

# ZEITGEIST

**“THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES”**

**WINTER EDITION - 2022**

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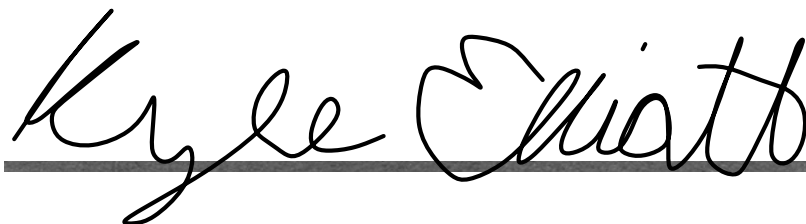




# DEAR READER,

This *Zeitgeist* edition's cover features a photo of the Statue of Liberty, located in the most famous city in the world, New York City. The statue itself represents many powerful ideas about the city, but more importantly, about our nation as a whole. The book in Lady Liberty's hand represents our laws and our democracy, while the torch in her other hand expresses enlightenment, progress, and leadership. I believe this statue is a great symbol of America and its values, and the ideas it represents can also be found in the framework for today's political landscape. The writers in this edition had these principles in mind when writing their articles, and I hope their work inspires continued discussion about what it means to live in America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kyle Elliott", written over a horizontal line.

**Kyle Elliott, Editor-in-Chief of *Zeitgeist***





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*(Please Note: the views expressed in Zeitgeist are not  
endorsed by the Fairfield Prep administration.)*



# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT:

*Sr. Tremblay is a beloved Spanish teacher here at Prep. He grew up in Rhode Island and went to college at URI in his home state. In college, he worked for the United States Ambassador to Spain, James Costos, in Barcelona. He got his master's degree in education at Fairfield University and ultimately ended up at Prep where he has taught Spanish and coached soccer for six years.*

## Sr. TREMBLAY:

Firstly, being able to form relationships with my students and their families has been really enjoyable over the years and is something I really cherish. Secondly, the opportunities and the extracurriculars here are so extensive. I've been able to coach soccer, go on a trip to New York, go on Kairos, Urban Plunge, the overnight freshman retreat, you name it. There are just so many awesome ways to connect with my students both inside and outside of the classroom.

## Sr. TREMBLAY:

I went to public school as a kid, so I already knew its faults, and I knew I wanted more from teaching. I feel that Prep, being a private school, gives teachers the freedom to explore different ways of teaching. Most importantly, I feel we have a really strong community here that you can't find anywhere else. I also really enjoy the religious aspect of the school and the Jesuit ideology it teaches.

## Sr. TREMBLAY:

In college, I double majored in Political Science and Spanish so I was able to work abroad and got to experience both Spanish politics as well as the language and the culture. I will say that Domestic Policy is challenging for a post-grad, but if you really like politics I'd say look into it for sure. If you're interested in foreign politics and traveling, I would recommend Foreign Affairs. However, a Spanish major is good for ANY career, because you're going to make a higher salary if you double major, you get to study abroad, and you'll make close friends that last forever.

## KYLE ELLIOTT:

*What do you enjoy most about teaching?*

## KYLE ELLIOTT:

*What drew you towards teaching at Prep?*

## KYLE ELLIOTT:

*Would you recommend a Political Science and/or Spanish major to upperclassmen considering future majors?*





# SEÑOR TREMBLAY

KYLE ELLIOTT:

*What were the most important lessons you learned in Spain?*

**Sr. TREMBLAY:**

Overall, there are just different ways to live life, and there are different ways to be happy. The lens through which you see the world is super important as well. When you speak another language like Spanish, your brain works differently, meaning you see life differently. It taught me to appreciate where I come from and appreciate others.

KYLE ELLIOTT:

*What are the major differences between Spain's politics and the US's politics?*

**Sr. TREMBLAY:**

First of all, Spain has a history of dictatorship, so they've only had 47 years of democracy, while the US has had democracy since day one. They have a king, meaning that have both representation of state and government while the US has just government. The people are very different, and Spanish culture has been evolving for far longer than America since the country is so old. There are also very different areas of Spain, all with their own unique culture and identity. Although Spain is smaller than the US, there is still that same division, with certain states even wanting to separate in Spain. In politics, there are more than two dominating parties, about five, which is common in Europe.

KYLE ELLIOTT:

*What do you predict for the economy in the next 6-12 months?*

**Sr. TREMBLAY:**

I think the US is beginning to even out on COVID. That means that traveling sectors will go up and the economy will begin to level out. It will be less volatile, so no crazy changes unless something happens out of the blue. Overall, we have more ways to fight COVID, and we are seeing fewer hospitalizations, so I'm thinking a solid 6-12% market increase in that time frame.

KYLE ELLIOTT:

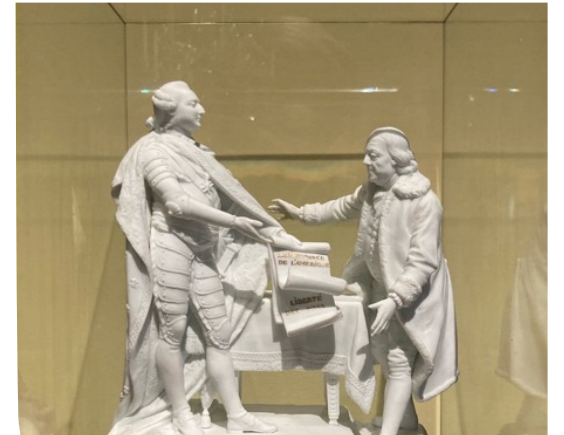
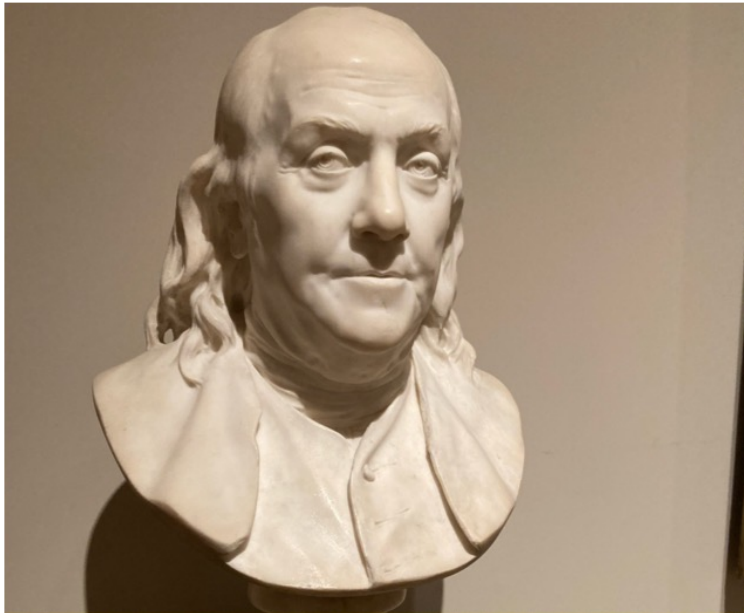
*Do you believe teenagers should be more involved in politics? If so, why?*

**Sr. TREMBLAY:**

Heck yeah! It's proven that older people vote more and that fewer young people are politically active, so younger people's lives are being dictated by older people. Your voice matters. Young people can make a big difference. Since young activists are so rare, when they do take action it's more meaningful. If you can vote, go out and do it.



# LUIS AND KYLE TAKE ON NEW YORK!



Club members Luis Brea '23 and Kyle Elliott '24, President and Vice President respectively, were able to travel to New York City and explore the Metropolitan Museum of art over the Thanksgiving break last fall. This trip provided the Political Awareness Society with some key research to help with future discussion topics. The club is looking forward to planning unique events and trips like this in the future!



