

\$GME, \$AMC, AND THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF #STONKS

by Nathan "Diamond Hands" Khichi



Gamestop is a struggling business model. As buying video games online continues to grow, Gamestop as a business model is becoming more and more obsolete. However, its share price reflected an entirely different story in late January, after the share price rose over 8,000%. In only a few months the company's market cap increased by \$10 billion. So what exactly happened? How did social media play a significant role? Why is this dangerous and was this illegal?

When Reddit users discovered that some hedge funds, particularly Melvin Capital were shorting GameStop, they wanted to take them down. Shorting a stock essentially means betting on a stock to lose by borrowing it, selling it, and buying it back at a lower price. What these Reddit users had in mind was buying many shares in Game Stop to cause the stock to go up. The message went viral and got passed on by Elon Musk. So naturally, the stock went up and

Melvin Capital's market cap fell 53% as GameStop shares just kept climbing.

Word of mouth epidemics are very easy to spread because of social media. By simply using a cell phone application, any normal person can create a post that reaches millions of people within minutes. Without social media, this process is much slower and does not occur within a matter of hours, but rather weeks or months. As this message grew larger it eventually reached Elon Musk who then forwarded it again and the message reached his millions of followers with just a few clicks on his smartphone.

After what happened to GameStop, we continue to learn social media has a profound effect on our behaviors, actions, and the way the world operates. If this could happen to GameStop, this could also happen to any other company. In America, citizens rely on the

private sector for almost everything. For example, we shop online from a private company, the cars we drive in are made by private companies, the food we buy is from private companies, and the technology we buy is from private companies. Now imagine if something like this happened to Apple a \$2 trillion-dollar company. A stock can never stay up forever and if a company of this scale was erratic it could be catastrophic for investors and citizens alike. While Apple will most likely never fall in our lifetime, it is still a scary thought that a 2 trillion-dollar corporation can be influenced by social media users.

Market manipulation is illegal in the United States and sounds very similar to what some traders did with GameStop. Market Manipulation is artificially inflating or deflating a share price for personal gain. Even though this is what these traders did, are they at fault? Not necessarily. There

is an online stock brokerage app named Robinhood which allows traders to trade stock commission-free. Robinhood sparked controversy after it banned the trading of GameStop stock on its app. The CEO had to testify before Congress on February 18th because of the number of investors that traded GameStop shares through the platform which caused Melvin Capital to crash.

After this, I think we have learned a valuable lesson. In the age of social media where word of mouth epidemics can spread faster than ever before, we have to make sure that these messages are not dangerous. If we let social media go without being regulated our lives will operate based on viral messages. Now we understand more than ever just how powerful social media can be and how a small number of everyday people can cause a \$13 billion hedge fund to drop 53% all with a few clicks.

Biden's Presidency

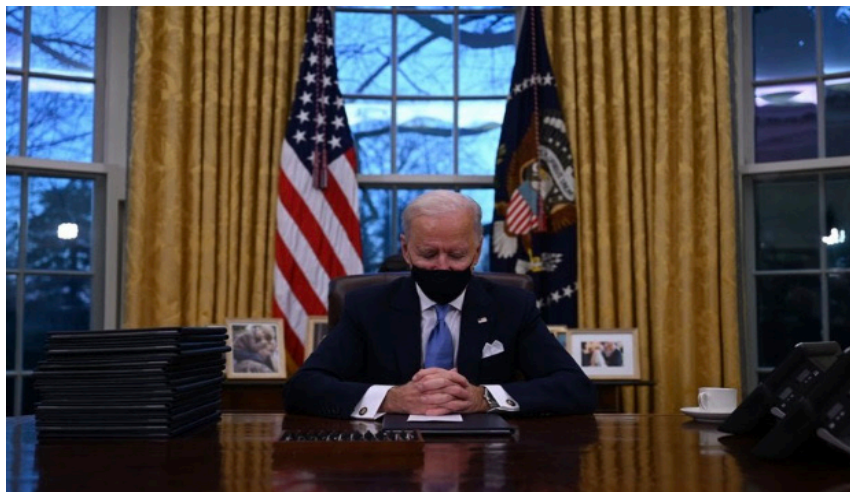
What Has He Done, and What Should He Do?

by Griffin "Minecraft Maniac" Velez

After a controversial four years, the country is more divided than ever. Democrats against Republicans, with no middle ground to stand on, and the future of our country is at stake. Half the country is hurt by Trump's election loss, and they are losing faith in the voting system. Biden has promised to move on from Trump, and bring unity, truth, and a COVID plan to the White House. Can he be the one to bring healing to our torn country?

