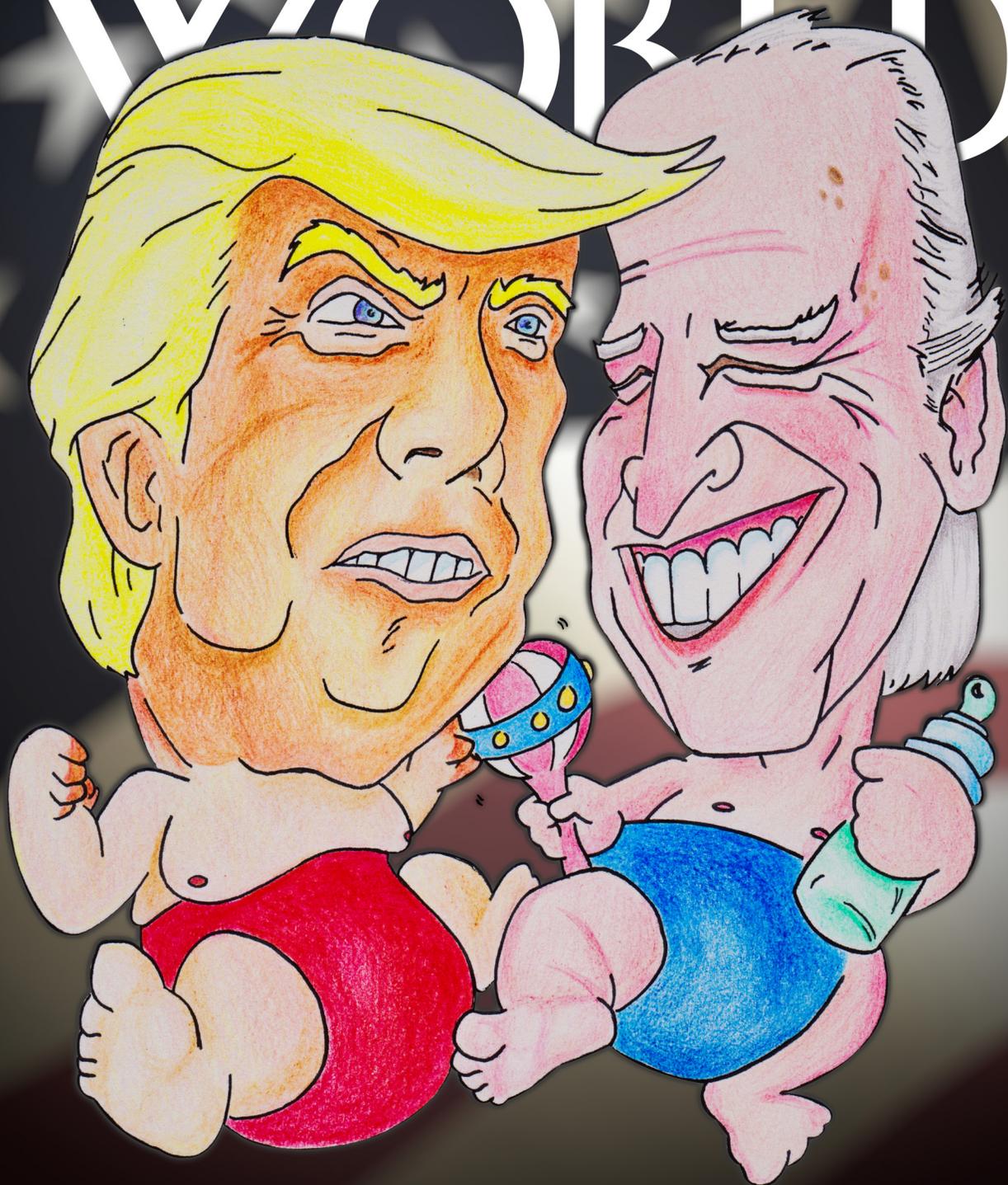


JOHN BURROUGHS

NOVEMBER 2, 2020

THE WORLD



Contributors to this Edition

Editors

Executive Editors-in-Chief

Kendall Allen
Graham Brown

Managing Editor-in-Chief

Thomas Dobbs

News Editor

Ava Teasdale

Features Editor

Brice Shearburn

Opinions Editor

Eesha Jasti

Arts + Entertainment Editor

Sara Cao

Sports Editor

Michael Turza

Online Editor

Ali Zolman

Art Committee Chair/Cover Artist

Holly Wei

Photo Committee Chair

Zoë Scully

Layout Editor

Allie Dornfield

Social Media Manager

Riley King

Reporters

Kendall Allen

Estelle Ballet

Olivia Ballet

Graham Brown

Sara Cao

Thomas Dobbs

Sruthi Dommaraju

Lana English

Leila Fischer

Celia Gossow

Eleanor Hohenberg

Nicole Murphy

Julian Schenck

Ava Teasdale

Kate Teasdale

Luke Tu

Michael Turza

Uday Vissa

Lily Yanagimoto

Young Republicans Club

Maisie Zipfel

Sponsors

Ms. Megan Zmudczynski

Ms. Allison Roberts

Layout Staff

Kendall Allen

Annie Calhoon

Graham Brown

Lana English

Estelle Ballet

Catherine Roth

Allie Dornfield

Nadia Steinle

Annie Calhoon

Grace Turza

Photos/Art

Liv Acree

Owen Front

Jacqueline Hu

Zoë Scully

Liam Taylor

Front Cover Artist: Holly Wei

Back Cover Artist: Julia Reichman



@jbs_world



@JBSTheWorld



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NEWS

President Trump's Tax Avoidances	page 6
Democracy Abroad	page 7
The Objective Reporter	pages 8-9
Mail-In Ballots	page 10
Interview with Gabe Fleisher	page 11

SPOTLIGHT

Political Balance at JBS	pages 12-13
What to Watch for on Election Night	pages 14-18

FEATURES

Profile: Amy Coney Barrett, Election Polling Comparison	page 19
President Trump's COVID-19 Diagnosis	page 20
GenZ and Political Movements on TikTok	page 21

SPORTS

The Effect of the NBA and NFL on Voting	page 22
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Criticisms Surrounding Disney's Live-Action <i>Mulan</i>	page 23
Political Cartooning	page 24

OPINIONS

Young Republicans Club	pages 25-27
Gossow; Choice is a Privilege	pages 28-29
Fischer; ACB is a Threat to Progress and the Court	page 30
Schenk; The Electoral College is the Wrong System for the Election	page 31

Letter From the Managing Editor in Chief

By THOMAS DOBBS

The election is finally upon us. This is a time when everyone wishes to express their opinion but demonstrates little willingness to listen. It is also a time when partisanship rules and indifference is unacceptable. And though I welcome everyone to participate and use this platform to share your voice, I understand that this is not always possible. There is a certain expectation for me to promote the importance of a free and impartial press, but what defines our community are not the words you will read on the following pages, but the daily interactions we have with one another.

To the younger students, I would like to tell you that your time at Burroughs will parallel the highest ideals of tolerance, intellectual curiosity, and the pursuit of knowledge.

But this isn't always the case. Reason and common sense are often triumphed by emotion and outrage. Sometimes, it may take a month or two to find an inoffensive prom theme, or allow a small minority to express outrage with the prospect of a Stromboli senior t-shirt. Perhaps the presence of milk will offend those who claim to defend the lactose intolerant members of our community. I pick these battles not because they are individually important, in fact, they are quite precisely the opposite.

I object because the pattern of critical thinking is deteriorating. I see this here at Burroughs but also on the national level. Leaders and politicians alike are no longer interested in pursuing the best decisions, but those that feel and sound right. We are told we must use our voice to immediately protest against perceived injustices or oppose a certain political figure. The minority now is those who patiently wait for the facts, or recognize that nuances exist everywhere. The world does not exist as a simple binary between right and wrong as we often choose to believe. But must we never consider an objection, because common sense or trepidation of intellectual mob rule is often interpreted as insensitivity.

Reason does not always guide this school. We try to do whatever sounds good or upsets the least amount of people, but sometimes we lose sight of what is objectively and undeniably good.

We watch construction after construction

until it seems the entire campus has been rebuilt. I have no reason to dispute the response that none of our tuition dollars are spent toward such causes, but I wonder that perhaps Burroughs' fundraising efforts are more effectively spent toward need-based scholarships rather than fancy new squash courts. Or such funds could raise the salaries of teachers, custodians, and cafeteria workers. To this, I often hear that Burroughs pays a living wage, which offers the same specificity as my favorite faux-pas response -- "I'm doing fine" -- when my parents ask how I'm doing at school.

The definition of a "living wage" will change with just about every person you ask, it is neither a set, static nor forthright answer.

When I twice emailed an administrator in January and later in March to receive a response, our paper suffered serious communication flaws and concocted a newfound and temporary rule that one must pre-approve the subject of an interviewee before asking, which I have never heard from any other interviewee to that point. The difference? I was pursuing something controversial, and though the difficulty of access perhaps was not intentional, it was unmistakably convenient.

I question plenty not because I am difficult or rude, but because acting with curiosity and skepticism are traits our school embraces. With this in mind, I challenge all of us to act with integrity and honesty. Don't feel afraid to express your opinion or your doubts, but do so in a targeted manner that will uplift, rather than divide, our community.

It is this same reason I am writing this letter now when Americans question each other's faith, meaning, and perspectives more than ever before. This letter is a reaffirmation of the steadfast belief that healthy back-and-forth dialogue should bring out the best in our community. It is why, even after intense questioning, I still believe our administration overwhelmingly acts in good faith for the betterment of our community. I still attend this school because I believe in the power of our student body to overcome perceived challenges and those still unknown.

So now, I revisit The World and our mission as a student newspaper. We exist in a time when our ability to listen and understand



must take precedence over our ability to speak endlessly. I do have faith that students are fundamentally well-intentioned and reasonable. And with this faith, I hope that any discussions within our community are not dominated by those who feign emotion or fabricate offense, but those who are willing to debate with substance. Blocking those we disagree with, shaming each other, or questioning each other's intentions are not the ideals of liberalism, but those of dictatorialism.

And once again to the younger students, it is my sincerest hope that your time at Burroughs will not be defined by the inconsequential conflict that has often arisen. Perhaps the time we wasted deciding a prom theme will now be spent by meaningful discussions about what we can do for our world. Or when people find ways to complain about items of little consequence, perhaps you will have the gall to respond, "Who cares?" It takes courage to stand against mainstream belief; you will be questioned as divisive, insensitive, or worse. But you need not listen to the fancy adjectives others tack below your name, for abrasiveness is a small price to pay for righteousness.

In the midst of these confrontational times, let our discussions guide themselves by principle and not emotion. We must always think independently, and if our first assumption is in the poor-faith of others, even if we wish to debate policy, perhaps we all need a healthy look in the mirror.

Letter From the Sports Editor

By MICHAEL TURZA

There are two different experiences at Burroughs; middle school feels far different than that of high school. There are few opportunities for middle schoolers to invest themselves into an entity that is enjoyed by the entire school. I lack a gripping anecdote as to how I became involved with The World. To characterize my experiences, I think of regret before I think of appreciation. I signed up to write an article that was listed on a spreadsheet my freshman year, purely because I wanted to. I did not realize how easy it was for me to partake in such a communal project. I wished that my chubby, acne-faced seventh grade self had the courage to write my name down on that spreadsheet two years earlier. Each issue of The World presents anyone the opportunity to simply write something of interest, and in doing so, create a communal project that is representative of John Burroughs School. To any middle schoolers who've made it this far: signing up for The World might feel like a risk--I really thought it was--but it is actually one of the easiest and most rewarding ways to cement yourself into such a special affinity.

