

Life Beyond the Pandemic

Featuring:

Dr. Anthony Fauci



Our season premiere will feature a conversation with Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984 and chief medical advisor to President Biden. Though Dr. Fauci became a household name in 2020 due to his trusted leadership amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, he has been battling public health crises for decades on the frontlines of the outbreaks of HIV/AIDS, SARS, avian influenza, zika, and ebola. He has served as a key medical advisor in the six previous administrations.

In a 1988 presidential debate, then-Vice President George H.W. Bush named Dr. Fauci as one of his heroes and added, “You’ve probably never heard of him.” But any anonymity Dr. Fauci once had is long gone. His face can be found on a vast array of tchotchkes for sale online, he is the object of numerous social media fan accounts, he was recently played by Brad Pitt on *SNL* and has been immortalized by the Bobblehead Hall of Fame. A petition has circulated to nominate him as *People’s Sexiest Man Alive*.

Not all of the recent attention has been positive, though. Dr. Fauci often corrected former President Trump’s misleading claims about the coronavirus, which earned Dr. Fauci criticism from the former president and his supporters. Dr. Fauci has been labelled a “closet lefty” in many Republican circles, and between the months of April and September of 2020, the portion of Republicans who fully or partially trusted him dropped from 77% to 48%.¹ He and his family are now the subjects of so many death threats that the Justice Department had to assign them a security detail.

At 80 years old Dr. Fauci works 18 hours a day, splitting his time between media appearances, congressional hearings, presidential consultations, research labs, and meetings with disease-stricken individuals. In 2008 he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by George Bush for his “determined and aggressive effort to help others live longer and healthier lives.”

¹ <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/report/kff-health-tracking-poll-september-2020/>