Biden has constantly preached unity, before he became President, and during his Inaugural Speech. Unity can mean many things. It can mean everyone standing together, and working together. Or it can mean forcing people to stand with you, and do what you want, therefore having no disagreements. I believe he is aiming for the latter option, however. If Biden wants to unify our country, he needs to be clear on his stance of unity. In his first 12 days he signed almost 40 Executive Orders. Trump, in his first 100 days, signed 32 Executive Orders. In almost 1/10 of the time, Biden signed 8 more Executive Orders than Trump signed. It seems as though Biden will take the road of forcing people to do what he wants them to do, not actually working for unity. Congress has a Democratic majority, so it makes no sense why he wouldn't want to propose a bill that allows Democrats and Republicans to voice their opinions. This is harmful for the country, and shows half the country that Biden doesn't want their unity or belief in him and he just wants to push his ideas in a way where Congress can't stop him.

The second thing that Biden has repeatedly expressed the importance of is truth. Crucial to a democracy, him and his administration have said how we need truth, claiming Trump did not bring us truth. Is Biden, and his administration, actually being truthful? Biden signed an Executive Order forcing everyone on federal property to wear a mask at all times. He then proceeded to not wear a mask. This is not the dishonest part, more hypocritical. The dishonest part is when Jen Psaki, Biden's Press Secretary, was asked about this, she said "He was inaugurated as President of the United States. I think we have big — bigger issues to worry about at this moment in time." First day of the job, the person who will be speaking for the Biden Administration every day is being dishonest and deflecting questions that would make Biden look bad. I don't care that Biden didn't wear a mask, mistakes happen, but the fact that his Press Secretary will cover for him like that is nowhere close to being truthful. Another example of his administration failing to be truthful is when Biden claimed during a news conference that Trump's vaccine distribution plan was nonexistent, and they would be "starting from scratch." During that same news conference, Fauci later refutes the claim, saying "We certainly are not starting from scratch." Trump did not always tell the truth. However, Biden should strive to be better than Trump, not lie just because Trump did too. If Biden wants to have bipartisan support, he needs to stop with the lies, and actually show everyone that he will work for the entire country, not his party, or for him.



Biden sitting in the Oval Office with a stack of Executive Orders beside him.

Biden has made it very clear that his number 1 priority is vaccination distribution. It is very unclear what he will actually do. He started off by saying that his 100 day plan was 1 million vaccinations a day. However, this goal was almost already met when Trump left office. Biden then changed his position, saying everyone will be vaccinated in the spring. Very soon after, he changed his position again, saying he misspoke, and everyone will be vaccinated by the end of the summer. This was why people didn't trust Fauci, he kept changing his stance on subjects. If he wants people to actually listen to him, Biden needs to provide a tangible plan that dramatically ramps up vaccine distribution. He also will need to make sure that there are enough vaccines for the second dosage, as it is unknown if the vaccine will work after that deadline is missed, or if there are side-effects. (21 day separation between doses for Pfizer vaccine, 28 for Moderna vaccine)

As the new Chief Executive of our country, Biden has a lot of responsibility thrown on his shoulders. Honestly, I hope he is the president to unify our country. I don't generally agree with what he wants, but our country needs healing, and I truly want him to be the one to bring the healing. The road he is going down is the opposite of healing. He needs to start from the top, with healing Congress. An example of our division in Congress is how Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently accused Sen. Ted Cruz of attempted murder against her during the Jan. 6 Capitol Riot. Our own lawmakers are pitted against each other's throats. Biden cannot hope to unify average citizens with the people we elect hating each other.

People listen to the representatives they elect. Unifying them will force the average citizen to look at them, and try to find middle ground with people that hold opposing views. This will by no means be an easy task, but our country cannot survive with people hating others just because of their political views. This will be a rough road for our new President, but I think that if Biden focuses more on the country than his party, he can accomplish this and provide a lasting positive impact on the United States.

LATEST COVID DATA IS GOOD NEWS... FINALLY!

By Chuck "Muscle Tee" Minervino

After several months of disappointing COVID statistics, the US may finally be getting good news. The combination of falling COVID cases and increasing vaccine distribution should allow the country to breathe a sigh of relief that better days are ahead. However, a question that still remains unanswered is how many people will choose to get the vaccination.

According to data from the CDC, the rolling 7 day average of COVID cases has been falling for the past two weeks. Confirmed cases are now down 32% from their daily peak of 248,000 on January 13th. Medical experts are applauding the public's efforts to better social distance and follow the correct safety protocols like wearing masks and limiting large gatherings.