Supposedly, having the title "editor" means that what I say here has merit. I'd beg to differ, but I'll take this opportunity as it has presented itself. The date November 3rd is inescapable; I find that there's little point in going off-beat. I hope that by now that we will be able to say that these elections have been decided. There is plenty of analysis and activity on events leading up to the election, and I'm astounded by the dedication I've seen by the youth to fulfill their civic responsibilities regarding our politics. However, I find it more effective for me to discuss what normally happens come November 4th. I'd like to say that I've conscientiously followed three presidential elections. Immediately following the first two, I've repeatedly heard that "this was the nastiest election ever seen". There's certainly truth in that statement, and I'm also under the belief that we will be hearing it again. There's an important question worth asking here: will four years from now be the "nastiest election ever?" Today, I find that question rhetorical. The Constitution states that elected officials must represent their constituents; political candi-



dates are no different. We cannot place the sole blame on those up for election for misbehavior, disrespect, and obstinance; the onus is on all of us. Mockeries of debates and passive aggressive social media comment sections are not going to change our nation, and I don't see an end to our actions soon. No matter the results of our recent elections, it would be amiss to say that we are proud of what our campaign trails have left behind, or uncovered. There is no sappy, centrist, pro-America message that I'm trying to put across. Rather, I feel that the class of our democracy is airing upon a point of no return. What do we have to do to reverse its course?

NYT Report Highlights President's Tax Avoidance

By AVA TEASDALE

In September, *The New York Times* published an exposé revealing that President Donald Trump paid no federal income taxes in ten of the last fifteen years, in large part because he reported losing more money than he made. Amidst unfavorable polling, the Coronavirus pandemic, an economic recession, and protests across the nation, President Trump received backlash among Democrats after *The Times* revealed that he paid only \$750 in federal income taxes when he was elected, and another \$750 in his first year in the White House. Burroughs students have reacted to the news with frustration, though most students have already decided whether or not they approve of the President. *The Times* published a 10,000-word report and analysis of President Trump's tax returns extending over two decades, "revealing struggling properties, vast write-offs, an audit battle and hundreds of millions of debt coming due." The documents of Trump's tax returns have long been sought after, as he is the first President in modern history to refuse making them public. *Times* reporters Russ Buettner, Susanne Craig and Mike McIntire said they attained the documents legally, though Trump and his lawyers refute that statement. The numbers in these documents were reported by President Trump (not an independent body) to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). "Ultimately, Mr. Trump has been more successful playing a business

mogul than being one in real life," writes the *Times* reporters. While his reality TV show "The Apprentice" and his licensing and endorsement deals brought him a quick \$427.4 million, this profit was rapidly spent on his famous business ventures, like golf courses and hotels. These Trump-branded sites frequently devoured more cash than they generated, allowing Trump to pay fewer taxes. "In many years, Trump lost more money than nearly any other individual taxpayer," wrote the *Times* exposé.

The amount he paid in taxes was also reduced because spending towards his lavish lifestyle is classified under the cost of running a business. For example, Trump received a \$70,000 deduction for his television hairstyling. Ivanka Trump, the President's daughter and employee of the Trump Organization, also accepted "consulting fees" that reduced Trump's tax bill.

President Trump's tax returns also reveal an IRS audit battle over a 72.9-million-dollar tax refund, and a loss would cost over \$100 million. In addition, Mr. Trump has

\$300 million due in the next four years, raising questions about the potential conflict of interest should he be re-elected in November. It is unclear if the government could, or should, foreclose on a sitting president.

Every president since Jimmy Carter has made their taxes public until Mr. Trump. There's no law requiring this information to be public, but it's recently been used to build trust with the American public. Trump has previously danced around the question of disclosing his tax returns and bragged of taking advantage of tax loopholes, saying that it "makes [him] smart."

The effect this news will have on the election is unclear. There is a large amount of evidence that Trump's personality as a businessman played a large role in his election in 2016. According to a Gallup poll in 2016, voters saw Trump's experience as a businessman as the second most important factor for their support-- second only to his status as a non-politician and outsider.

1995 Resident Income Tax Return		IT-201
New York State • City of New York • City of Yonkers		
For the year January 1 through December 31, 1995, or fiscal tax year beginning ending		1995
For office use only		19
Last name First name and middle initial (if joint return, enter both names)		✓ Your social security no.
TRUMP, DONALD J. AND MARLA		✓ Spouse's social sec. no.
Mailing address (number and street or rural route) Apartment number		New York State county of residence
721 FIFTH AVENUE		• NEW YORK
City, village or post office	State	School district name
NEW YORK	NY	• MANHATTAN
In the space below, print or type your permanent home address within New York State if it is not the same as your mailing address above (see instructions, page 25).		School district code number
Permanent home address (number and street or rural route) Apartment number		369
City, village or post office	State	ZIP code
	NY	
(A) Filing status - (1) Single		(B) Did you itemize your deductions on your 1995 federal income tax return? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
(2) X Married filing joint return (enter spouse's social security number above)		(C) Can you be claimed as a dependent on another taxpayer's federal return? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(3) Married filing separate return (enter spouse's social security number above)		(D) If you do not need forms mailed to you next year, mark an "X" in the box (see instructions) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(4) Head of household (with qualifying person)		(E) Enter the number of exemptions claimed from your federal return, line 6e <input type="text" value="3"/>
(5) Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child		

Photo by THE BOSTON GLOBE

In the 2016 Presidential Election exit poll, 48 percent of voters said Trump would better handle the economy, compared to 46 percent for Clinton. His approval rating on the economy is consistently higher than that of other issues like education, foreign policy, and crime. Trump's image as a great deal-maker is essential to his political brand, and his tax records may potentially jeopardize this. The Trump campaign is already struggling to curtail criticism of its handling of the coronavirus pandemic as well as the social unrest this summer. Early voting has already begun in many states, leaving little time for him to turn his ratings around.

Democratic Presidential candidate Joe Biden is utilizing Trump's taxes as evidence of Trump's betrayal of the working-class voters the President promised to fight for. Meanwhile, former Vice President Biden is attempting to underscore his own middle-class upbringing in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

"Not paying taxes and avoiding rules blatantly disrespects the people living in this country," says Burroughs student Summer Levin ('24). For Levin, Trump's tax evasion is just another sign of failure from the president.

"When I heard the news I obviously wasn't very happy, as the famous billionaire turned president pays less taxes than my family," said

Gaurav Muthusamy ('22), who supports Trump for re-election. For Muthusamy, Trump is another example of the rich using loopholes to pay less, and although the president may not be the wealthiest businessman, his success in Hollywood is "still impressive." "It doesn't really change his image for me," adds Muthusamy. "The moment he declined sharing his tax returns in 2016, I knew he likely paid less." Many stories surrounding Trump and his re-election campaign receive mixed opinions, and reactions often fall along party lines. Legal or illegal, right or wrong, Americans have varied opinions on the Trump presidency.

Democracy Abroad

By EESHA JASTI and MADDY PASS

There are many differing opinions on how to best conduct the general election in the U.S. this year due to the pandemic. Thankfully, there are a multitude of different voting methods around the world to use as models.

One voting method that is utilized by several countries such as Mexico, Australia, and Brazil is the practice of compulsory voting. Compulsory voting, otherwise known as mandatory voting, is the requirement that eligible citizens must vote.

This method increases voter turnout and theoretically provides a more accurate representation of the people. For example, before Australia made voting compulsory, which was in 1924, the voter turnout was less than 50 percent. After the change, the voter turnout rose and is now at around 80 percent. On the other hand, one could argue that compulsory voting interferes with people's freedom of choice. In the U.S, our right to vote also includes our right not to vote; therefore, constituting compulsory voting can be viewed as an infringement upon people's rights. Others also say compulsory voting may promote an uninformed electorate as people who haven't educated themselves on candidates would still be forced to vote. However, others say it would encourage informed voting as people would want to research more on each candidate.

Another voting method which would theoretically function during a pandemic is online voting. This method was first implemented in Estonia in the early 2000s. Voter verification is conducted through a QR code displayed after the voting process. One downside to this method is that there is no way for voters themselves to ensure that their votes are counted (or at least get the physical, if not definite, reassurance of handing in a paper ballot). The system has also undergone criticism for its susceptibility to fraud. These concerns have been dismissed by the Estonian government as political bad-faith attacks as opposed to general and productive concern.

Finally, one of the most pervasive voter suppression attempts is the placing of election day on a non-holiday weekday. Many people are prevented from voting simply because they must work for the entire period that polls are open. This technique is not unique to the US. Declaring election days a national holiday and/or placing them on a weekend would increase voter turnout, though some argue that this would bring a decrease in productivity due to a potential loss of a workday.

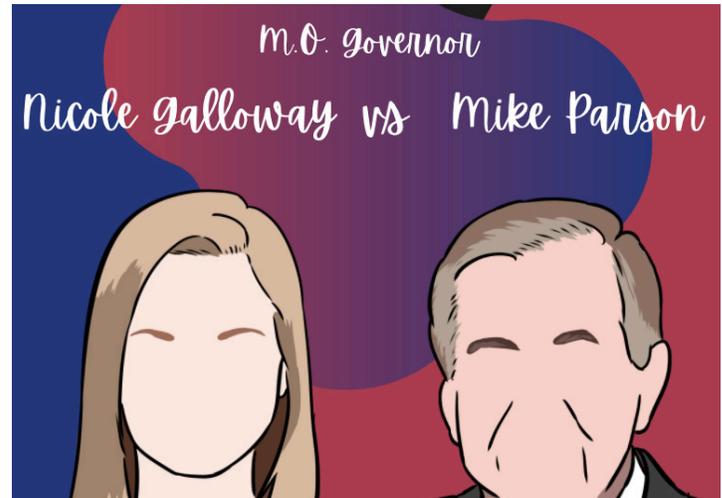
With the current political climate in the United States, it would have been unwise to introduce a new method of voting for this election, especially ones with any taint of possible fraud. However, many believe that the US must continuously study the ways that other governments conduct voting in elections to ensure that we implement the safest and most efficient method.

Who Represents Me? Seniors Work to Educate St. Louis

By ELEANOR HOHENBERG

John Burroughs seniors Ziyaad Raza, Rahul Jasti, Josh Antony, and Thomas Champer all knew that they should do something with the free time that online school and stay-at-home orders offered this past spring. The only question was what that endeavor should be. The boys knew that they wanted to have an impact on their community, so they met for several hours every week, discussing everyday problems and how they might fix them. One fact in particular stuck with them and prompted the start of their nonpartisan nonprofit: a Harvard report found that “just 10 percent of Americans

between 18 and 24 met a standard of ‘informed engagement’ in the 2012 presidential election cycle.” (Source: Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics) The purpose of the organization they created, The Objective Reporter, is to increase the number of young voters who are knowledgeable about the representatives and politics of their municipality and state. The Objective Reporter does not advocate for any particular policies or parties; this choice stemmed from witnessing the heightening tensions and conflicts nationally and within the school. The goal of their organization



Graphic by ANANYA SHAH and ERICA SHI

is to provide young people with an overview of politicians' views, but with so much going on in students' lives, it can be difficult to spend a significant amount of time researching candidates for political offices. Ziyaad Raza, one of the Co-Founders, learned that it could take anywhere from 30-40 minutes to find useful and truthful information on just one candidate. The Objective Reporter hopes to “take that time... and instead of spending it [learning about] one person, to spend it on ten different politicians, with their main points listed on a simple template,” Raza explained. The Objective Reporter accomplishes this by clearly formatting politician’s stances on the most prominent issues about which young people care.

In addition to providing a summary of politicians' views, The Objective Reporter has also conducted multiple interviews with Missouri representatives and candidates. They first built up connections by approaching politicians at in-person (but socially-distanced) events and secured several interviews that way. This then helped establish trust in the website and organization, so when they “emailed and called every single politician in St. Louis,” Jasti recounts, many were happy to be interviewed. The team remains in contact with the local politicians and the members have begun to create connections with more prominent figures such as St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson and St. Louis County Executive Sam Page.