## KEY EXHIBITS

"The Death of Socrates" by Jacques-Louis David  
"Washington Crossing the Delaware" by Emanuel Leutze  
The Temple of Dendur



## THE WONDER OF THE MET

*By Luis Brea, President of the Political Awareness Society*

I must admit that I did not care for New York when I was younger. However, as I explore local and international politics, I have grown to fully appreciate what the city has to offer. This was only fortified by my recent trip to New York alongside my fellow club leader Kyle.

Over the course of about seven hours, Kyle and I viewed artifacts and art representing 2,000 years of human civilization from all corners of the world. It was astounding to see how much the Met could fit into one building.

Personally, my favorite spot to visit was *The Death of Socrates*. It is easy to fall into the trap of idealizing Socrates in this painting in a similar way that Plato does. However, if there is anything to praise in Socrates' life work, it is his humility. Despite facing death, Socrates accepted his lack of knowledge and did his best to try to find answers to life's most burning questions. Moreover, Socrates rejected the fear of death on the grounds that he simply did not know what followed it. In this light, *The Death of Socrates* represents the ideals that Political Awareness Society strives for: we don't pretend to know the answers, but that doesn't stop us from pursuing them.

Oh, and the mid-day Shake Shack we had was great. Nothing pairs better with 18th Century Baroque art than french fries. In all seriousness, I look forward to organizing more club opportunities like this New York trip in the future!

## THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

*By Kyle Elliott, Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of the Political Awareness Society*

When reflecting on the importance of this trip to the Met, I am called back to the theme of this edition: freedom and American principles. As exemplified in many of the articles in this *Zeitgeist*, history has profound weight on the world today. Being able to experience history, both American and foreign, through the medium of art means being able to both reflect on past events and how those events shaped the world we lived in today. Take, for example, the many museum exhibits showcasing Native American art or the exhibits showcasing Ancient Greek art. In your everyday life, going to school here at Prep or driving around your neighborhood, the impact of indigenous people or the government of the Ancient Greeks is rarely going to cross your mind. Even in politics today we are so focused on the present and the future that we often forget how we got where we are. If we are so concentrated on moving forward in America, we will simply ignore the weight of the past. We should not dwell on it, but we should not forget it either. If our politicians were to forget the foundations this country was built on, they would not be building America. They would be building a completely separate country, in their own eyes. That is why it is our job, as voters, as citizens, to keep history in mind when acting for the future. So please, explore art, go to museums, learn something new. But do not ignore the lessons of history.



# THE COCA COLA TRAIL

BY: LUIS BREA '23

Beyond the policymaking and politics of American history, there lies a rich culture that Americans have developed along the way. Throughout the years, it has been a culture that has withstood some of the country's gravest threats. But what exactly is American culture? To understand the gravity of American culture, one must accept that America is diverse, progressive, and carries weight.

For this work, the instances in history in which American politics has fallen short of our ideals will be omitted from our cultural tapestry. This includes Slavery, The Civil War, Japanese Internment, Racial Segregation, and other monumental injustices committed on American soil.

To those who call this revisionist, it is— but for good reason. This work is not meant to be a mere recitation of facts and dates. This work is, however, an illumination of America's greatest moments and loftiest ideals. To understand this is not to negate the gravity of our lower moments or defend its perpetrators, but rather to inspire America's continuous effort to realize its greatest potential. Further, this work includes quotations from diverse groups who were the victims of these injustices, and who fought for their inclusion in the American experiment.

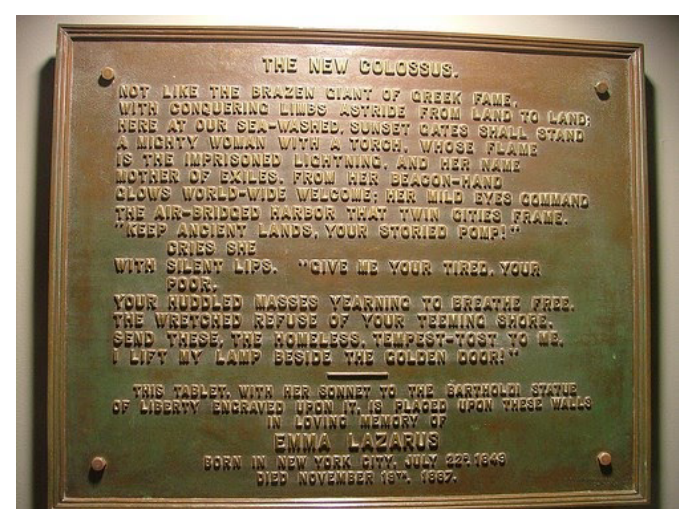


*A mural of various Coca-Cola marketing posters.*

The following are unique stories revealing three different qualities about American culture. These stories, like any iconic bottle of Coca Cola, should represent a piece of quintessential Americana. This is the American culture you may not have been taught in traditional history textbooks. This, dear reader, is the Coca-Cola Trail.

## American Culture is Diverse

If you have ever visited New York, and have not taken the time to visit the Statue of Liberty, you have gravely missed out. Sure, perhaps the M&M store or Central Park are more entertaining stops, and perhaps also examples of American culture, but the Statue of Liberty represents something far more profound. On Lady Liberty's island, allusions to two documents— both of equal stature— are inscribed: the Declaration of Independence and Emma Lazarus's poem. Specifically, Lazarus's poem reads as such: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."<sup>1</sup>



*The bronze plaque found at the base of the Statue of Liberty.*

Many conservatives celebrate the idea of "American exceptionalism." The phrase has been used to recognize social, technological, and political advancements throughout the evolution of the Republican Party.<sup>2</sup> However, while these



accomplishments are constantly celebrated, the diverse people that worked towards many of these accomplishments are ignored. In reality, had Lady Liberty's cry gone unnoticed, "American exceptionalism" would be a much more limited phrase.

Without immigration, West Side Story and Singin' in the Rain actress would have stayed in Puerto Rico (Rita Moreno).<sup>3</sup> Without immigration, a prominent voting rights advocate and co-inventor of the scholarly term "institutional racism" would have remained in Trinidad and Tobago (Kwame Ture).<sup>4</sup> Without immigration, the man who discovered relativity would have been tracked down and killed by Nazi officials (Albert Einstein).<sup>5</sup> The list goes on and on.

These individual accomplishments should be celebrated within the full context of these individuals' status as non-native-born Americans. Nevertheless, anecdotes can only provide so much evidence for the overall diversity of American Culture. To prove this, more comprehensive numbers can be found in recent studies. For example, a study funded by the United States Office of Advocacy found that immigrants create small businesses twice more often than their native counterparts on average.<sup>6</sup> Further, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found that "Immigrants added \$2 trillion to the U.S. GDP in 2016 and \$458.7 billion to state, local, and federal taxes in 2018."<sup>7</sup>

From Lady Liberty's doctrine, immigration has taken its place at the heart of American exceptionalism. Therefore, American culture should grow to include the celebration of non-native-born American citizens.