This news is welcomed after a ferocious second wave swept through the country beginning in mid-September 2020, taking average daily confirmed cases from 35,000 over 200,000 by early January. Experts say the COVID surge was due mainly to human behavior such as holiday gatherings, not wearing masks, being within 6ft of people, schools and businesses opening up, just as the cold weather caused people to stay more indoors and in close proximity.

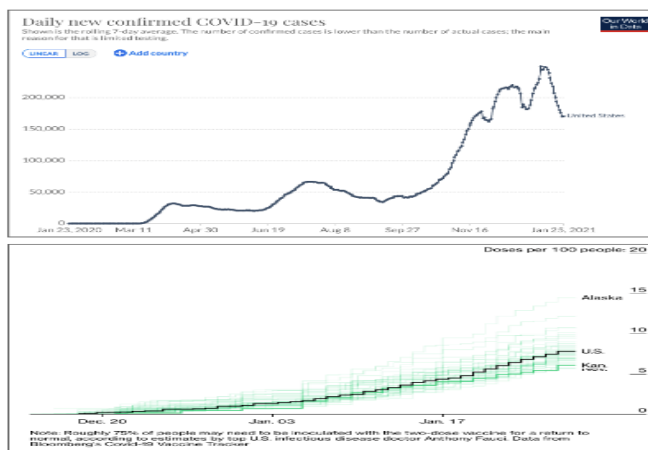
Coincidentally, just as confirmed cases are starting to fall, COVID vaccinations are also rapidly ramping up across the country. According to the

Center for Disease Control (CDC), vaccine distributions are now 26 million, up from 3.2 million at the start of the year. Currently, 7.8% of the US population has been vaccinated. On January 26th,

President Joe Biden announced the purchase of 200 million more vaccines for the US. This brings the total vaccine doses to 300 million, nearly enough to vaccinate the entire population of 328 million Americans. According to the President's plan, the entire country could be vaccinated by the end of the summer. The President has also committed to increasing the weekly vaccine supply to the states to a minimum of 10 million doses from 8.6 million.

One of the major challenges with vaccinating the citizens has been the distribution within the states and the COVID vaccination centers. According to the CDC, more than 48 million vaccine doses have been distributed to the states but only 26 million vaccines have been administered. The New York Times reports that logistical at clinics, low staffing levels have been causing delays. But, states are aggressively opening vaccination locations as quickly as possible allowing for a faster ramp in vaccinations. For example, New Jersey opened additional mega COVID vaccination sites across the state.

While the vaccine distributions are ramping there are still questions about how much of the public will actually get the vaccine. The Pew Research Center recently conducted a study that estimated confidence in getting a COVID had risen to 60% in December 2020 from



51% in November 2020. In that same study, 21% of the people said they will never get a vaccine and nothing anybody can say will change their minds. These people are not uninformed or unintelligent, they range from doctors to senior citizens to military veterans.

Some of the arguments against the vaccine are that it will not be effective, that it may be dangerous for older people, it is unproven, and may not prevent people from catching a mutation of COVID. If someone believes it doesn't work and could ultimately harm them why would they take it? The AstraZeneca vaccine was just restricted

in Germany to people under the age of 65. This seems to be causing some of the fears about vaccines.

The CDC says that "...getting a COVID-19 vaccine may also help keep you from getting seriously ill if you do get COVID-19." It encourages people to get the vaccine for their safety as well as for the safety of their family members and friends. Experts do not yet know what percentage of the US population needs to get the vaccine in order to achieve herd immunity. The experts believe that as the vaccine is distributed and there are no major signs of side effects the confidence level will increase even further.

2020-21 NBA Season Predictions

By Sean "Likes Snacks & Jazz" Fialcowitz

Western Conference

1. Los Angeles Clippers- The Los Angeles Clippers are a great team with star players Kawhi Leonard and Paul George. They are a complete team that I believe will go far in the playoffs.



2. Los Angeles Lakers- The reigning champs are back with almost the same roster as the season before. The only danger that could bring this team down is injuries because Anthony Davis is injury prone and Lebron James has been battling an ankle injury all season.



3. Utah Jazz- The Jazz have come out hot this year and are in first place in the Western Conference. Led by Donovan Mitchell and Rudy Gobert, they are a complete team that can hit shots from the outside and also score on the inside. The Utah Jazz are a loaded team and they are showing it now.



4. Phoenix Suns- Three years ago the Suns were the worst team in the league. Now they are one of the best. After acquiring Chris Paul to join rising star Devin Booker, the Suns have gone off this year to win 19 games. If I were a Phoenix Sun fan, I would be proud of how far they have come.