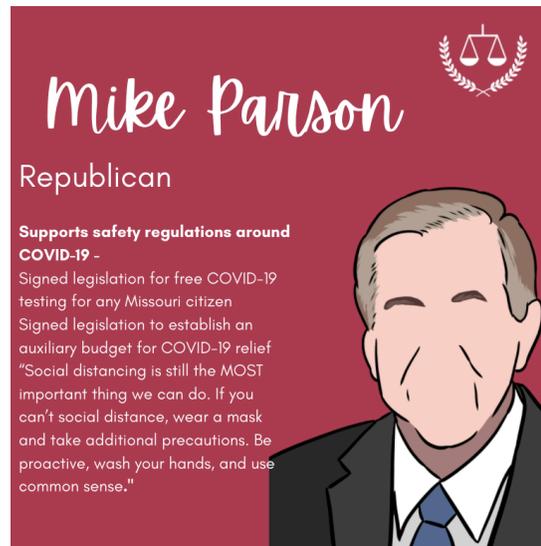


Graphic by ANANYA SHAH and ERICA SHI

The Objective Reporter has grown significantly as an organization since it originated late last spring. It started by reaching out to friends and family for assistance, and a website was subsequently created. Donations aided the team in advertising the organization, setting up the website, and bringing their page to the top of the Google search for "The Objective Reporter." Now, this organization has interviewed multiple Missouri politicians, gained over thirty team members, been written about in the Ladue News, and has started working on new chapters in cities outside of St. Louis. "Any city has the same problem as St. Louis," Jasti said, namely that young people are under-informed and under-represented in their local elections. When a couple of students in Dallas and Atlanta reached out to the group, interested in fixing that issue in their municipalities, the JBS seniors worked to expand their organization into those cities. The team does not plan on stopping after the upcoming presidential elections

or when the senior leaders leave for college. While during the aftermath of this election the organization might regroup and reorganize, they will continue to report on the policies and government positions which come to a vote more frequently than the presidency. In regards to the way The Objective Reporter may look as its founders move on to college, nothing is yet set in stone, except for the fact that these seniors certainly expect to remain involved in some capacity. They hope to look to younger members to take on leadership roles and continue to develop the nonprofit. Raza, Jasti, Antony, Champer, and their team members continue to work to make local politics easily accessible to younger demographics. If you are interested in learning more about your representatives, simply head to theobjectivereporter.com/search-politicians.

Graphics by ANANYA SHAH and ERICA SHI



Mike Parson
Republican

Supports safety regulations around COVID-19 -
Signed legislation for free COVID-19 testing for any Missouri citizen
Signed legislation to establish an auxiliary budget for COVID-19 relief
"Social distancing is still the MOST important thing we can do. If you can't social distance, wear a mask and take additional precautions. Be proactive, wash your hands, and use common sense."



who represents you?

theobjectivereporter.com
Research by: Eesha Jasti and Kate Harley
Graphics by: Ananya Shah and Erica Shi



Nicole Galloway
Democrat

Support masks and other restrictions due to COVID-19 -
"We need a statewide mask mandate to keep our communities safe. Period."

Opposes gun violence - "We need leadership that solves the problem of gun violence instead of using it as a political talking point."

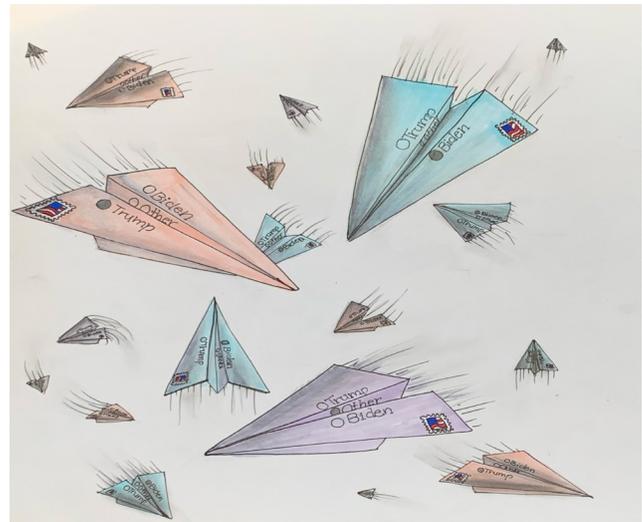
Dispelling the Myths Around Mail-in Ballots

By KATE TEASDALE

When thinking about the November 2nd elections, many Americans have addressed concerns about voting safely while dealing with COVID-19. Mail-in ballots are an alternative to in-person voting; however, due to many falsehoods told by the Trump Administration, the stigma around this option is overwhelming. It is important for the entirety of the American electorate to vote this November. "Mail-In Ballot fraud found in many elections. People are just now seeing how bad, dishonest [it is]," Trump tweeted. This is a false statement. There have been numerous nationwide and state-level studies over the years that have revealed that there is no evidence of major, widespread fraud. Studies have shown that the rate of voting fraud overall in the US is between 0.00004% and 0.0009%, according to a 2017 study by the Brennan Center for Justice. A Washington Post review of the 2016 election found only one proven case of postal voting fraud. The only true part of this statement is the growing number of people who are fearful to

use mail-in ballots, as well as the growth of people who also spread this misinformation.

President Trump has pointed to discarded ballots as proof of fraud saying: "They throw them out if they have the name Trump on it, I guess." This statement is partially true; certain ballots can be discarded if they are not properly filled out. This is an issue on its own because there are numerous ways your vote could possibly not be counted. However, the complete falsehood of this statement is that the ballots discarded are intentionally votes for Trump. This quote is from September when the US Department of Justice released a statement about an incident in Pennsylvania in which "nine military ballots were discarded" and that seven of them "were cast for presidential candidate Donald Trump". The department opened an investigation that proved there was no indication that they were "discarded" intentionally to disadvantage Trump. "Election results could be delayed for months. No more big election night an-



Artwork by OWEN FRONT

swers? 1% not even counted in 2016. Ridiculous! Just a formula for RIGGING an Election, absentee Ballots are fine because you have to go through a precise process to get your voting privilege. Not so with Mail-Ins. Rigged Election!!! 20% fraudulent ballots?" By tweeting this, Trump is inventing a distinction between mail-in and absentee ballots where none exists, and also spreading baseless claims of rigged elections because of fraudulent ballots. Across America, different states use different terms, but "absentee ballots" are "mail-in ballots," and vice versa. Regardless, there are strict measures in place across the country to verify the authenticity of all ballots cast in the mail. These measures are very successful -- more than 99.9% of votes in US elections are legitimate. "You get thousands and

thousands of people sitting in somebody's living room, signing ballots all over the place," Trump said. The rumor that mail-in ballots allow fraudulent voting or created the ability to vote multiple times is just that, a rumor. Postal voting is largely secure, the process often includes additional steps to further bolster election integrity. Voters are sometimes required to ask for a ballot for a specific election that confirms the voter is still alive and living in the state. One could argue that the spread of misinformation is a way to scare certain Americans from voting or voting in a safer way. This type of voter suppression can be avoided by addressing many of the falsehoods created at this time.

Former *World* Editor-in-Chief and Political Journalist Gabe Fleisher Talks About Why You Should Vote

By SARA CAO

This year has thrown the whole country off of its tracks with simultaneous public health, social, economic, and environmental crises, as well as the upcoming presidential election, which could dramatically change the country's course as the two very polar candidates face off. JBS '20 graduate Gabe Fleisher, now a freshman at Georgetown University, is working hard to accentuate the importance of voting in this election, especially to young people, as we near one of the most crucial turning points in American history on November 3rd.

Fleisher, an experienced voice in politics, has been active in increasing awareness of the political world since 2011, when he started his newsletter, *Wake Up to Politics*, which has garnered over 50,000 readers from across the country and the world as of now. Since establishing *Wake Up to Politics*, Gabe has, according to his website, appeared on CNN, MSNBC, and NPR, and has been profiled by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Yorker*, *NBC News*, *Politico*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and other news outlets.

Fleisher is still the sole staffer of his newsletter and he has started a podcast on the St. Louis Public Radio. He emphasizes that "a big focus of my newsletter and podcast is helping voters understand the election process and have a sense of the candidates and issues that will be on the ballot in November." Fleisher's role has not only remained as a consistent reporter of relevant news and stories, but has also adapted to inspire the younger generation to cast their ballots for the elections. He believes that this election is especially vital due to the multitude of issues that the country is currently facing and he acknowledges the polarity

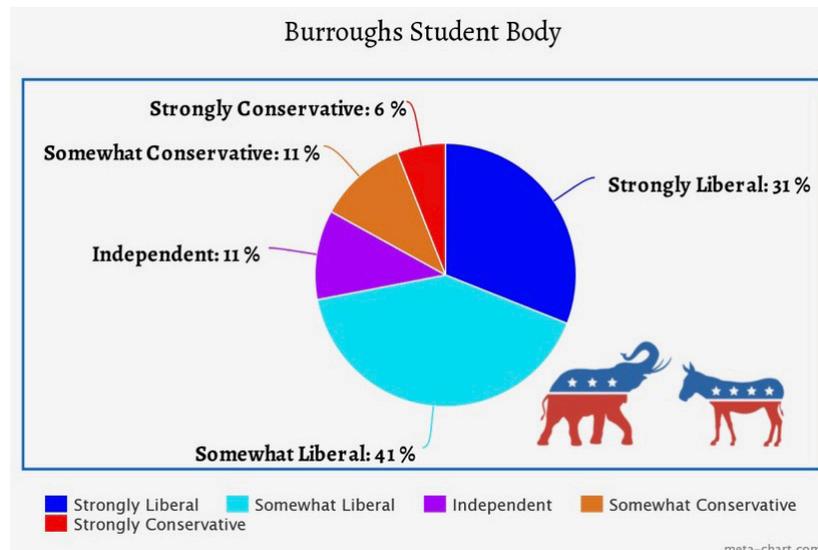
and decisiveness of both the presidential and statewide elections, stating: "On the presidential level, there are two candidates with pretty diametrically opposed philosophies, and the winner will determine which of two fairly different paths the U.S. will go down for the next four years to come. Down the ballot, there are also quite a few races that could be decisive in Missouri: there are some signs that the governor's race is heating up, while the congressional race in Missouri's 2nd Congressional District is one of the most closely-watched in the country." With the coming election exhibiting utmost importance, Fleisher has become involved in multiple new projects alongside his newsletter to urge young voters to turn out at the polls. He has appeared on Jaden Smith's Snapchat show, "The Solution Committee," "to talk about the importance of young people voting and taking part in the political process." He has also, since moving to Washington D.C., been reporting from the Capitol, and as he put it, "interviewing senators and House members on the last dash of legislation they're attempting to pass before facing re-election, and from the Supreme Court, especially in the days after Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death." More recently, Gabe was at the White House for the announcement of President Trump's Supreme Court nominee, Amy Coney Barrett, where he was able to interview several Trump allies on how they expect the nomination to impact the 2020 race. (That ceremony was later identified as a "super-spreader event" for coronavirus, but he tested negative afterward.) Working on these projects has given Fleisher an opportunity to dive inside the heart of today's politics and to really consolidate his belief surrounding the imperativity of voting and having a voice in politics, especially for young Americans. Even if one does not meet the voting

requirement of being 18 years old, Fleisher stresses the fact that young people "can certainly have an impact on a campaign by taking small steps like those to help persuade voters or boost voter turnout." He states that "There are tons of ways people who aren't eligible to vote can be politically active. Anyone has the access to do research on the candidates and issues they believe in, and once you've found a campaign that aligns with your beliefs, there is no age minimum to knocking on doors for them, or phone banking, or volunteering at campaign headquarters." Specifically on Election Day, Fleisher says that being a poll worker is a great opportunity to be politically active, as "a lot of election authorities need extra help since some seniors who normally work the polls are less likely to do so amid the pandemic."