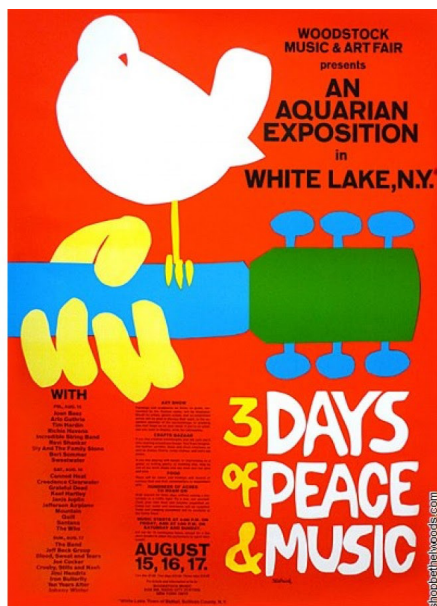
## American Culture is Progressive

Many point towards 1950s consumerism as the quintessential American cultural age. However, what many of these romantic accounts of the decade fail to mention is the neglect of all sorts of minority groups. In "What We Really Miss about the 1950s," Stephanie Coontz reveals the "tremendous hostility" towards "people who could be defined as 'others': Jews, Puerto Ricans, the poor, gays, lesbians, and 'the red menace.'" Still, this brewing political hostility was tempered by suburbanization, where many families moved into the suburbs to "retreat from social activism."<sup>8</sup>

In the next two decades, the political tide had shifted towards more progressive causes, and prominent advocates of the 1960s were beckoning those stuck in the 1950s to catch up. In his letter from Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr. admitted that he was "gravely disappointed with the white moderate" and went on to criticize the citing of "order" in the name of indefinitely deferring "justice."<sup>9</sup>

The creation of a "counter-culture" was a response to calls for political change, and the parallel cultural and political shifts often worked hand in hand. For example, the Woodstock Music Festival included several musical guests and around half a million attendants. As a result, the festival is a widely held historical symbol of the newly created "Woodstock generation." This generation would not shy away from serious political advocacy like their 1950s counterparts, however, as the festival included prominent African American artists. For example, Jimi Hendrix's performance of the Star-Spangled Banner that featured the sound of bombs dropping was an outcry against the ongoing Vietnam War.<sup>10</sup>





*Poster for the Woodstock Music Festival.*

The 1950s is celebrated far more than any other era for its cultural significance. Nevertheless, if Americans look a few decades following the 1950s, they will find a culture that did not shy away from the social and political realities of their time. This courage to face harsh issues head-on, alongside a willingness to celebrate social change alongside cultural staples like Star-Spangled Banner, shows that the 1960s is an era far more worthy of praise.

## Conclusion

The image of American culture presented above may be unfamiliar to some. Further, to “define” American culture as one thing or another would be unnecessarily rigid. However, if American culture is diverse, progressive, and carries weight, why should it not uplift the stories above? We gain nothing by limiting the people and movements we celebrate under the American identity.

On the other hand, by looking at American culture under these three attributes, we open the door to the next generation of diverse poets, artists, teachers, scientists, politicians, and philosophers. What could possibly be more American than that? ■

*Luis Brea (Junior) is the President of the Political Awareness Society and a teammate on the Ethics Bowl Team. This will be his fourth article published in Zeitgeist.*

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# SUKKOT AND THE AMERICAN EXODUS

**BY: KEVIN MURPHY '25**

The beginnings of America are often compared to the Exodus of the Hebrew people. While this is quite a broad comparison, there are still many similarities between the two. These parallels are actually drawn long after the events themselves. Specifically, Thanksgiving and the Hebrew Sukkot.

The United State's most prominent national holiday is, without debate, Thanksgiving. The holiday is, of course, centered around a feast where we take special care to give thanks and commemorate the first Thanksgiving feast 400 years ago. Being one of the most popular festivals it has evolved and changed over the years as the tradition is diluted. Similarly, the Hebrew people celebrate Sukkot, a holiday that holds strikingly similar principles. Sukkot is celebrated over the course of seven days of feasting, prayer, rest, and celebration. All meals during the festival are eaten in Sukkah, small tent-like huts. The feast is mentioned several times in the Old Testament and once in the Gospel of John, where it is referred to as "The Feast of the Tabernacles" or, "The Feast of the Booths." The purpose of the feast is to commemorate the time the Israelites spent in the desert for

forty years. Even after millennia, this is the day the Hebrew people live as their ancestors did. Also, like any other tradition, it has changed over time and is interpreted in many different ways by different cultures and groups of people, especially over such a span of time.

To put it simply, the festivals of both Thanksgiving and the Sukkot are quite similar in the sense that they hold together a group with tradition. As people branch out within a culture, more ideas, traditions, and opinions are formed as a result. This branching out is what makes individuals so incredibly unique: it is the basis of the common idea of freedom. While this is a positive, these traditions we hold are still necessary to hold a strong foundation for a people. Tradition is valuable to any group as it often encompasses a common belief and holds people together on an enormous scale. ■

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# MENTAL HEALTH AND GENERATIONAL INJUSTICE

**BY: TOMAS GALLOZA '24**

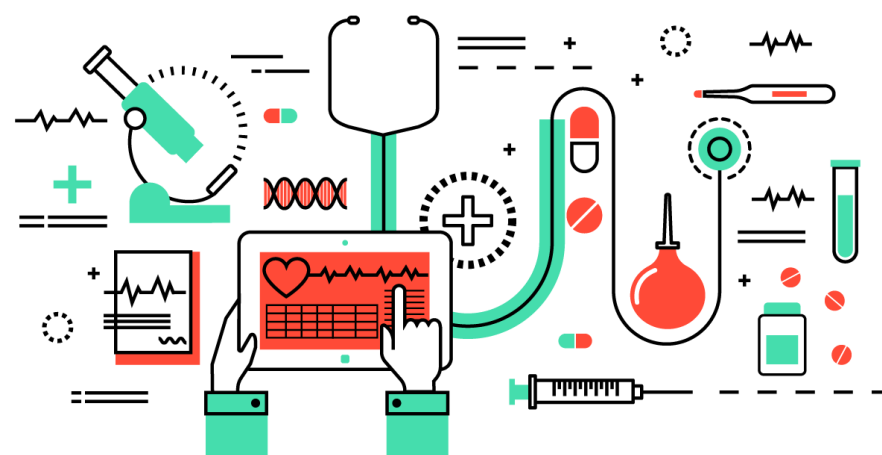
It is a well-known fact that in America mental health has been at the forefront of social media and the news even before the pandemic had started. Even with all of this infamy, it seems that the numbers of those with a mental illness are on a rise, as nowadays every 1 in 5 people experience mental illness. That is 51.5 million people in the U.S alone. Out of those 51.5 million people, 12.9 million have a serious mental illness. Now, one may wonder as to why one would be talking of the statics of mental illness. That is not what this is about, this article is about how America is treating mental illness in different age groups, why the current system is failing, and what needs to be done to end this crisis.

As stated previously, mental illness is becoming a serious problem. However, it always has been. Not even 40 years ago if you were to tell someone you had some sort of mental illness you would be sent to a mental ward or be neglected and ignored. You would not get treated and if you were it would not be properly or with care. Yet, that was 40 years ago, not even the 21st century yet. In 2022 in comparison, it is an entirely different world. Or at least I would like to say so. Unfortunately, people are still mistreated when it comes to mental illness. At any given time 3.9 million people who have a mental illness and require treatment are going untreated and or neglected. This number is going up along with the number of people diagnosed with a mental illness. One might say that this is due to a growing population. Even so, if more people are being diagnosed and in need of treatment, the government should make it a higher priority to get more people treated.

One might assume that the 1 in 5 statistic only applies to adults. However, unfortunately, that would be incorrect, as it

also applies to minors as well. Now more than ever people are accepting of mental illnesses. This allows children to feel more comfortable talking about such things allowing for a more accurate statistic to be made. It is surprising how many people develop and have mental illnesses even at such a young age. Facilities for children with mental illnesses are good or at least decent enough to not gain any notoriety for being inadequate. The only lackluster thing with the child mental health care system is the drugs that are administered. To clarify, there is no problem with the drugs themselves but there is a problem with it being administered when it is not necessary. In places with low care for mental health such as Vermont or Mississippi, there are times when psychiatrists and doctors simply hand their patients drugs and go on with their day. This is not just a problem when dealing with kids but with every group and age as well. With doctors that don't care, you get a health system that also does not care.

In every age group, the only one that seems to get or have gotten proper mental health care properly is the elderly. Now, that is not saying that the elderly have constantly been taken care of to the best extent. Nursing homes have not always been the best places as in some cases although uncommon they do face some sort of abuse.



