of his Jackson, Mississippi home. He was pronounced dead an hour later.

Accused killer Byron De La Beckwith was twice tried by all-white juries, which deadlocked. Nearly 30 years later, a reporter for Jackson's *Clarion-Ledger* newspaper unearthed documents and holes in the defense that led to re-trying and convicting the white supremacist behind Evers' killing.

And that's just one of four Klansmen that award-winning journalist Jerry Mitchell helped put behind bars, decades after they got away with murder. Details of his dogged investigative reporting and the resulting trials are documented in his new book, *Race Against Time: A Reporter Reopens the Unsolved Murder Cases of The Civil Rights Era*.

Mitchell joined *On Second Thought* host Virginia Prescott to explain how he was inspired to look into these crimes, how his investigative chops revealed new evidence (or poked holes in previous alibis and testimonies), and why these cases matter, decades later.

### **On Second Thought**

**GPB**

February 21, 2020, 11am.

The documentary "Always in Season" gives an honest look into the history of racism and lynching in the United States and connects it to the racial climate and justice of the present. The film makes its television premiere on PBS' Independent Lens on Monday, Feb. 24. Director Jacqueline Olive talked to *On Second Thought* host Virginia Prescott about her documentary and her engagement with the film — and discussions across racial lines — with viewers in communities across the country.