The importance of taking political action and exercising one's right to vote is vital now more than ever in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, and other pressing and contentious issues. Even after the election, it is crucial to keep on being politically active, as "there are always opportunities for young people to make their voices heard, whether it's by writing letters to your lawmakers or attending protests or marches." For now, Fleisher continues to stress how essential voting in this election is, as he states, "Young people are especially impacted by the elections taking place in November: whether it's the air we breathe, or the education we receive, or the economy we'll be left with — all of those issues are on the line, and if people have strong opinions on any of those issues, the biggest thing they can do to make an impact is cast a ballot on (or before!) Election Day."

Liberal Echo Chamber or Inclusive Setting?

By SRUTHI DOMMARAJU and LILY YANAGIMOTO



Graphic by RILEY KING

Burroughs is known for promoting an inclusive environment, but does this translate into a school climate that is politically balanced?

Statistically, the answer is no. A recent survey of 242 members of the student body found that almost three out of four students (72%) identify as liberal; nearly a third of the student body identifies as “strongly liberal” (31%). On the contrary, only 17% of the students surveyed reported that they were conservative, with just 6% of the student body identifying as “strongly conservative.” In other words, conservative students at Burroughs are outnumbered four to one. This ratio comes with consequences; when the majority of the student body is liberal, many students with other political beliefs may be less comfortable sharing their opinions, and we lose the benefits that come with the inclusion of multiple perspectives in our community. How do we ensure that every

student’s voice is heard?

(Briefly, we want to acknowledge that the labels we use throughout this article—“conservative” and “liberal”—are broad categories that cannot completely account for the spectrum of political beliefs present in our community. We use them here because they are the most commonly used terms in regards to political alignment in the U.S.)

Every single person with whom we consulted about this article expressed the belief that Burroughs was not politically balanced; most specified that they saw the Burroughs community as liberal. Ms. Shimabukuro, the 9th and 10th grade principal, says that “there seems to be more of a liberal leaning and [liberal] vibe on campus,” noting that her perceptions of the political climate have been influenced by “conversations . . . with other teachers and students,” as well as “assembly announcements and clubs on campus.”

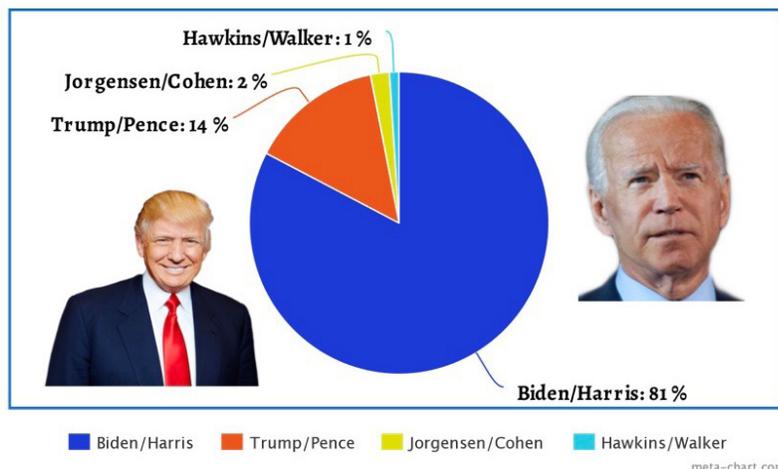
Most of the students we spoke to who identified as liberal agreed that the liberally-leaning climate at Burroughs made them feel more comfortable sharing their beliefs and opinions, and many acknowledged that conservative students might have a more difficult time doing so. Max Wood ('23) explained that he previously identified as conservative and was now “more of a leftist”; while he added that Burroughs did not contribute to his change in political alignment, he explained that “it was definitely easier going from conservative to leftist and not the other way around” because his opinions wouldn’t get “as much of a reaction.” Phoebe Philip ('21), who helps to lead the Young Republicans club, said that “going into social studies classes [especially] every year” is “a source of anxiety” for her. “On the whole, though,” she says, “I’ve been very blessed to have teachers who seek to understand me and let my voice be heard, but also teach me how to listen.” Phoebe indicated that many conservative students do feel much less comfortable speaking out about politics. She pointed out to us that she is being interviewed for multiple articles about her conservative viewpoint—something that she was happy to do, but that to her implied a lack of vocal conservatives on campus. A student body that has an equal number of liberal and conservative students might allow students with differing political identities to feel more comfortable sharing their opinions. Still, attaining a balanced population is far from the most effective way to achieve a politically balanced climate, and may never happen. Ms.

Kinney, who teaches the 10th grade Diversity Seminar class, notes that while “achieving a balance of political identities” is not a “stated goal of Burroughs,” that “we do want to foster a community that welcomes and embraces each person’s entire identity, including political identity.” Thomas Dobbs (’21) notes that any actual attempts to balance out the political ratio of the student body would inevitably carry over into the admissions process. Ideally, he says, Burroughs “would only consider applicants as students,” and not “a means to achieve ... political balance.” Every individual we spoke to agreed that trying to equalize the ratio of conservative to liberal students would not be a reasonable course of action, or necessary for creating an environment that feels more politically inclusive. Phoebe Philip says, “It’s not so much that [conservatives] are the minority, it’s just that we want to have a voice and we want to be respected for that voice.” Yara Levin (’22) “[doesn’t] think the solution is [. . .] to try to be 1/3 liberal, 1/3 independent, 1/3 conservative, or some ratio like that. We just need to get better at dialogue.” There are opportunities for students to

express their opinions, though many students who we spoke with were not certain that there are enough. Ms. Shimabukuro agreed, and said that students “may not take advantage of these opportunities, especially if they feel uncomfortable or intimidated because they don’t hold the majority point of view.” If students at Burroughs are to feel comfortable voicing their political opinions, we, as a community, need to understand how to facilitate respectful discussions and how to operate when we disagree. Diversity seminar, in the words of Ms. Kinney, helps to “build the skills to have healthy conversations (not debates!) around a number of sensitive, identity-related issues, with the goal of applying [them] to any sensitive conversation students might have elsewhere in [their] lives”; she finds that students are able to have more “meaningful and respectful conversations” as the year progresses. “I’m not naïve enough to say that students always feel comfortable sharing everything that comes to mind,” she added. “I do hope that if students ever feel [...] unable to be authentic in the classroom, especially because of an unhealthy power dynamic, they will

share those feelings with me and we will find a way to navigate it together.” Phoebe Philip says that Diversity seminar is “a good start,” but that a more open student body “can’t start with diversity class [. . .] It has to start from the culture up at Burroughs.” She notes that not all sophomores are equally as mature when it comes to the difficult conversations that arise in Diversity. The truth is that Burroughs will most likely remain a liberal community. While we don’t need to change this, we should consider what impact our liberal majority has on students who aren’t part of it. Being accepted by our peers is a concern in both middle and high school, even without getting political—there are many factors that determine how each student in our community expresses and interacts with political opinions. We need to ensure that platforms are available for students who want to speak up, especially those who want to make their voices heard but are less comfortable doing so. Discussions about politics are bound to result in disagreement; Ms. Kinney reminds us to “truly listen to the other’s experience and to seek understanding, without the need to change the other person. The key to all of this is empathy.” As Maddy Pass, a Burroughs sophomore currently taking Diversity Seminar, puts it—“I don’t mind speaking about politics with someone [. . .] as long as they are willing to listen just as I am. Because that’s what we all want, right? To be heard.”

If the Presidential Election Was Today



Graphic by RILEY KING

Election Night 2020: A Guide

By GRAHAM BROWN

For the 59th time in American history, voters will decide who they want as their President of the United States for the next four years: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. or President Donald J. Trump. Additionally, thirty-five Senate seats will be in play, as well as all 435 seats in the House of Representatives. Flipping on your television to the news or opening Twitter will likely provide you with plenty of information that is irrelevant to determining what actually matters--so here's what to actually watch for on Election Night.

The 59th Quadrennial Presidential Election

Ever since Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's shocking loss in the 2016 Presidential Election, the Democratic Party has worked to take back the White House from Mr. Trump and the Republicans. Following the 2018 midterms, which saw fierce infighting between the progressive and moderate wings, the party lacked a true standard-bearer, which led to the largest and most diverse field of presidential candidates in history. Even so, the Democrats eventually fixed its gaze on the man they'd known the longest--the two-term Vice President and seven-term Senator from Delaware. For the 77-year-old Mr. Biden, this was truly his moment. His first two runs for the White House--in 1988 and 2008--failed to gain traction amongst primary voters, but this time his message of "Restoring the Soul of America" connected with voters (despite several early stumbles) and allowed him to coalesce the moderate wing of the party behind him before scoring major victories over his progressive rival Senator Bernie Sanders on Super Tuesday.

Despite polling showing Mr. Biden holding large leads over the incumbent Mr. Trump, Democrats remain haunted by the ghosts of 2016, when all polling pointed to a victory for Ms. Clinton. However, Mr. Trump edged out victories in the traditionally Democratic "blue wall" of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin--which propelled him to the electoral college win. Those three states remain major battlegrounds in this election, and if any candidate carries all three of them, they will surely enjoy January 20th. However, due to the increases in mail-in balloting, there is a decent chance that these states remain uncalled on Election Night. Therefore, if you want a good idea of how the race is going, you may have to look elsewhere. Even 20 years later, Florida elections remain infamous for "hanging chads" and the 537 infamous votes that handed the 2000 election to George W. Bush. Despite their history, however, Florida has long been a leader in mail-in-voting. Their robust counting system makes it very likely that it will be called on election night, and there is a lot we can extrapolate from its results.

Florida is essential to the Trump

map--without it, Mr. Biden will need just one other swing state (like Michigan) to get over the magic number of 270 Electoral votes. Although Mr. Trump carried the state by a 1.2% margin over Ms. Clinton in 2016, his path to victory will look very different this time around. Ms. Clinton's ground game in the state was perhaps her best anywhere and was widely successful with its outreach towards Hispanics and Cuban-Americans in Miami-Dade County. Although Cuban-Americans are a core part of the Republican coalition in the state, Mr. Trump eschewed outreach to those communities the last cycle--a mistake he has not repeated this time. Cuban-Americans no longer feel the sting of the divisive primary campaign between Mr. Trump and Florida Senator Marco Rubio (himself a Cuban-American) and have rallied back to the Republican Party. Mr. Biden will unquestionably carry Miami-Dade county but do not expect him to put up the numbers that Ms. Clinton, who won it by nearly 30 points, did. If he just wins by 15-20 points, he will be in a fine position because of his likely improvements in Central Florida.

Sumter County is part of the state that you should keep your eye on this election and could be a potential canary in the coal mine for Mr. Trump. The home of the massive retirement community known as The Villages, Sumter is a heavily Republican county. However, with Mr. Biden improving dramatically in the polls versus Ms. Clinton among senior voters and nearly all of the residents voting early and by mail, it will likely tell us about Mr. Biden's standing among this crucial demographic. You will likely see results come in early in this county and if Mr. Trump only receives 60-61% of the vote, it may be a short Election Night (he carried the county 68-29 in 2016). Polls have shown that Mr. Trump is hemorrhaging support among seniors, who voted for him by a 53-44 margin nationwide in 2016. Some polls in mid-October show Mr. Biden with double-digit leads in this category of voters, who are overwhelmingly concerned with COVID-19 and have a negative view of Mr. Trump's handling of the crisis. If Mr. Biden can cut into Mr. Trump's margins in retirement communities in Central Florida, it may be just enough to put him over the top and score a decisive victory in the Sunshine State.

Rapidly changing demographics in the so-called Sun Belt have led Democrats to set their sights on the two traditionally Republican states of Arizona and Texas that they believe can swing towards Mr. Biden this cycle. Arizona, the old home to conservative titans like Senators

John McCain and Barry Goldwater, elected a Democratic Senator in 2018 for the first time in 30 years and the Biden campaign is investing serious money with the hopes of carrying the state's 11 electoral votes. For this state, which has laws allowing the early counting of mail-in ballots and will likely be called on Election Night, Maricopa County is the key. The county, which houses Phoenix, its surrounding suburbs, and 62% of the state's population, is emblematic of Arizona's leftward shift. The county voted for Mr. Trump by three points in 2016 and Mitt Romney by 11 points in 2012 and will have to swing to Mr. Biden if he wants to carry the state. His coalition there includes the suburban women that delivered the Democrats the House in the 2018 midterms, a young Hispanic population that has exploded in size, and traditional conservatives that remain skeptical of the President.