*Graphic portraying the mental health care system.*



has been a neglected problem for a long time, and now that the problem is being given its time in the sun it is reportedly becoming an even bigger problem. In every age group, there are individual problems that don't occur often in other age groups, problems that could be solved relatively easily with a bit more care and a bit more money, as there are people who go untreated every day and people who are mistreated every day. It is a bigger problem than it may seem, or at the very least has the potential to be a much bigger problem if not given the proper time and care that is needed to solve it.

Despite these faults in the US mental health system, there are many solutions available to us to create a better system in the future. However, solutions are very personal; what works for one person may not for another. In terms of policy, we need to increase mental health education in schools. It should be included in health classes in such a way that productive conversation is had and students feel comfortable being open about it. Mental illness should be discussed in an open and realistic light, as anybody can be born with a mental disease or develop one. These are things that can be done on a group level. However, most required solutions are more personal than that. One such solution would

be restricting phone access. Social media brings a plethora of problems into one's life, especially earlier on which is when most people tend to begin joining social media platforms. Along with that, people nowadays need more connection. With everything that happened with COVID-19, people were cooped up inside and couldn't socialize with others in real life. In order to counteract that, people need socialization now more than ever. If nothing else works, then and only then should we turn to the wonders of science. Humanity has made strides in mental illness in the past few decades. So much so that there are drugs that help release certain chemicals to help someone with their mental illness. Although it's easily accessible, drugs should always be a last resort as it is extremely easy to become dependent on them.

If you or a loved one are ever having any suicidal thoughts or feeling depressed, please get help before doing anything drastic. If you or someone you know think of acting on suicidal thoughts, call the suicide hotline at 1-800-273-8255. ■

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# UNDER FIRE

BY: KYLE ELLIOTT '24

In recent times, the Second Amendment has arguably become one of the most hotly contested and debated articles of the constitution. The Second Amendment states: “a well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.” During the beginning of America’s independence from England, the term “militia” meant groups of young men who were banded together with loyalty to the American republic, while “well-regulated” meant trained to standards set by the state in case of attack. When the Second Amendment was written in the bill of rights, its goal was to allow Americans to provide for the defense of the nation, to allow for a militia to disrupt federal tyranny, and to put more power into the hands of the people. However, a lot has changed in America since 1791, nearly two and a half centuries later. The Second Amendment has been interpreted in many different ways by different groups of people, and now our country is unable to agree on its original purpose. For perspective on how our judicial branch has interpreted this article of the Constitution, it is important to examine the Second Amendment-related Supreme Court rulings handed down throughout American history.

## A Brief History

The first of these rulings was the 1876 Supreme Court case of *United States v. Cruikshank*. This case was mostly about the First Amendment as members of the KKK were convicted of violating the 1870 Enforcement Act, which was an act created during reconstruction to protect black citizens’ right to assemble peacefully and exercise their right to vote. However, this act also included black citizens’ right to bear arms under the Second Amendment.

Despite this, the court ruled that the Second Amendment only applied to the federal government as a protection against tyranny. Therefore, citizens taking away other citizens’ right to bear arms did not violate the constitution.

The Second Amendment was mentioned roughly a decade later in the 1886 case of *Presser v. Illinois*. Herman Presser led hundreds of armed citizens through the streets of Cook County in protest of factory owners cutting wages and what they felt to be a war between labor and capital. He was charged with violating Article 11 of Illinois’s Military Code, which prohibited groups other than the organized militia from parading while carrying arms. Presser pleaded not guilty and argued that this violated his Second Amendment right. Justice William B. Woods wrote on behalf of the unanimous court that “. . . a conclusive answer to the contention that this amendment prohibits the legislation in question lies in the fact that the amendment is a limitation only upon the power of congress and the national government, and not upon that of the state.” Therefore, the state had the right to prohibit such activity.

In the 1939 case of *United States v. Miller*, Jack Miller and Frank Layton were charged with violating the National Firearms Act (NFA) of 1934 by transporting a sawed-off double-barrel shotgun across state lines. Justice James Clark McReynolds wrote that because possession of a sawed-off double-barrel shotgun does not correlate to maintaining a well-regulated militia, the Second Amendment does not protect them from possessing it. This was the only Supreme Court case that dealt with the Second Amendment directly in the 20th century. It was only until 2008, nearly 70 years later, when the amendment was



quoted once again in *DC v. Heller*.

In 2002, Robert A. Levy of the CATO Institute, a libertarian think tank, sought to challenge the Firearms Control Regulation Act of 1975. The act banned DC residents from owning handguns, automatic firearms, and high-capacity semi-automatic firearms, and even prohibited keeping a firearm in one's home. Decades after its creation, Levy was looking for DC residents to help him sue the city based on his argument that the act went against the Second Amendment. One of these residents, Dick Heller, a police officer, opposed it heavily. The district court granted the government's motion to dismiss the case. However, in 2007 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit reversed the dismissal, saying that the gun ban was unconstitutional. The court argued that restrictive gun regulations infringed on an individual's right to bear arms for lawful self-defense, which was guaranteed not only by the Second Amendment but by a natural right that existed before the constitution was even created. Dick Heller, the only plaintiff in Levy's group who could claim damage because he was denied a handgun permit, was asked to appeal to the Supreme Court. He accepted, and the court heard oral arguments on March 18, 2008. Under a 5-4 majority, the court sided with Heller. It concluded that, although it was not unlimited, the Second Amendment still protected a citizen's right to keep and bear arms. This was a huge change in the discussion of the amendment, as it was the first Supreme Court case to recognize the right to bear arms as independent of state militias.

In 2010, yet another major Second Amendment case was held in the Supreme Court, one heavily influenced by *Heller v.*

*DC*. The case of *McDonald v. Chicago* concerns a man named Otis McDonald challenging the city of Chicago's gun laws. While McDonald argued that these laws infringed upon his right to own guns, granted by the Second Amendment, the city argued that such laws were necessary in order to maintain safety and public order. The court ruled in favor of McDonald and the other petitioners due to the conclusion drawn in *Heller* that the right to self-defense was "fundamental" and "deeply rooted." Because of this, it was argued that the Fourteenth Amendment also applied, as it states: "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Therefore, the state could not interfere with the right to keep and bear arms. Dissenting judges reasoned that the history and meaning of the Second Amendment showed no evidence that the right to own a gun was fundamental, but this argument did not persuade the court as a whole and thus the case was won by McDonald.

### A Shift in Interpretation

It is clear that the way the Supreme Court and other American courts have understood the Second Amendment has shifted over time. On top of this, the public's interpretation of the Second Amendment is very different now than it was 200 years ago. But what is the cause of this judicial and cultural change? Although there is not one sole culprit for the way we talk about the Second Amendment today, there are a few key influences that are necessary to consider when having this discussion.

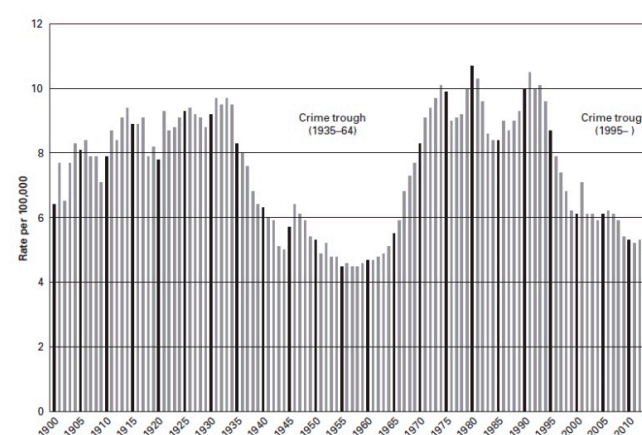


## The NRA

The National Rifle Association, or NRA, is the most notable factor in “rewriting” the Second Amendment. When the NRA was first created, it was drastically different from the organization we know today. The NRA was founded in 1871 by two Civil War veterans and a former New York Times reporter under the goal of helping urban northerners improve their marksmanship, as their inferior ability compared to their southern counterparts was believed to have prolonged the war. Their main agenda was education for firearms safety, marksmanship training, and recreational shooting. Surprisingly enough, they were also involved in gun control during the early 20th century. During the Prohibition era of the 1930s, the NRA assisted President Roosevelt in the drafting of both the 1934 National Firearms Act and the 1938 Gun Control Act, the first federal laws for gun control. These laws put strict regulations and taxes on firearms that were considered to be associated with crime at the time, such as machine guns, silencers, and (as mentioned previously) sawed-off shotguns. Gun owners and sellers were also required to register with the federal government and felons were prohibited from owning any firearms. The proposed legislation was so uncontroversial that it was unanimously upheld by the Supreme Court in 1939. This practice of supporting gun control by the NRA was continued for another 30 years until the 70s when the first shift of priorities occurred.