5. Portland Trail Blazers- The Trail Blazers have been as good as usual. Despite being carried by Damian Lillard, they are still overall a good team that I think will do very well this season.



6. Denver Nuggets- Led by arguably the best center in the game, the Denver Nuggets have been solid so far this season. Though not as complete as last year's team, they still take our number sixth spot.



7. Golden State Warriors- The Warriors were the worst team in the Western Conference last year but this year, mainly because of a healthy Steph Curry they have risen to number eight in the standings. The Warriors also have new exciting players that will enhance the team. Even though the Warriors are far away from their prior dynasty, they are on their way to making the playoffs.



8. Memphis Grizzlies- Taking our last Western Conference spot are the Grizzlies, who have proven they are a solid team. The only reason why they have been losing this year is because of a Covid outbreak that spread through the team. Now, with everybody healthy, I am sure they have what it takes to make the playoffs.

Eastern Conference

1. Milwaukee Bucks-Coming from last year's playoff disappointment, the Bucks are back and ready to dominate again, led by The Greek Freak, Giannis Antetokumpo(right) and Khris Middleton.



2. Philadelphia 76ers- The 76ers are making Philly proud after going 19-10 and placing first currently in the Eastern Conference. Led by Joel Embid who is statistically having his best season yet.

3. Brooklyn Nets- The Nets made headlines with the deal of the year when they acquired James Harden for almost the entire bench, a couple of draft picks and Caris Levert. As good as James Harden is, I think this trade will hurt them in years to come. Even without rebounding or defense, the Nets are a dangerous team at the moment.



4. Toronto Raptors- Last year, the Raptors proved that they could win without Kawhi Leonard and the same goes for this year. The Raptors are great on defense and are also a scoring threat with Kyle Lowry.

5. Indiana Pacers- The Pacers have shown up to play lately and with star players Domantas Sabonis and Caris Levert leading the charge, they take a very good spot at number five.



6. New York Knicks- They are exciting to watch, those are words that have not been spoken at Madison Square Garden since Linsanity. The Knicks are a young and good team led by Julius Randle who have come out of nowhere to be seventh in the standings. I am happy that after all the Knicks struggling they are in line to make the playoffs.

7. Boston Celtics- After starting out the year well, the Celtics have not been living up to their potential after the team had an outbreak of Covid. Even though they still have one of the better records in the East, their value has gone down lately which is why I have them at number seven.



8. Charlotte Hornets- Bouncing back after a couple years of mediocrity, the Hornets have lots of depth in their lineup which is why they take the last playoff spot.

NBA SEASON PREDICTIONS (CONT'D)

Toilet Bowl 2020-21: Sean Fialcowitz's NBA worst of the worst



vs.



15. Minnesota Timberwolves- The Timberwolves were not good the last two years and they have continued that streak this year. Even with Karl Anthony Towns coming back, the Minnesota Timberwolves need a miracle to make the playoffs.

15. Detroit Pistons- Taking the last spot in the Eastern Conference are the Detroit Pistons. In my opinion, the Pistons were an easy choice for last place. After losing Andre Drummond, the Pistons have yet to gain any momentum. I hope they improve over the offseason because the Detroit Pistons are in bad shape.

Student Spotlight!!!



This month's edition features a poem from Jack Tonzola, '25 (LEFT) and a Super Bowl poem written by Joe Artiglere, '25 (RIGHT), after losing a bet to his math teacher.

"Shore"

You feel your ears pop from the collision of waves.
You smell that salty soak of a cold breeze.

You hear the gulls laughing over the sea.

You are irritated by the sun
shouting at *you!*

It may seem unpleasant.
But your remember for all the memories
it has provided.

It is a place, not any place.
One that holds a portal to the outside world.

It is morning.
You are awakened by the sound of a crew ship.
As unnecessary as it sounds

you smile.

Tom Brady, "The GOAT"

Super bowl 55 Was one crazy ride.

Hopes and dreams for the boy patty,

Only for him to get shut down by the fatties.

I made this bet in hopes of winning.

Only to see Mr. LaLib grinning.

On to Tom Brady, the best of them all,

Was somehow able to stand strong and tall.

He showed true leadership amongst his team,

And threw his boys some absolute beams.

He showed that he truly carried the patriots,

And made his new team look like the craziest.

There's no doubting that Tom Brady's the best,

Only sorrow amongst the rest.

I now rest easy knowing I lost,

But I await the day Patrick dominates them all, but at what cost?

Faculty Editors: Mrs. Luludis & Mr. LaLiberte