Texas has also seen a large spike in its Hispanic population, as well as liberals moving to the state from California and New York. The trends in Texas will almost certainly mean Democrats will increasingly win statewide elections, but it is unclear if it has yet reached the tipping point that would deliver its 38 electoral votes to a Democrat for the first time since 1976.

With all of that being said, the 2020 Presidential Election will ultimately rest on the Upper Midwest and the three states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin that Mr. Trump carried in 2016 by

a combined 70,000 votes. Most forecasters expect these states--and Pennsylvania in particular--to be the tipping points of the election. The tipping point, which was Pennsylvania four years ago, is the state that hands the winner their 270th electoral vote. That does not mean that they will necessarily be the closest state, but it means that they will be the deciders of the election. Mr. Trump's shocking upset in the Rust Belt four years ago was largely due to his ability to tap into resentment towards the status quo harbored by white, non-college-educated voters who overwhelmingly turned out to the polls to cast their ballot for the "outsider." Democrats hope that Mr. Biden, who has spent his career touting his blue-collar roots and working-class home of Scranton, PA, can bring these blue-collar workers--once reliable Democrats--back into his column this time. The county to keep your eye on for this is Erie County, PA. Located in Northwest Pennsylvania, the county was once solidly blue due to its history as a union district that built cars and packaged meat. As those jobs left, the voters left the Democrats and gave Mr. Trump a narrow 2-point margin in the county. Mr. Biden has spent his time on the road in communities like Erie, touting his plans to "Build Back Better" and hopes to rebuild the traditional Democratic coalition of working-class voters.

However, if blue-collar voters are trending Republican, suburbanites are going the other way.

Once a large part of the Republican base, affluent, educated, white suburban voters have soured on the GOP's rhetoric and policy and shifted towards the Democrats. The DNC hopes that, should Mr. Biden fail to pick up working-class voters, he can offset those losses and then some in the suburbs. A bellwether to look for here is Kent County, MI. The home of Republican President Gerald Ford and the DeVos family, Kent County--which encapsulates Grand Rapids and its surrounding area--symbolizes a shifting suburbia. Mr. Trump ran behind Mr. Romney's margin in the county and Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer carried the county in 2018 and Mr. Biden hopes to do the same this year as the professional class increasingly joins the base of the Democratic Party.

The 2020 Senate Elections

The wave election of 2018 that led to a 41-seat swing in the US House of Representatives towards the Democratic Party met a brick wall in the statewide Senate races during the same year. A historically unfavorable map towards Democrats put them on the defensive in traditional Republican strongholds and, despite major victories by Joe Manchin and Jon Tester, Midwest Democrats like Claire McCaskill, Joe Donnelly, and Heidi Heitkamp were routed by challengers, expanding the Republican majority in the chamber by a net gain of two seats--giving them a 53-47 advantage heading into the 2020

campaign. But this time the roles are reversed. Republicans will be forced to defend 23 seats versus the 12 Democrats hope to hold. Since the Vice-President breaks a tie in the Senate, Democrats will need to net four seats or three seats and the Presidency to retake the chamber, which they have not done in six years.

Alabama

Democrat Doug Jones' upset victory in a 2017 special election in one of the most Republican states in the country has made election forecasters wonder whether he can catch lightning in a bottle once again as he seeks a full six-year term in his own right. Despite being a political neophyte, Mr. Jones' opponent Tommy Tuberville is well known throughout the state as the former football coach at Auburn University. He defeated former Attorney General and Senator Jeff Sessions in a contentious Republican primary election by aligning himself closely to President Trump, who endorsed the coach just before the primary. Mr. Tuberville is widely considered to be a stronger candidate than the scandal-plagued Judge Roy Moore, who Mr. Jones defeated by just 0.6% in 2017, and most polls show Mr. Tuberville enjoying vast double-digit leads.

**Cook Political Report Rating:
Leans Republican (Flip)**

Arizona

Despite her defeat in the 2018

Arizona Senate election, Republican Governor Doug Ducey appointed Martha McSally to fill the other Senate seat and she is now trying to avoid losing two statewide campaigns in as many years. But facing perhaps the strongest Democratic challenger seeking a Senate seat this cycle, she faces an uphill battle. With just his credentials as a former Navy pilot and NASA astronaut, Mark Kelly would be a formidable opponent to Ms. McSally. But excludes his greatest asset--his wife. Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) was once considered a rising star in the party, until an attempted assassination nine years ago abruptly ended her career in public service and left her partially incapacitated. She has become an outspoken advocate against gun violence and is central to the Kelly campaign's message of unity and hope. Mr. Kelly leads in most polling by an average of 5-15 points and is essential to Democrats goals of retaking the Senate.

**Cook Political Report Rating:
Leans Democratic (Flip)**

Colorado

After his quixotic Presidential bid fizzled out last fall, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee made a concerted effort to recruit popular Former Governor John Hickenlooper to challenge Senator Cory Gardner, who is perhaps the most vulnerable Republican up for re-election in 2020. Even though he was seen as a heavyweight candidate,

Mr. Hickenlooper has stumbled at times during the campaign, from the Democratic primary, where he tried to avoid being outflanked on the left while still maintaining his image as a moderate, to ethics issues that have swirled around some of his expenses as Governor. Still, Mr. Gardner remains unpopular in the increasingly Democratic state and with Mr. Biden almost guaranteed to carry Colorado in the Presidential Election, it seems unlikely that Mr. Gardner can win over enough Biden voters to secure another term.

**Cook Political Report Rating:
Leans Democratic (Flip)**

Georgia

This year Republicans have to play defense on two Senate seats in a state that is increasingly Democratic. Senator David Perdue is seeking another six-year term against 33-year old Jon Ossoff, who narrowly lost a nationally watched House race three years ago. Mr. Ossoff has far outraised his rival and appears to be closing the gap in recent polls, especially after a recent incident where Mr. Perdue mocked the name of Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee Kamala Harris in a move that was widely seen as racist. Following the resignation of elderly Senator Johnny Isakson, Republican Governor Brian Kemp appointed Atlanta businesswoman Kelly Loeffler to finish his term and she will attempt to hold the seat in a

special election this fall, but faces challenges from her right and left flanks. The White House did not attempt to hide their displeasure with Ms. Loeffler's appointment, preferring instead that Mr. Kemp would've appointed Congressman Doug Collins, a former pastor and one of Mr. Trump's most vocal supporters during the impeachment process. Mr. Collins got in the race and cast himself as a conservative populist, forcing Ms. Loeffler to make a hard turn right, even going so far as to declare herself in an ad as "more conservative than Attila the Hun." The special election is a "jungle primary" where all candidates (there are more than 20) will be placed on the ballot and, should no candidate reach 50%--which is extremely likely--the top two vote getters will advance to a runoff election. Democrats have largely consolidated around the Reverend Raphael Warnock, the minister at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Mr. Warnock is virtually guaranteed to advance in the primary and will face either Mr. Collins or Ms. Loeffler (they are running neck and neck in all polls) in January.

**Cook Political Report Rating
Georgia Regular: Tossup
Georgia Special: Tossup**

Maine

Senator Susan Collins, who won her last election with 68% of the vote, heads home this year in the closest race of her life and as the

only Congressional Republican from New England. Ms. Collins, who has long cast herself as a moderate, became a target for liberals after her 2018 vote for Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh and her tendency to chastise President Trump only to vote for his agenda. In 2020, she faces a well-financed and well-known challenger in Sara Gideon, the former Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives. Ms. Gideon raised nearly \$40 million in the fundraising quarter that ended on September 30 and narrowly leads Ms. Collins in most polls.

**Cook Political Report Rating:
Tossup**

Montana

The fact that Montana has a close Senate race this cycle is a testament to Democrats' recruitment successes. After months of saying he would not seek the Senate seat held by Republican Steve Daines, popular Democratic Governor Steve Bullock filed at the last minute for the race--immediately turning it into a battleground. Although Montana will likely be in Mr. Trump's column this election, residents of the state pride themselves on an independent streak that saw Mr. Bullock win two terms as Governor and Democrat Jon Tester win reelection to Montana's other Senate seat in 2018. Polls have Mr. Daines and Mr. Bullock in a tight race without a clear favorite.

Cook Political Report Rating:

North Carolina

The Tar Heel State is seen by Republicans and Democrats alike as the state that will likely decide control of the Senate and the race there has been shaken up by both candidates in recent weeks. Senator Thom Tillis, a Republican, has grown increasingly unpopular with centrists in the state due to his continued support of the President and tested positive for COVID-19 after attending the introduction of Amy Coney Barrett in the Rose Garden that became a super-spreader event. Mr. Tillis' opponent is 47-year old former State Senator and Iraq War veteran Cal Cunningham, who was enjoying 6-8 point leads in the polls. However, at the same time that Mr. Tillis contracted the virus, sexual--though PG-- text messages between Mr. Cunningham and a campaign pollster were leaked to the media. Recent data has shown that this scandal has harmed Mr. Cunningham's favorability ratings, but not his standing in the polls. He will attempt to hold on to his lead in the race that may give Democrats control of the Senate.

Cook Political Report Rating:
Tossup

South Carolina

The Palmetto State has become one of the fiercest Senate battlegrounds of 2020 as South Carolina Democratic Chairman Jamie Harrison has closed the gap on Senator Lindsey Graham, a hated figure among liberals. Mr. Gra-

ham was once one of President Trump's most vocal critics within the GOP but has quickly shifted to being one of his fiercest allies. Mr. Graham is the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and shepherded Justice Kavanaugh to the bench in 2018. And, after declaring that "you could use my words against me" regarding his opposition to the filling of a Supreme Court seat in an election year, Mr. Graham reversed course and has become a strong fighter for Amy Coney Barrett. Mr. Harrison nearly doubled the fundraising record for Senate candidates in one quarter when he raised an astonishing \$57 million in the third quarter of this year. Mr. Graham raised \$28 million during that same time, a GOP record, highlighting the premium that both parties are placing on this state. Polls show a tight race with Mr. Graham maintaining a small advantage.

Cook Political Report Rating:
Tossup

The House of Representatives

After a 41-seat swing handed Democrats the US House of Representatives in 2018, Republicans have been vying to retake the chamber, but it seems unlikely that it will happen this year. Not only will Republicans not win back the House, they admit privately that they will likely lose even more seats. Following the Supreme Court redrawing districts in North Carolina, Democrats will handily pick up the North

Carolina 2nd and 6th. Additionally, the open seat in the Georgia 7th--which was the closest race in 2018 as incumbent Rob Woodall won by only 433 votes--seems likely to also be picked up by the Democrats as Mr. Woodall is retiring. The Texas 23rd, represented by a retiring moderate Republican who barely won re-election last time, will likely endure a similar fate. Democrats are also targeting suburban districts in Indiana, Michigan, and Missouri that can very plausibly swing blue this election.

On the other side, Republicans are struggling to go on the offensive as there are no districts that are guaranteed to flip their way. Their best chance may be the Minnesota 7th, a district that Mr. Trump won by 31 points in 2016 and is represented by conservative Democrat Collin Peterson--the chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture. Republicans recruited a heavyweight candidate, Former Lt. Governor Michelle Fischbach, to challenge Mr. Peterson and both parties acknowledge that it will be a tight race. They are also targeting several traditionally Republican districts that swung Democratic last cycle including Oklahoma's 5th, New Mexico's 2nd, California's 21st, and New York's 11th. Some of these freshman Democrats may face an uphill battle to retain their seats.