The first sharp turning point of the organization’s agenda can be traced back to 1971, when the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, a government agency, raided the home of

longtime NRA member Kenyon Ballew, who was suspected of stockpiling illegal weapons. He was shot in the head, an injury that paralyzed him for life. This incident caused the NRA to speak out against the federal government and insist that the Second Amendment protected individual gun rights for all Americans, not just militias. This language was similar to that of the Black Panther Party, a controversial civil rights movement during the time that sought to arm African Americans to protect themselves against police brutality. However, it was only four years earlier that the NRA had supported California’s Mulford Act of 1967, which was created as a counter to the Black Panther Party’s march on the State Capitol to protest gun control legislation. This exposes just how extreme of a shift the organization had undergone, from helping the government fight against gun advocates to adopting their language.



*Homicide victimization rates, 1900–2013.*

However, this wasn’t the end of the NRA’s change of platform. During the 1977 “Revolt at Cincinnati,” a group of reformers brewed conflict inside the organization over the leadership’s fluctuating stance on gun control, which was displayed in the previous paragraph. In a more violent America (See Graph), with the assassinations of Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X, the topic of self-defense had become



increasingly more relevant. Although there was a new rise in panic by gun rights advocates about new gun restrictions, the FDA was not reflecting this same level of worry. After the organization had decided to move its headquarters to Colorado to get away from the politics of DC, more than a thousand protestors showed up at the annual NRA meeting at the Cincinnati Convention Center in opposition to the organizations' leadership. About 30,000 delegates in total attended the convention. By four in the morning, the leaders of the NRA had been voted out and activists from the Second Amendment Foundation and the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms advanced into power. Under the command of Harlon Carter, former head of the Institute for Legislative Action, a lobbying arm for the NRA, the organization dove back into the political landscape and fought for gun rights and against gun control legislation. He claimed



*Harlon Carter- American gun rights advocate and former NRA leader.*

that the NRA was “so strong and so dedicated that no politician in America, mindful of his political career, would want to challenge our legitimate goals.” Ronald Reagan must have understood this, as he saluted the NRA in a 33-minute speech in 1983 and offered comfort to the gun rights advocates by swearing to “never disarm

any American who seeks to protect his or her family from fear and harm.” Strangely enough, Reagan never actually mentioned the Second Amendment in this speech.

Thus, the NRA was able to create their own interpretation of the Second Amendment, an amendment that had rarely been discussed throughout American history. Today, there is even an incomplete reading of the article emblazoned on a wall of their headquarter’s lobby, reading “. . . the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.” Using the constitution to lure conservative Americans into supporting their movement, they began influencing campaigns of both democrats and republicans. The NRA’s impact was evident in a matter of years. In 1959, when Gallup, a DC analytics and advisory company, asked Americans if the law should ban handguns for everyone except law enforcement and other authorized persons, 60 percent of them said yes. By 1980, just 38 percent of those surveyed said yes, while only 19 percent of them said yes in 2021. However, this sudden adoption of the Second Amendment by gun rights enthusiasts can not be credited solely to the NRA and its political influence. To truly understand its transformation from a forgotten piece of legislature to a key platform policy in American politics, it is necessary to recognize the rapid cultural and societal changes of the time.

## Gun Culture

The first of these cultural changes was an overall shift in Americans’ view on firearms. Today, guns are an integral part of American society, and the US is often criticized for its unhealthy relationship with guns compared to other developed nations. They’re in our music, video games,



television, and cinema. The US has only 5% percent of the world's population but 42 percent of civilian gun ownership, and the amount of estimated firearms currently in the country surpasses its population.

Our obsession with guns can be traced back to the 1920s. During the decade, we were introduced to a new protagonist in American crime, one who was brave, honorable, and solved all of his problems with a gun in his hand. Many credit Carroll John Daly with first creating this type of character, who he called Terry Mack. Appearing in “Three Gun Terry,” published in Black Mask magazine in May of 1923, Mack was a fearless detective who shot at criminals and never missed. He and other characters like him were incredibly popular during the time. During an era of gang violence, Prohibition, organized crime, corrupt government, and growing populism, the American public was drawn to the symbol of a moral and well-armed champion, one heroic enough to save the lawful and stop the lawless without the help of police.

At the same time, guns began to represent the gritty self-reliance of cowboys and the Wild West. Classic Hollywood westerns packed with rifles and revolvers such as Stagecoach (1939) glorified gun-toting mavericks and violent combat. However, Wild West towns like Tombstone and Dodge City prohibited residents from carrying guns in public, meaning these films were far from accurate. By the end of the 1900s, this idea of a courageous and well-armed warrior had become a cultural hero. The gun, on the other hand, shifted from a piece of military and law enforcement equipment to a feeling of invincibility.



*John Wayne, Ringo Kid from Stagecoach (1939), posing with a rifle.*

This glorification of gun use is problematic, as gun enthusiasts don't stack up to the fictional ideal of the steady, perfect shot. Guns actually make hostile interactions such as robberies and assaults more deadly and do not make your home safer than a baseball bat or mace does, according to research done by David Hemenway, Professor of Health Policy at the Harvard School of Public Health. A 2017 National Bureau of Economic Research study discovered that right-to-carry laws increase violent crime rather than decrease it. A meta-analysis by the Annals of Internal Medicine found that access to firearms in the home not only increased the chance for suicides but homicides as well, partly due to domestic violence between husband and wife. The presence of a gun in the home also increases the risk for accidents, mostly involving children. According to Everytown's #NotAnAccident Index, there were at least 342 unintentional shootings by children in 2021, resulting in 141 deaths and 219 injuries across the nation. Even with many schools still in remote learning last year, 32 students were tragically killed in school shootings in 2021.

This idea of a “good guy with a gun” is a dangerous fantasy that has nestled itself into the ideologies of many gun rights



advocates. It goes like this: more guns in the hands of the people make everyone safer, as the only person who can stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. However, evidence for this claim is lacking, as most active shooter situations are not stopped by concealed-carry citizens. In an FBI study of active shooter situations from 2000 to 2013, 13 percent of shooters were stopped by unarmed civilians (21 incidents) while only three percent of shooters (five incidents) were stopped by armed individuals, the majority of them being armed security guards. In 2012, the FBI found there was one justifiable gun death, one occurring in self-defense, for every 34 unjustifiable gun homicides, along with 82 gun suicides and two unintentional gun deaths. The gun lobby also claims that shooters target “gun-free zones” out of fear of being stopped by a “good guy with a gun,” and that arming more people in more places, creating more of these zones, will stop violent crime. In reality, most mass shooters target specific people, groups, or institutions, making it unlikely that right-to-carry laws affect their choice of target.

Overall, a society filled with “good guys with guns” isn’t practical. When in an active shooter situation, especially in those where the senses can be impaired, such as vision in the dark movie theater of the 2012 Aurora, Colorado shooting, or the loud nightclub of the 2016 Pulse Nightclub shooting, it is extremely difficult to immediately identify and take out the shooter. This can even result in the accidental shooting of innocents by “good guys” attempting to kill the active shooter. In this attempt to diffuse the situation, they can also confuse law enforcement by diverting attention away from the shooter. Regardless of the effectiveness of

concealed-carry citizens, do we want to live in a society where their existence is common? Do we want to live in a country where teachers have to keep guns in their desks?

