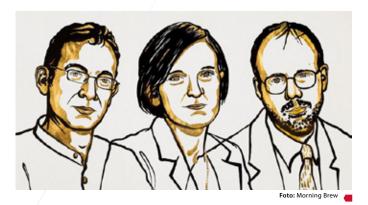


USA OUTLOOK

Weekly newsletter | October 14 to 18





Nobel Prize in economics Awarded to One High-Achieving Trio

Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer were awarded the Nobel Prize in economics yesterday for their innovative research into alleviating global poverty. Duflo is the youngest person and the second woman to win the economic prize. What the trio has taught us about the world: First, a few years ago, Banerjee, Duflo, and a co-authors puplished pioneering work on microcredit programs in India. Turns out, these really small loans help somewhat but aren't a game-change for poverty. Second, in a 2000 paper called "Elephants", Kremer and Charles Morcom took on elephant poaching. They argued that in some circumstances, government should actually stockpile ivory, then threaten to sell it and flood the market if the elephant population drops too low. Third, Kremer also looked at peer effects on college rommates. The conclusion: Males randomly selected to live with roommates who drank alcohol before college earned lower GPAs.



Forget robots, Al Supervisors are working to automate humans

As robots continue to lack certain skills to perform worker bee tasks, Axios reports that companies are optimizing human workforces of the future with increasingly cheaper AI employee-monitoring systems. In other words, instead of AI learning from its failures to improve its own output, machines are monitoring human employees to improve their productivity.

According to Prasad Akella, CEO of the Silicon Valley-based Drishti, "The most programmable machine on the planet today is still the human". Of course, not everyone loves the idea of management jobs being outsourced to an algorithm programmed to turn employees into productivity machines.

Many companies have preached to curb the worry of work-bots taking over the workforce entirely. These robo-monitoring systems take pro-human sheen up a notch. Its software is a way to make safer and to better recognize positive work. But it doesn't take an infallible android ro see how treating humans like machines could easily turn inhumane.





Amazon quietly fires 3 of its major delivery firms following a spotlight on fatalities

Amazon has terminated its contracts with third-party delivery firms Inpax, Sheard-Loman, and Letter Ride, following damning reports that documented deaths connected to the three contractors. Amazon's move to wash its hands of the firms will reportedly put more than 2k people out of work in 8 states. But the reports raise the question of whether the pressure Amazon puts on its drivers to meet their speedy delivery goals, could be partly to blame. Amazon drivers have been involved in over 60 serious crashes. To meet Amazon's goals, drivers say they were forced to skip meals, ordered to pee in bottles, and coached to speed without wearing a seatbelt to deliver more packages in less time.

Other than dictating routes for third-party drivers, Amazon prides itself on keeping its hands off the wheel when it comes to labor and operation logistics, claiming the company is just in it to lift up entrepreneurs who want to make a dent in the delivery game.



Foto: eSuite

Understanding Precision Medicine and Al within the Life Cycle of Technology Revolutions

Powerful new technologies have the potential to radically transform both science and society. In science, as Douglas Robertson describes in Phase Change (2003), a new technology like the microscope, the telescope, and the calculus can profoundly alter the questions we ask, and advance our ability to better understand nature. The remarkable and often maddening aspect of technology is originally invented and the time when people figure out how to use it most effectively.

If precision medicine is in the first stages of its journey, the application of AI to healthcare and, in particular, drug discovery, is just getting out of the starting gate. Predictability, this has led to the same patterns of contrasting perspectives that have emerged in response to precision medicine.





NASA Tries Again for the First All-Female Spacewalk

NASA is set to launch the first all-female spacewalk Friday, after canceling it earlier this year because it didn't have two spacesuits in the right size. NASA astronauts Christina Koch and Jessica Meir are slated to venture outside the Interactional Space Station to replace a power controller that failed over the weekend on what would be the 221st spacewalk at the International Space Station since December 1998.

This time, NASA has the spacesuits ready. Another spacesuit was launched to the ISS this year, this one already in a medium configuration, according to Kirk Shireman, NASA's program manager for the International Space Station. Koch and Meir's poten-

tially history-making spacewalk is one of the 10 spacewalks that NASA has planned for the rest of the year.

"What we are doing now shows all of the work that went in for the decades prior, all of the women that worked to get us where we are today", Meir said during an interview on the space station.

"There are a lot of people that derive motivation from inspiring stories from people that look like them", Koch said in the same interview. "And I think it's an important aspect of the story to tell".