The New SCOTUS Justice

By ESTELLE BALLETT

In addition to the upcoming elections, and in light of Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death, one of the most pressing issues voters are concerned about is who will be elected to fill the late Supreme Court Justice's position. While both sides of the political spectrum disagree upon whether or not this position should be occupied before or after the November elections, President Donald Trump has made his pick. A finalist for Brett Kavanaugh's spot in 2018, Judge Amy Coney Barrett has been a favorite among conservative evangelicals and the Republican base.

After graduating from Rhodes College magna cum laude and majoring in English literature, Ms. Barrett went on to Notre Dame Law, where she graduated in 1997 as summa cum laude and received the Hoynes Prize, the law school's highest honor. After law school, she became a clerk for the conservative Supreme Court Justice, Antonin Scalia. Ms. Barrett then went on to join the faculty at Notre Dame Law School, attaining a nomination by the current President as a federal appellate judge on the US Circuit Court of Appeals for the 7th district, controlling Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana.

Though it's unquestionable that Ms. Barrett has had an impressive and successful career, many voters are concerned that her religious beliefs could affect her decisions in court, effectively

destroying the concept of the separation of the church and state. While she has been cautious in the past about communicating a strong stance in either direction, knowing that the spotlight has been on her for a potential nomination to the Supreme Court, through her law articles and court decisions, voters can study the history of her opinions. During her hearings, she avoided giving direct answers on how she would rule on major cases, which has been the norm for all nominees since Robert Bork's failed confirmation in 1987. As Ms. Barrett did when being confirmed to the US Circuit Court of Appeals, she testified that her faith would not interfere with her ability to perform her job correctly and with a clear head.

While Ms. Barrett has openly written about her views on *Roe vs. Wade*, during her confirmation hearings, she declined to answer on how she might rule on the case. Still, many voters are concerned that because of her pro-life stance, she would work towards overturning the decision. When looking at the 2nd Amendment, Ms. Barrett made her stance clear in 2019 when she dissented on a case that did not allow felons who are no longer considered "dangerous" to bear arms legally. Barrett has also made her views clear on the Affordable Care Act, by criticizing Chief Justice John Roberts' decision to uphold the act instead of striking it down. Lastly, liberal voters are concerned that the Supreme Court may now, in a six to three ratio, lean too far to the right, as the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg was known as a dyed-in-the-wool progressive.

Polling: 2016 vs 2020 and its Effect on the Election

By NICOLE MURPHY

In 2016, the United States and the world witnessed a shocking electoral outcome that defied all pollsters' forecasts. Now, as the country approaches Election Day 4 years later, Democrats are more doubtful of the polls than ever, haunted by the results of Clinton v Trump.

Polling, although a carefully calculated process, cannot be consistently reliable. The task begins with gathering a representative sample constructed to illustrate the political views of the

nation's voting population. For this process to function properly, pollsters ensure that the sample size accurately reflects the larger population, incorporating characteristics of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and geographical location. Each sample, however, has to allow for error, which is where the most confusing aspect of the polls comes in: margin of error, or MOE. MOE is a mathematical equation that determines how inaccurate the polls could be based on the size of the repre-

sentative sample. For example, a sample size of 1,000 recipients has a MOE of +/-3 percentage points, meaning if a candidate is polling at 55%, their actual numbers could range from 52-58, providing inaccurate and unreliable voting numbers. This year, it seems that more Democrats and moderates are taking these potential miscalculations into account, pushing the narrative that although Biden is polling favorably, Donald Trump could still win the election. Although this portrayal may be

get moderate voters to the polls, the 2016 and 2020 elections are drastically different. In 2016, Trump won the election solely off of the electoral college vote, despite his polling numbers falling under 46%. In February of this year, he peaked at a 45.6% average against Biden, and has yet to raise that number. Despite the uncertainties of polling, this number could still mean something, as it displays President Trump's lack of voter gain throughout the past 10 months. This election is also likely to drop a lot of third-party voters in comparison to 2016, which

showed about 6% voting third-party, the highest since 1996. Biden has made a point to work closely with Senator Bernie Sanders, who seemed to play a large factor in the lack of Clinton supporters 4 years ago. Accordingly, the United States population seems to be focusing heavily on the two main candidates, possibly due to the political presence on social media and the prominent clash between the two parties. Third-party candidates, such as Jill Stein and Gary Johnson in 2016, are rarely brought up in mainstream media and on national

television, fully placing the spotlight on Former V.P. Joe Biden and President Donald Trump and the severity of this election. As we approach the election, pollsters across the country are continuing to gather numbers and data that both parties are utilizing to rally supporters and focus their campaigns effectively before November 3rd. As of now, Biden is polling 11% higher than Trump, but considering the uncertainties, these numbers could shift completely.

President Trump's COVID-19

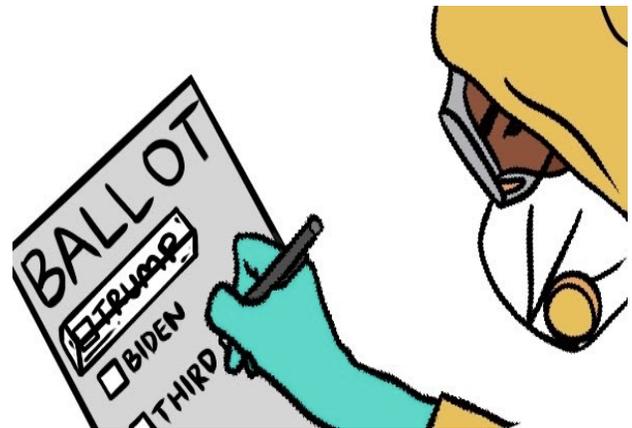
Diagnosis By LUKE TU and UDAY VISSA

On Friday, October 1, President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump both tested positive for COVID-19. President Trump experienced a much more severe case, undergoing a high fever and low oxygen levels, prompting his transportation to Walter Reed Medical Center where he was administered dexamethasone, a drug used in more serious cases, along with “cutting-edge” intensive and precautionary treatment. The president then left the hospital on Monday, October 6, and resumed his campaign trail the next week, amid criticism that he still refuses to take the virus seriously.

Although many of the president's aides initially thought that he would reemerge from his infection with a possible newfound sympathy for the virus' impacts, President Trump has shown no sign of slowing in his hopes to reopen the country and lessen social distancing, even filling

his schedule with additional rallies. Besides the surface level precautions, such as moving certain events online and instituting mask-wearing protocol for the Whitehouse staffers, his general attitude, and thus the attitude of his devoted supporters, has not changed much.

In terms of public opinion and the upcoming election, it would seem that such events would place the president's contraction of the virus, along with his controversial handling of the pandemic as a whole, at the forefront of matters right as voting commences. Thus, this would most likely be interpreted as a hard blow for the incumbent. However, many have even used the disease's presence in the Whitehouse as a reason to lessen public health restrictions and move forward with opening schools and businesses. Rep. Gaetz went as far to state, “There is no lockdown that can be a panacea to save



Artwork by LIV ACREE

everyone from everything,” reasoning that, “If this virus can get into the Oval, ...the body of the president, there's no place where it could not possibly infect one of our fellow Americans.” Additionally, the diagnosis has drastically changed the debating environment of this year's election. Although President Trump was originally set to debate with Democratic nominee, Joe Biden, on October 15, Mr. Trump's positive test led to this being reworked into a virtual format. Despite what seemed a solid plan, Trump refused to participate, claiming that Biden would cheat, “relying on his teleprompter from his basement bunker.” Rather than attempting to reschedule the second presidential debate, thus maintaining the traditional three-debate system of the past two decades, planning efforts have moved on and it was announced that the third debate would be held on Thursday, October 22, at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. In reality, the effects of this turn of events could have greatly varying degrees on how the election and remaining presidency plays out, but only time will tell.

TikTok's Unique Impact on GenZ Politics

By MAISIE ZIPFEL and OLIVIA BALLETT

When it comes to politics and the overall awareness of the world, Generation Z has a unique advantage that no other has had the privilege of experiencing during their adolescent years. With access to unlimited resources and information thanks to many social media outlets, Generation Z has gained the opportunity to educate themselves and form their own opinions. Over the past year, TikTok, an entertainment app created in China, has become increasingly influential to young voters. Many political parties and groups with unified political viewpoints have taken to TikTok to express their beliefs and the importance of voting. These groups, including "Barbs for Bernie," "Settle for Biden," and "Trump 2020" have a very influential impact on many new and younger voters.

The political group "Barbs for Bernie" emerged in December of 2019 and trended on Twitter for three months before making its way to TikTok in March of 2020. As soon as the upcoming slogan reached the screens of popular creators, those same creators began using the slogan and hashtag to spread their favorable views of Bernie Sanders and his campaign. Rising TikTok star Emmuhlu (aka "Barb" to her followers) became the unofficial leader of the TikTok group and used her platform to show her love of female rapper Nicki Minaj, Bernie Sanders, and Trump haters. She, along with her fellow "Barbs," (a term coined for Minaj's fans) encouraged each other to cyberbully well-known Trump-supporting or conservative TikTok stars and reached far beyond TikTok, sending emails to the colleges of many such popular creators with false rumors about them. This popular slogan then soon died off when a video depicting Emmuhlu using racial slurs with her friends surfaced and quickly erupted on the platform. After the release of this video, Emmuhlu was quickly "canceled" by the TikTok community. Soon after this, Bernie dropped out of the Presidential race, officially ending the use of the popular slogan.

Following former Vice President Joe Biden's win of the Democratic Nomination of the President for the United States, a new popular hashtag "Settle For Biden" began trending. The group is described as "a grassroots group of former Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders supporters who recognize Joe Biden's flaws but know that our nation will not survive four more years of Donald Trump," as stated on the homepage of the Settle for Biden website. The creators of Settle for Biden write, "We don't like all of Joe Biden's policies but we recognize that he is running on the most progressive platform in American history and that not supporting him would literally endanger the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans."

For roughly a month, "Settle for Biden" was one of the most popular hashtags used on TikTok to show support for the presidential candidate until a new account coined "TikTok for Biden" was created in October. The latter group consists of about 200 TikTok creators, all voicing support for Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris in the upcoming election. As stated in their first TikTok, their goals are to "Register young people to vote, raise awareness about the election, and to eventually put Joe Biden in the White House." It is said that they will be posting content related to the current political issues and the upcoming election. In order to broaden their horizons and expand their impact, they have even created their very own website where they explain their purpose and sell merchandise to fundraise money for the Biden campaign. The merchandise includes the slogans: "Gen-Z for Biden, Gays for Biden, Voting is Cool, and You Can't Spell Biden Without Bi."

Trump 2020 is the last of the major political groups showing their ideals on TikTok. This is one of the oldest political groups on TikTok, as they have exhibited their support for President Donald Trump since the 2016 Presidential Election. Although for the president's first three years of presidency, his supporters were not as active in their promotion efforts, they have been extremely strong with their views in light of the upcoming election. Many Republican/Conservative and Trump specific groups have emerged and banded together to show their support and political beliefs. The Trump 2020 group of Tiktokers are arguably the most scrutinized from outside parties and creators. This is most likely due to their headstrong views and their tendency to debate other Tiktokers and attempt to sway others from their more liberal views.

While these three groups may seem merely trivial and lacking in impact, social media is currently the most influential platform for GenZ as a whole. While their methods may be harsh and at times immature, they bring political matters into social media, forming and influencing young people's and voter's minds.

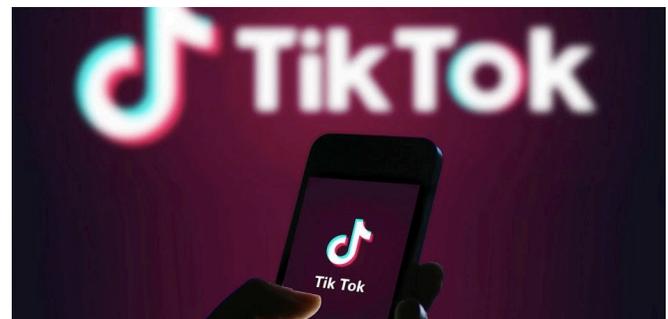


Photo by TIKTOK

Star Athletes Use Platform For Message: Vote, Please

By JULIAN SCHENCK

Voting is one of the most important themes that has been seen in sports this year, most notably in the NBA and NFL. The huge non-partisan movement has impacted millions of people, reshaping the way that they think about voting. Members of both professional leagues express the sentiment that voting is a major way to express your voice, as well as a measure to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race or gender, have the right to vote.