Overall, the way we interpret the Second Amendment today is the consequence of a drastic change in American society. Through our ever-increasing urge for self-defense, we have resurrected a formerly forgotten article of the constitution as a justification. We have made guns an idol under the invented concept of guns as a solution instead of a problem. In reality, a gun’s main function is to evoke a feeling of fearlessness in its owner. Yet, does its use as an emotional utility really outweigh its use as an instrument for bloodshed?

### **A Future Upholding the Second Amendment**

It’s safe to say that the Second Amendment isn’t going away any time soon. That being said, it’s necessary for the future of gun control discussion that we come to a consensus on its meaning. The right to keep and bear arms has never been absolute in American history, with gun laws being just as old if not older than the Second Amendment itself. With our current gun culture in the US, firearm laws are necessary for order. If we want to keep the Second Amendment and reduce gun violence, politicians, as well as American citizens, need to stop thinking of gun control as a political battle and start to see gun violence as a public health crisis.

In politics, gun control is seen as a danger to those who support gun rights. This has led to gun violence research being underfunded, most notably due to the consequences of the 1996 Dickey

Amendment which mandated against any CDC research that “may be used to advocate or promote gun control.” Dr. Eric Fleegler, a pediatric emergency physician and health services researcher at Boston Children’s Hospital, says there are thousands of gun law studies waiting to be performed but researchers “can’t do them because of the money.” If gun violence were any other “disease, any health issue, any genetic condition,” Fleegler said, “there would be an all-hands-on-deck approach to reduce and eliminate that threat. And yet with firearms, we have gone in the opposite direction.”

Guns, as well as mental health, need to be talked about. With nearly 400 million firearms in the hands of US civilians, and a raging epidemic of mental health illness, something nearly one in five US adults experience, mass shootings, homicides, and suicides are going to continue to occur. Both of these crises should be discussed by doctors and medical professionals with families, but that conversation isn’t happening. According to Mental Health America, over half of US adults with a mental illness, 27 million, do not receive treatment, and the percentage of mentally ill adults who report unmet need for treatment has increased yearly since 2011. With gun safety, it's even less. A national survey conducted by Northeastern Professor Matt Miller found that of approximately 4,000 adults who live in

households with guns, fewer than 10 percent of them have received gun safety instruction from a clinician. Minnesota, Missouri, and Montana even limit doctors’ ability to address firearms with patients.

Mass shootings, especially school shootings, need to be addressed better and change needs to occur. We should look at New Haven as a model. After a spike in gun violence in 2021, the city has decided to take action, with an expansion of police capabilities including more training and the implementation of systems to detect and report gun violence, as well as investment in community collaboration through funding of community policing and gun violence education.

We need to invest in solutions that work. The American gun crisis is a product of our inability to work together politically and address the problem head-on. If we want to live in a society with guns, we can’t just have political talking points, we need political discussion. Only then can the Second Amendment live up to its true potential: ensuring the rights of the people, not the death of the people. ■

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*Kyle Elliott (Sophomore) is the Editor-in-Chief of Zeitgeist and the Vice President of the Political Awareness Society. This is his fourth piece published in the magazine.*

*For any questions or comments about Kyle’s work, please contact: [p24kelliott@fairfieldprep.org](mailto:p24kelliott@fairfieldprep.org)*



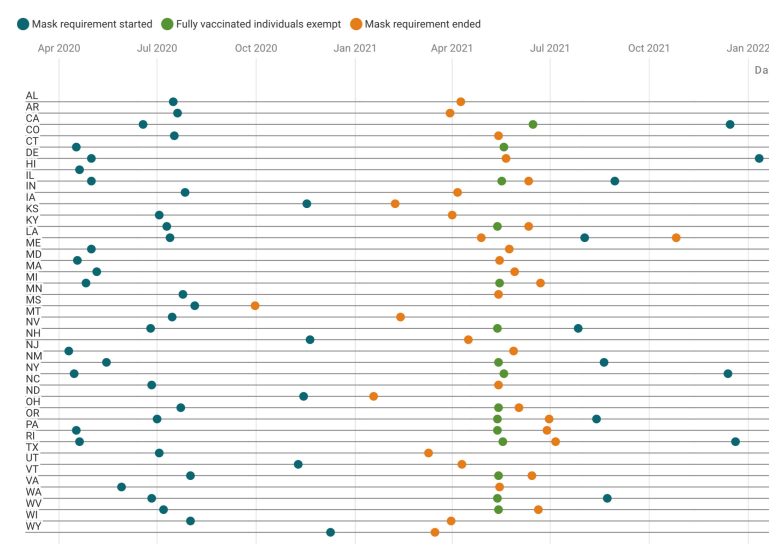
# SMALLPOX: THE FOUNDING FATHERS' COVID-19

BY: ETHAN FARBER '24

Many Americans consider George Washington to be one of the best Presidents in American history. Washington's popularity means that many citizens, and politicians, wonder what Washington would think about certain policies and events. This has been happening much more during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially regarding mask and vaccination mandates. The reason many citizens are questioning whether or not Washington, or the Founding Fathers in general, would support the government's handling of the pandemic is that Washington is a symbol of freedom to many. While some could argue that mask mandates and vaccination mandates infringe on the freedom of the people, George Washington and the Founding Fathers would support the government's handling of the pandemic.

The policies that the government has instituted fall into two main categories, the most important being economic, and the second being public health. The economic policies focus almost exclusively on helping small business owners get back on their feet following the pandemic, as well as supporting the financial market, as stated in an article by the Brookings Institute: "The Fed's actions ensured that credit continued to flow to households and businesses, preventing financial market disruptions."<sup>1</sup> As for public health policies, those concerning masks have been left to individual states. However, during 2020 and early 2021, nearly all states had some sort of mask mandate in place (See Graph). The government has also mandated vaccinations for health care workers in about half the states.

The government has enacted many policies that have had varying degrees of success. Although, the question remains, would the Founding Fathers support these policies? To



*Graph of statewide mask requirements over time, current as of January 14, 2022 (Ballotpedia).*

answer this question, all one has to do is go back to the Revolutionary War, when smallpox was still running rampant through Europe and the Colonies. The British troops, who had either been inoculated (an early form of vaccination) or had gotten smallpox and were now immune, were not affected as severely by smallpox as the American troops were. Washington was hesitant to inoculate his troops as it would leave them weakened, meaning his already dwindling forces would be even more fragile. However, this decision against mass inoculation ultimately led to a smallpox outbreak in 1776, following the Siege of Boston, as well as during a siege of Quebec. The soldiers besieging Quebec were forced to retreat due to their sickness, which signaled to Washington, as well as many revolutionary leaders, that their smallpox policy was ineffective, and needed to be altered. While they were hesitant to inoculate at first, they eventually "order[ed] to have all troops inoculated on February 5, 1777."<sup>2</sup> This is almost an exact parallel to today's US government, which took little action against it in early 2020, although later putting policy into place when it became serious. Washington's requirement for all troops to be inoculated against smallpox is also similar to how the military requires COVID-19 vaccinations today.

Although the Founding Fathers may have supported vaccination mandates, would they have supported mask mandates? According to history, most likely. When Washington wanted to require his troops to be inoculated, he did so for the greater good. He knew that the revolution would not succeed if all of his troops were sick. If Washington was willing to inoculate his troops, then if masks were needed he would have required them as well.