NBA players including LeBron James, Kemba Walker, and Chris Paul have expressed the lack of encouragement for voting that has existed in the past. LeBron claims that kids who grow up in the inner city don't think that their vote counts, so they don't bother going. Similarly, Kemba Walker says "Where I'm from, nobody talks about voting." This topic seems to be apparent throughout communities across the nation, specifically less privileged areas. President of the NBA players association, Chris Paul, attributes the general lack of enthusiasm to the fact that people who are not part of the Democratic or Republican majorities feel that because of the electoral college, their vote won't cause a swing of a state's electoral votes.



Photo from THE NEW YORK TIMES

The NFL has put up a similar fight to encourage eligible voters to utilize their right. A statement made collectively by the NFL and the NFL Players Association says that they "Encourage the civic engagement of (their) fans, players, and legends." This "civic engagement" that the NFL mentions includes voting. The league is making a considerable effort to advertise their voting campaign. NFL.com features videos made by players and coaches instructing how to register to vote, as well as emphasizing the impact that your vote has. Just like the NBA, the NFL has addressed the massive lack of voting that has occurred in the past. According to the NFL, 60% of eligible voters

casted a vote in the last presidential election. They mock this statement, as Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll says that "he's only coaching to win 60% of the games", and players Shaquill and Shaquem Griffin joke that they "will only show up to 60% of the practices." With this satirical way of addressing this statistic, they then encourage eligible voters to cast their ballots, saying that "60% isn't going to get it done." Overall, both the NBA and the NFL have remained prominent supporters of citizens using their power to vote this year. This movement surely has impacted eligible voters to express their constitutional right to vote, and will contribute to the ability to see a true reflection of how Americans feel about who should be the president next year.

Ethics of New Film Spark Fierce Criticism of Disney

Company receives backlash over filming

Mulan in Xinjiang

By LANA ENGLISH

As the highly anticipated live-action film, *Mulan*, concludes, a thank-you note from Disney to eight government bodies of Xinjiang briefly rolls down the screen. It would be insignificant if it was directed to almost any other Chinese province, but avid fans, politicians, and the media quickly took to the Internet and brought to light astounding news: Disney had knowingly filmed parts of the movie in the very province where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been detaining, brainwashing, and abusing over a million Uighur Muslims. The credits specifically thanked the public security bureaus of Turpan (a city in Xinjiang with a large Uighur population) that run several internment camps. These camps, referred to as “Vocational Education and Training Centers” by the Chinese government, are internationally condemned, yet the construction of them has persisted since 2017.

Using methods alarmingly reminiscent of the fictional “Party” of Orwell’s *1984*, the Chinese government is engaged in the largest mass

internment of an ethnic-religious minority group since Nazi Germany, according to The Guardian. China denies accusations of abusing human rights, despite vast photographic and written evidence. Rather, the Chinese government claims that it is trying to control terrorism and extremism, and the centers are merely training facilities. In reality, many experts agree that there are no active problems to control, and the centers instead are a money source for the government. Evidence in the form of leaked CCP documents match horrendous accounts from survivors released from the centers, and together they painted a picture filled with rape, sterilization, beatings, waterboarding, and other forms of physical and mental torture. Slight deviations in everyday life, such as increased electricity usage, is deemed suspicious by the Xinjiang government, and can be grounds for detaining an individual. The primary goal of the camps, according to expert interpretation of the leaked documents, is to forcibly transform the beliefs of the Muslims, and in turn destroy any culture or identities contradictory to

that of the mainstream Han Chinese. Former prisoners have reported that to achieve psychological unity, the CCP forces Uighurs to study communist propaganda and to repeat affirmations to the Chinese President. In other words, Uighurs are violently pressured to believe that they did something wrong for simply being of another culture.

By refusing to acknowledge the human rights crisis in Xinjiang that is widely deemed to be cultural genocide, Disney is encouraging the cruel and unethical behavior of the Turpan bureaus. As one of the most powerful international companies, Disney could have easily used their influence to push back on Beijing. Instead, Disney’s CFO Christine McCarthy has only issued the brief statement: “[The controversy] has generated a lot of publicity. Let’s leave it at that.” She claimed that Disney’s primary interest in filming in Xinjiang was to get shots of the “unique landscape” of the province. By turning a blind eye to human rights issues, Disney is implicitly aiding China’s efforts to keep the world unconcerned with the ongoing atrocities against the Uighurs. Be-



Photo from WSJ.COM

cause the *Mulan* controversy has brought attention to the Uighur camps, China has banned major Chinese media from writing about the movie in an attempt to reduce spreading of discontent. As an enterprise whose entire brand is based on happiness and inspiration, Brice Shearburn (‘23) asserted, “It’s really shocking to see Disney executives so blatantly thanking and praising the XUAR [Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region], the same region in which a mass cultural genocide is being violently enforced.” Liberal and conservative politicians alike have expressed their opposition to Disney’s actions. Missouri Senator Josh Hawley (R) wrote to Disney CEO Bob Chapek arguing the hypocrisy of his company. Hawley stated, “Your decision to put profit over principle... is an affront to American values.” In response, The Trump administration back in 2019 blacklisted the public security bureau in Turpan and has enacted sanctions on several high-ranking Chinese officials with ties to human rights abuses. Presidential candidate Joe Biden’s campaign has also opposed China’s actions in Xinjiang. Disney has not responded

to the public criticism and continues to promote the movie.

The tag #BoycottMulan had been used earlier this year following a separate controversy in which the starring actress of the titular character, Liu Yifei, expressed support for police brutality in Hong Kong. The hashtag has resurfaced in the past few months, indicating the opposition many social media users have for Disney's choice to film in Xinjiang. The box office

earnings of *Mulan* have thus far reflected this, as the movie has garnered far less than an action movie with a 200-million-dollar budget typically would. Besides its political ramifications, the movie itself has received mixed reviews. Richard Lawson from *Vanity Fair* called it a "dull reflection of the original," and described it as lifeless, unsatisfying, and not entirely well done. Other critics have agreed that the film lacks emotional depth. However, some

critics agree that *Mulan*'s impressive battle scenes and familiar protagonist make it an enjoyable watch.

As the movement for Asian representation in Hollywood has taken off with hits such as *Parasite* and *Crazy Rich Asians*, *Mulan* was an opportunity for Disney to take much-needed steps towards equality on the big screen. But, as Gaurav Muthusamy ('22) put it, "While it is great to see some Asians on the big screen... I can't ever come to support filming

next to the Uyghur camps." Furthermore, the Asian community has pointed out that although an Asian cast could be seen on the screen, the directors, producers, designers, and others off screen were predominantly white and the movie is superficial in its cultural nuances and whitewashed. Thus, many agree that Disney failed to capitalize on the opportunity that a *Mulan* remake offered.

Cartooning and Politics

A seemingly-swollen President Trump foams at the mouth, yelling obscenities censored by a series of @, #, \$, and % symbols. The comically-large head, prominent receding hairline, and true-orange skin tone let the reader know that they have laid their eyes on a political cartoon. Political cartooning is a form of propaganda that is believed to have been begun in America by Benjamin Franklin in 1754. Historians attribute the art style to Franklin's famous drawing titled "Join or Die," which was published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* to implore the 13 colonies to become a unified nation. Since then, political cartooning has bloomed across many different art mediums, and is featured in editorial sections of online and print publications alike. They typically feature both metaphorical and satirical language, but also may have no text at all, forcing the viewer to deeply think about the intended message. Britannica's website elaborates, "When successful, political cartoons can fulfill an important criticizing and controlling function in society. In addition, political cartoons can encourage the process of opinion formation and decision making as well as provide entertaining perspectives on the news." Below are examples of student political cartoons.



Benjamin Franklin's "Join or Die"; Photo from HISTORY.COM



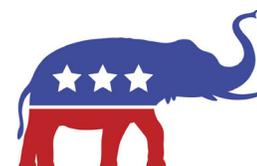
Artwork by LIAM TAYLOR



Artwork by JACQUELINE HU

YRC: This Election is Complicated, So Let's Not Simplify It

By YRC Co-President, THOMAS DOBBS



Dear Burroughs community,

Many of you have likely read the title and have already begun to roll your eyes. I get that. Here they come, the black sheep of the Burroughs community. But before I cover the substance of this piece, let me remind everyone that though this is the Young Republicans Club, our members range from moderates to partisans, those fascinated by politics to those just beginning to find their perspective. Amidst all the heightened rhetoric, we have been conflated as an extremist monolithic community consisting of deniers of climate change, science, and racism. We have heard teachers refer to Democrats as “the only sane party” and have watched our friends ridicule us at the activities fair. In order to identify as anything other than AOC-level of leftism, one must essentially enter the witness protection program.

As the Young Republicans Club, we wish not to use our platform here to persuade voters or change minds but to remind everyone of the value of intellectual diversity. That is our common denominator. I personally am a centrist who is immensely dissatisfied with both parties, but I lead the Young Republicans Club because I value how important it is that we understand and respect all viewpoints, even if we fervently disagree with them. As a club, we consist of those who dislike the President, those who support him,

those who identify as independents, and everyone in-between. It is all of those who stand between who I primarily speak to today. Partisan election cycles will attempt to divide everyone into a strict binary. You either fully support the left, or you are a Trump-enabler who overlooks racism and sexism. You either back the right with total vigor, or you are allowing socialist policies and those who hate our country to take over. These generalizations are neither healthy nor accurate.

We need to recognize that some vote in accordance with favorable economic policies, yet others value high-character candidates. Perhaps some voters have strong religious principles while others prioritize combating climate change. This personal assessment of value does not qualify some as more moral or caring than others. Strongly equating one's identity and morality with politics automatically paints those who disagree as not only your political opponents but as dire and direct threats to yourself as an entity.

It is certainly true that neither party can boast an untainted record and I believe it is the case that politicians care increasingly less about policy than about playing politics. Take, for example, the American National Election Studies that found that “since the 1980s, voters have become incredibly loyal to parties, yet they publicly identify less and less with a party. The number of voters identifying as independent, but leaning one way

or the other, has surged to a record level.”

This can only be viewed as an overwhelming loss for the American people, and it is a reflection that we are far more concerned about voting against our ideological opponents than for our own personal identity and principles.

We see this now when national stimulus plans are fought as “all or nothing”. Such holdups only serve as a political message while Americans themselves suffer, and Senate leaders from both parties deserve blame. Or perhaps we see further political games when Senate Democrats filibustered the JUSTICE ACT this summer following the horrifying George Floyd murder. Keep in mind that this occurred amidst simultaneous Democratic calls to abolish the filibuster and Pelosi's claims that her Republican counterparts were “attempting to get away with murder.” Or perhaps we see an abandonment of principle when Republicans seemingly become in favor of spending deficits once they have political control. You see, both parties are responsible for a political system that no longer fights for the American people but is obsessed with artificial and symbolic political victories. The era of compromise seems to have passed.



The Young Republicans Club poses for their Yearbook Photo

Photo by JBS GOVERNOR

It is hard to admit that both parties have severe flaws. The Republicans of today will attempt to frame this election as a choice between policies rather than personality. The Democrats, meanwhile, are seemingly only unified at the moment by a shared dislike of the President, with significant questions remaining on how they will approach enormously consequential topics such as packing the Supreme Court, the Green New Deal, DC statehood, and the future of fracking.