Now that it has been established that the Founding Fathers would support the government's policies concerning public health, it must be asked if they would have supported its economic policies. It is quite simple to see the Founding Fathers' views on economy and businesses, as four out of the seven founding fathers were business owners. Clearly, they would approve of most policies that would support small businesses. In addition, according to the U.S. Department of Treasury, "The Treasury Department is providing critical assistance to small businesses across the country, facilitating the urgent deployment of capital and support to help these organizations not just persevere, but recover on solid footing."<sup>3</sup> Seeing that this is a core value imprinted into our government, it seems that they would have agreed with the principal of these policies.

Now, even though the founding fathers were small business owners and would have supported relief for these businesses, they would have not wanted the government to spend such an incredible amount of money, while it was already in

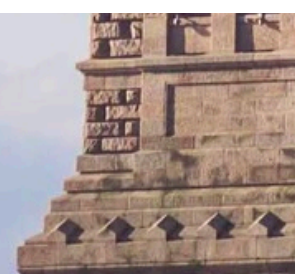
debt. The government approved the spending of 4.5 trillion dollars to go towards pandemic relief. Currently, the US is in 23.3 trillion dollars worth of debt. This is a huge deficit, which will be even harder to recover after the 4.5 trillion has been spent. It is known that the Founding Fathers greatly disapproved of debt, with Alexander Hamilton saying, "Nothing can more interest the national credit and prosperity, than a constant and systematic attention to husband all the means previously possessed for extinguishing the present debt, and to avoid, as much as possible, the incurring of any new debt."<sup>4</sup> Hamilton is essentially saying that, in order for the nation to prosper, the debt must be reduced. With Hamilton's views in consideration, the economic policies that increased our National debt would not have been supported by the Founding Fathers.

Many say that the COVID-19 pandemic has been unlike anything the world has seen. We hear time and time again about these "unprecedented times." However, this exact crisis has been seen throughout history, even by our own Founding Fathers. By looking at their response to an epidemic, our politicians can draw inspiration and see what has worked in the past. If the Founding Fathers were able to come out of an epidemic standing strong, then surely we can do the same. ■

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*Ethan Farber (Sophomore) is a distinguished member of the Political Awareness Society. This is his first year with the club.*

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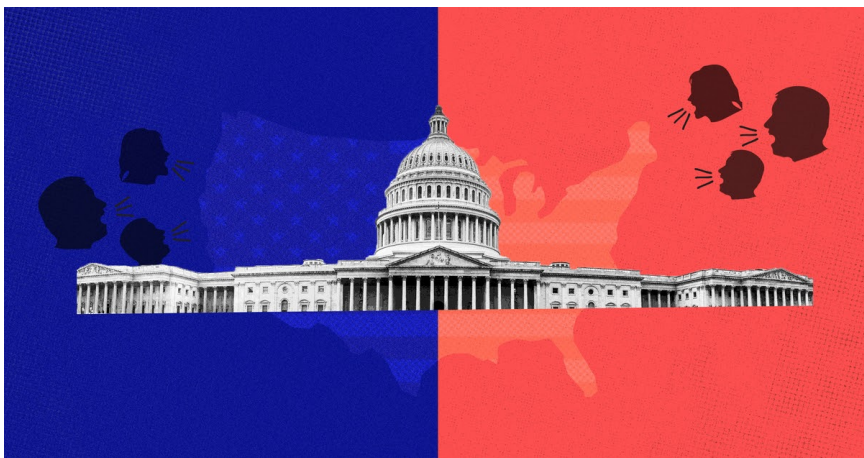


# AMERICAN DEMOCRACY: STUCK IN THE MUD

**BY: DREW KOPCHICK '25**

The United States is considered by many to be the world's oldest democracy. Its institutions have been around for centuries, and they have evolved over time. However, many current issues with America have been around for years.

A common complaint some people have with the state of government in America is a perceived lack of formality from some politicians, but this is not a new issue. In fact, today's politics is more civil than ever in some ways. While politicians might not have the utmost respect for each other, at least there are no duels between statesmen. In 1838, two congressmen dueled over an accusation of bribery, and there have been many other examples of physical violence between politicians. Thankfully, congresspeople attacking each other is not a common occurrence today.



*A graphic depicting the United States' split Congress.*

Another issue people have with the United States government is partisanship, which is an issue that permeates all of American history. It is standard to see votes from congress split directly down party lines, both

now and throughout the past. This issue, unlike the last, has gotten worse over time. The past few years have been near historic highs for congress people voting with their parties. This makes change very difficult when the government is not completely dominated by one party.

This is one of the causes of a third complaint people have with the US: the lack of laws being changed and passed. Laws were made deliberately hard to pass by the founding fathers with their devised system of checks and balances. While this keeps any one person or branch of government from having too much power, it also makes it very difficult for any change to take place, including change that is very popular among US citizens. This results in very slow incremental change over time, which can be harmful for people who need immediate change. However, it does usually prevent lawmakers from making poor spontaneous decisions.

The issues people have with the government are hard to solve, which is why they have been around for so long. However, the great thing about the US. government is its ability to be changed. By voting, people can decide the change they want to see. ■

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# EDITOR ASKS

**“IF YOU HAD THE POWER TO, WHAT AMENDMENT WOULD YOU ADD TO THE CONSTITUTION TO ENSURE THE FREEDOM OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE?”**

## ABOUT EDITOR ASKS

MEMBERS OF POLITICAL AWARENESS ARE ASKED A QUESTION CENTERED AROUND SOME ASPECT OF POLITICS. THEY THEN HAVE TO RESPOND TO THAT QUESTION IN ROUGHLY A FEW SENTENCES TO A PARAGRAPH, USING THEIR OWN PERSONAL INSIGHT AND OPINION.

### **Luke Van Dusen '24:**

I would add an amendment specifically stating that the Supreme Court can interpret and enforce any part of the constitution as they see fit in the present world. This could help the government come to decisions on many harshly debated topics like the right to bear arms. This is an amendment that, because it is in the constitution, cannot be ignored and should be reinterpreted into a better context for the present world.

### **Jack Miller '23**

I would add an amendment to correct the US justice system. This amendment would allow no person or persons subject to a cash bail system. Rather, they will either be released from jail or kept in custody depending on the level of severity of the crime that they have committed. People who commit crimes on a lower level, such as petty theft, should be released as soon as proper procedures are handled in order to document said crime. However, crimes such as murder should allow no release; instead, a long-term holding until the trial of the perpetrator should be in effect.



# PROPOSITION VERDICTS MADE BY THE POLITICAL AWARENESS SOCIETY

Every Political Awareness meeting is filled with discussions on current events. Under the direction of the President, **Luis Brea '23**, the group decides on key propositions from the week's recent news. The topics of these propositions— from Prep football to vaccines— are decided upon by all members in an informal vote after an open discussion is held. The following are some of the group's decisions on propositions so far:

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## November 18th, 2021 Meeting - Model UN x Poliware

**No propositions were voted upon**, but the two clubs were able to collaborate and analyze scenes from the following productions:

Wall-E  
Hamilton  
The West Wing  
Monty Python and the Holy Grail  
Good Night and Good Luck  
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington  
All the President's Men

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## December 2nd, 2021 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***"This society believes Fairfield Prep's football is the greatest in the state."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

Proposition Two:  
***"This society supports an age cap on the presidential office."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

Proposition Three:  
***"This society supports an expansion of gun control legislation at the federal level."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

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## December 9th, 2021 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***"This society believes in Santa Claus."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

Proposition Two:  
***"This society believes in lowering the voting age."***  
In the end, the proposition was **denied**.

Proposition Three  
***"This society believes in abolishing the death penalty."***  
In the end, the proposition resulted in a **tie**. The first in Poliware history!

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## January 13th, 2022 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***"This society supports the present use of school vouchers to tackle educational inequity."***  
In the end, the proposition was **denied**.

Proposition Two:  
***"This society believes that priority should be given to vaccinated citizens during urgent care shortages."***  
In the end, the proposition was **denied**.

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## January 27th, 2022 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***"This society believes the United States is in a state of severe democratic backsliding."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

Proposition Two:  
***"This society believes that Joe Biden is too moderate for the Democratic Party."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

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## February 3rd, 2022 Meeting - Debate Club x Ethics Bowl Team x Poliware

In preparation for the Ethic Bowl Team's upcoming competition, Poliware, along with the Debate club, joined them in a meeting to discuss **the following ethical propositions**:

Proposition One:  
***"The same messaging encryption which lets investigative journalists communicate safely, though also employed by violent criminals, is necessary for a free society."***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.

Proposition Two:  
***"It is permissible for employers to restrict (or impose consequences for) their employees' speech outside of work hours."***  
In the end, the proposition was **denied**.

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February 10th, 2022 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***“This society believes that Spotify should remove Joe Rogan from their platform.”***  
In the end, the proposition was **denied**.

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February 17th, 2022 Meeting

Proposition One:  
***“This society believes that Kanye West fans should boycott his music until the artist gets psychiatric help.”***  
In the end, the proposition was **declined**.

Proposition Two:  
***“This society believes that the world is prepared for any further Russian military threat towards Ukraine.”***  
In the end, the proposition was **accepted**.





# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM THE FAIRFIELD PREP STUDENT BODY

## ABOUT THE LETTER TO THE EDITOR SECTION:

We at the Political Awareness Society understand that our Prep brothers may have questions and comments about the *Zeitgeist*. We hope that these letters will provide the opportunity for everyone to say what is on their mind without having to write an entire op-ed and/or put their names on their views. Below are the Editor's pick of six letters taken from a pool of several submissions.

Dear Editor,

As always, I am happy to see the release of another edition of *Zeitgeist*. I wanted to take this opportunity to ask you about the future of the group. Could you mention some future projects we have planned that readers may be interested in?

Peace,  
Luis Brea, President of the Political Awareness Society

least one more club trip along with a couple more special events in place of our standard meetings. I can't wait to see how it all unfolds in the next few months!

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*



Dear Editor,

How many articles have you written and how close are you to a Noble Peace Prize?

Best,  
Danny DeRose

Dear Luis,

Thank you for your dedication to this club. I could not imagine where we'd be without your guidance. Although I won't spoil the next *Zeitgeist* edition, I will say that we plan to collaborate with other Prep clubs to make it happen. On top of that, we are working on a few projects behind the scene which will involve other politically minded students in Jesuit schools. Lastly, by the end of this year we plan to do at

Dear Danny,

I have written four articles for the *Zeitgeist*. As for my Nobel Prize, I am very close to earning it. Frighteningly close. Almost as if I know people in high places. In all

seriousness, the Nobel Prize would be a great achievement, but the title “Zeitgeist Editor-in-Chief” will do in the meantime.

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*



divided as we might think. You can always find middle ground between the two parties, which is something I see a lot in our Poliware meetings.

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*



Dear Editor,

I’m not really sure where I fall on the political spectrum. What is the difference between a republican and a democrat?

Sincerely,  
Tomas Galloza, Poliware Member

Dear Editor,

What are your thoughts on the Ukraine-Russia conflict?

Sincerely,  
Ethan Farber, Poliware Member

Dear Tomas,

Political ideology is very complex, as both of the two major parties have shifted a lot in the past 10-20 years. Although this has not always been the case in the past, the left, democrats, tends to lean towards progressive policy and support forward-thinking ideas while the right, republicans, tend to be more traditional and seek to conserve our current systems and institutions. You can see this clearly in both left-leaning and right-leaning third parties like the Green Party and the Constitution Party. The Green Party wants drastic change in the way we run our country for the sake of the environment. On the other hand, the Constitution Party, as its name implies, fights for the constitution and maintaining the traditional beliefs of the US through policy.

A good way to tell which side of the spectrum you’re on is by weighing what policies or values you support. If you support high taxes, big government, and environmental preservation, you’re most likely left-leaning. If you support low taxes, small government, and free enterprise, you’re most likely right-leaning. However, democrats and republicans are not as

Dear Ethan,

Although I am not the most educated on this topic, I can definitely offer some insight on what’s going on. To give some background, Russia has been making several moves that indicate an attempt to invade Ukraine, which was formerly part of the USSR, with one of these moves being the stationing of thousands of troops on the Russia-Ukraine border. Although Russia denies their plans to invade, many people believe that they are power-hungry and want more land and political power, and they believe they can start such a war because of their large and dominant military. A big concern is whether or not Ukraine will join NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization). Although Ukraine has expressed interest, NATO is still hesitant to allow the country, being in its current state, such a membership. In my eyes, the Ukrainian government will have to prove that they are working to eradicate corruption before NATO even considers accepting them, as doing so is a great risk as it could spark direct conflict with Russia.

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*





Dear Editor,

What are your opinions on the current situation in Ukraine? Do you think this will cause World War III?

Sincerely,  
Anonymous Prep Brother

Dear Prep Brother,

This crisis has escalated greatly in the past few weeks, with 150,000 Russian troops reported to be on the Ukraine border. However, I believe there is still time for our world leaders to come to an agreement. The US has already allied with the United Kingdom and other European countries in order to de-escalate this conflict. Ultimately, it's hard to say whether or not another world war will start as we do not know for certain what Putin and the Russian Government's intentions are. With all of this in mind, I still think it is important for the US to be involved in stopping such a war. To quote President Biden: "If we do not stand for freedom where it is at risk today, we'll surely pay a steeper price tomorrow."

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*



Dear Editor,

I am curious about Fairfield county's impact on the environment. What are we doing to

add to Greenhouse emissions? To limit emissions? What plans are there to limit emissions soon? What can the average person do?

Sincerely,  
Anonymous Prep Brother

Dear Prep Brother,

These are great questions. Although this may be biased, my answer will be solely focused on Fairfield, my hometown, instead of Fairfield County as a whole. The town of Fairfield actually has a Sustainability Plan which you can learn more about [here](#). 30% of the town's electricity actually comes from renewable sources. I can speak from experience that my own elementary school Dwight in Fairfield is run entirely on solar power. This actually saves Fairfield roughly \$2.8 million a year on energy costs (2018). We have also invested in electric vehicle chargers throughout the town to encourage and allow for more EVs to be purchased and owned by residents. By 2030, Fairfield plans to convert 10 of the town's school buses from diesel to electric power, implement a "no idle" policy for cars and commercial vehicles, and install fast-charging EV stations for cars and trucks at rest stops. They also plan to establish a town-authored, quarterly media column focused on sustainability. I would say the best ways the average person can help combat this rise in emissions is to waste less food, be cautious about their energy usage (leaving the lights on), and hold their elected officials accountable.

Sincerely,  
Kyle Elliott, Editor-In-Chief of *Zeitgeist*



***LET US DARE TO  
THINK, SPEAK,  
ACT, AND WRITE.***

-John Adams, Second President of  
the United States

## **SPECIAL CREDITS:**

### **MR. DENBY**

FOR PROVIDING EDITS TO WRITERS AS A  
MODERATOR OF OF THE POLITICAL  
AWARENESS SOCIETY

### **MR. MAURITZ**

FOR PROVIDING EDITS TO WRITERS AS A  
MODERATOR OF OF THE POLITICAL  
AWARENESS SOCIETY

### **SR. TREMBLAY**

FOR OFFERING INSIGHTS INTO POLITICS  
AND HIS LIFE AS A TEACHER AT PREP (SEE  
PAGE THREE)

### **LUIS BREA**

FOR PROVIDING SOLID LEADERSHIP TO  
THE GROUP AS PRESIDENT OF THE  
POLITICAL AWARENESS SOCIETY

### **KYLE ELLIOTT**

FOR ORGANIZING AND FORMATTING  
ZEITGEIST AS THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF  
THE POLITICAL AWARENESS SOCIETY

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FOR OFFERING THEIR OPINIONS AND  
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