We hope that students in our community are never coerced into siding with a political party since both have sizable flaws. I always will believe that the vast majority of Americans are well-intentioned and hope to better our country. During the general election, it is always important to remember that we do not have the choice to vote for those who we believe are best-representative of ourselves for political office; our system is a fairly strict political binary. We should never assume that support of certain President Trump policies is an endorsement of his character. If Trump advocates for a policy that is generally popular such

as bringing troops out of endless Middle East wars in Syria and Afghanistan, opponents of President Trump do not need to immediately transform into supporters of foreign conflict just to spite the President as we have seen.

In this contested election, our media commonly utilizes absolutisms to dramatize the present. For instance, phrases such as “Trump is the worst president of all time” or “Trump is the most racist President we’ve ever had” commonly populate the transcripts of CNN and MSNBC. Trump, despite his shortcomings and flaws, has had plenty of little-recognized successes. Let’s touch on a handful. Firstly, he promised groundbreaking tax cuts and deregulation that has led to record economic growth and prosperity. The median household income rose and has gained about \$5,000 of income in just three years. Over eight years of President Obama and his administration, this figure only rose \$1,000 per household. The Wall Street Journal and a Hoover Institute’s examination of Biden’s tax, health-care, and regulation proposals predicts “\$6,500 less in median household income by

2030.” The risk of a Biden presidency lies not with the short-term near-certain economic comeback, but the risk of another slow recovery such as the one witnessed in 2009. Trump signed into law The First Step Act, a criminal justice law determined to lower the sentences of nonviolent offenders and to lower the astronomically high prison population in the USA. He also signed into law Opportunity Zones, which expects \$75 billion of private investment to help revitalize the most vulnerable communities in our nation. Meanwhile, the fracking industry has revolutionized global energy markets, allowing the US to become energy independent for the first time since 1957. Thus, our adversaries in Russia and Iran suffer as we support American jobs and transition to a lower-emissions economy by dampening US reliance on coal. Trump has withdrawn the US from the TPP, a partnership that threatened American workers by outsourcing jobs and corporations abroad. Trump has also refocused attention on the deceitful nature of the Chinese government by confronting rampant intellectual property theft and currency manipulation, both central themes of his campaign. China attempts to control global technology networks through state-controlled companies such as Huawei, bankrupt countries through their Belt and Road Initiative, and expand their geographical claims in Asia. Now partners such as India, Australia, Taiwan and Japan are forced to associate closer with the U.S as democratic values are under attack. Meanwhile, Former Vice President Joe Biden still fails to admit that advocating for China’s entry into

the WTO was a mistake. The influence of Huawei and other Chinese technology companies once appeared strong. Trump, however, has led the world towards sanctions and established a now-widely shared skepticism of Chinese government intentions.

And though Trump has increased funding for the military, he is the first president since Reagan to avoid initiating another foreign war. He has proved a disrupter in NATO to require that other countries pay their fair share, a 2% GDP figure that many of our European allies have failed to reach. As much as his opponents enjoy gossiping about his relationship with Russia, he has enacted undeniably stronger policies on Russia than his predecessor. When Russia invaded Crimea in 2014, then-President Obama refused to arm the Ukrainians with anti-tank weapons they needed, even following a 2015 bipartisan request from the Senate Armed Services Committee. President Trump, however, approved a sale of Javelin anti-tank systems to the Ukrainians after assuming office. In addition, President Trump has embraced the European Deterrence Initiative and has moved additional troops to Poland, Norway, and the Baltics to deter Russian aggression.

To his credit, Trump has even played the role of peacemaker, brokering a reestablishment of economic relations between Kosovo and Serbia, and has helped to normalize Israeli-Arab relations in the Middle East with the Abraham Accords between Israel, UAE, and Bahrain. In this case, actions speak far louder than words. Trump has played the role of disruptor and has achieved significant accomplishments at home and abroad. It is not up to me to say if he has earned your vote. Perhaps his inexcusable

behaviors, erratic tweeting, both perceived and actual mishandlings of the COVID-19 pandemic, and shoddy responses to protests/looting have led you to believe he is irredeemable. That is fine. But we have to recognize that a large swath of people will vote for him to lead us for the next four years. This is also fine.

There now exists a crossroads when some will recognize our economic potential and the need for American leadership. Perhaps these same people will look to former Vice-President Joe Biden's segregationist past, his racially insensitive quotes portraying African Americans as an ideological monolith who must support him, or his jokes insinuating a common stereotype that all gas stations are run by Indian Americans. Perhaps they hear Joe Biden tell them that voters do not deserve to know his stance on packing the Supreme Court. Perhaps these voters see Biden's "tough on crime" past, in which when he sponsored the 1994 Crime Bill, bolstering already high rates of incarceration. Perhaps they believe the allegations of sexual assault by former staffer Tara Reade. Or maybe they even believe it is impolite but necessary to recognize Biden's obvious and persistent cognitive decline.

Perhaps that voter is a miner or natural gas employee who fears the Green New Deal and Biden's potential inability to control the left-wing of his own party. Perhaps that voter is a police officer, who fears the rise of anti-police rhetoric amid calls to defund, and in some cases, abolish the police. Perhaps that voter is a small business owner or farmer who appreciates the President's regulation cuts and economic confrontation with China, who has taken advantage of our country for too long. Perhaps that

voter is a retail worker, who lost their job because of state-wide lockdowns, and believes the country should safely re-open. Perhaps this voter does not want a "return to normalcy" presidency and believes that a confrontational, hard-ball candidate should control our relations and negotiations with China and Russia. Perhaps this voter believes that it is time to end foreign intervention in the Middle East which has garnered a \$6.4 trillion bill since 2001, especially since the US economy no longer depends on foreign oil. Perhaps they spot the contrasts with a former Vice President who oversaw US wars in the Middle East, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and cheered China's quiet ascension to global economic superpower.

All in all, there are countless reasons to vote for or against a candidate. It is true that President Trump has had some real successes. These have often suffered from messaging mishaps at the hands of a media too obsessed with him to cover him with a modicum of accuracy or fairness. But it is also true that Trump has led some fairly substantial political failures, holds deeply narcissistic personality flaws, and engages in divisive and insulting rhetoric. It is yet to be seen whether this election will be a referendum on his personality and failures or a vote of confidence recovering from a pandemic and our role as a global leader. Perhaps you will have a say. Perhaps you don't. But let us always remember that over-simplification of a complex election cycle does a disservice to the future of our republic.

On behalf of the Young Republicans Club with sincere gratitude for your attention and open-mindedness,

-Co-President Thomas Dobbs

Gossow: Choice is a Privilege

By CELIA GOSSOW

As a democratic country, the right to vote is opportune to the recognition of voices in our country. Established for white men with property in 1788, African American men in 1870, and women in 1920, this right was previously viewed as an opportunity, not an obligation. In our current political climate, with presidential elections close on the horizon, voting is a hot topic. Voter registration, mail-in ballots, and voter fraud are ever-present on the American psyche. The running of Biden and Trump, while highly polarized, is revealing about the American attitude towards voting.

While many stand steady on their candidate of choice, many Americans lay undecided on their November ballot. Trump, on one hand, is struggling to grab the moderate-Republican vote, or in lay terms, economic conservatives who are socially liberal, while on the other, Biden's moderately Democratic policies surrounding issues such as fracking and police reform leave the far left unsatisfied. Many supporters of either side argue the problematic background of the opposing candidate while refusing to reference the same themes within their own candidate. It is clear that both men need a refresher on consent. With Trump's twenty-six and Biden's eight sexual misconduct allegations and accusations, the search for the lesser of two evils halts at a grey-area. Although both men

lay severely flawed, "Settle for Biden" has become a popular mantra among farther-left-leaning voters. This ideology harps on the shortcomings of Biden's campaign, but recognizes the necessity of getting Trump out of office. For many, the past nearly four years of Donald Trump's presidency have stirred up feelings of discomfort and disgust. Any economic appeal of the presidency has been squashed under the boot of the one-percent. Forbes reports that Trump's 2018 tax cuts allowed the 400 richest Americans to pay fewer taxes than any other group. Although these cuts were marketed towards the joint-benefit of the entire American population, the increase in standard deduction resulted in squandering results for everyone except the top one percent. In truth, Trump's economic plan for his 2016 and potential 2020 term have different tones. Thanks to the incapacity of the COVID-19 regulations, all that is left of the American economy should be flushed. Anyone relying on standard income, living with multiple children, living in low-income communities, and almost anyone else in the middle to lower economic class has been hit hard by the pandemic. No American can say they have been wholly unaffected by COVID-19, but it is undeniable that a disproportionate portion of the damage was felt by low-income communities and commu-



Photo from CNN.COM

nities in which the majority are people of color. Not only are POC more likely to have severe asthma, heart conditions, and diabetes, but they are heavily present in the essential workforce. ThinkGlobal-Health reports "Blacks and Latinxs are more likely to be unemployed due to the impacts of the pandemic on the labor market, but they are also overrepresented among essential workers who must stay in their jobs, particularly lower-skilled positions, where they are at greater risk of exposure to the virus." This close to election day, the impacts of COVID-19 on these crucial communities could potentially swing the election. Trump's lack of COVID-19 reform lands him in a sticky situation when campaigning for these demographics. It should be noted that the political demographics of black populations are more left-leaning to begin with. This is not without good reason. The appeal of Donald Trump in low-income communities notwithstanding his economic plan is unpopular. Take a moment to step away from the economic sector for a minute. Hypothesize with me for a second; you are reading this article as a white student of John Burroughs School, in which 400 of the 600 students pay a full

\$30,000 tuition each year. You have been granted experiences and opportunities unheard of just miles away. Your political alignment most likely lays heavily on that of your parents, and your political engagements rely solely on what may affect you. As seen in the Republican Party, which is made up of roughly 89% white people, the items that could possibly impact your life up for debate are government-mandates against bodily autonomy, control over the rights of others, guns, and of course, taxes. On the other hand, for nearly anyone without your same privilege, the Democratic Party provides more appeal. With a demographic of 22% black people compared to the right's 2%, and 13% Hispanic people, compared to the right's 6%, the left are more reflective of the diversity of the population we live in. This leads to an overall more well-rounded and accurate survey of the issues important to the American people. In your hypothetical support of the Republican party, you would be discounting the needs of populations who look different than you or who are not granted the same opportunities. Hence, we see the need to look past personal desires in comparison to the survival and wellbeing of others.

As previously mentioned, these demographics are no coincidence. For POC, the electoral choice is not fueled by tax breaks or job growth; it is for survival. A 2% tax break is nothing to celebrate after the history of slavery, lynching, redlining,

gerrymandering, police brutality, and Donald Trump's lack of recognition of systemic racism in America. For families of undocumented immigrants, the electoral choice is a defining factor in the survival of those immigrants and the perseverance of DACA. For women, especially women of color, the electoral choice is predicting their accessibility to abortion clinics and women's healthcare. For the LGBTQ+ community, the electoral choice means being allowed to legally marry, adopt, or attend businesses without being denied service. The impacts of Donald Trump's presidency are majorly unfelt by his voters but are felt greatly by those already hit hard by systems of oppression in America.

For those who depend on the outcome of the election, voting is not

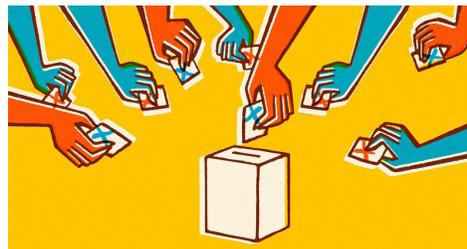


Photo from TED.COM

optional. For the many undecided voters, I ask you, what privileges do you hold that allow you to make your electoral decisions based on anything but the protection of your own life? How has your privilege granted you the ability to have a choice? For many, voting for Biden is not a choice made out of great debate of the options at hand, but out of an understanding of the pos-

sible and already executed impacts of the alternative. "Make America Great Again!" is a tricky concept for those who still are not granted equal freedoms. Which America was great? The one that relied on the backs of slaves? The one where a six-year-old integrating into a white school required military intervention? Or was it the one where the lynching of black people was a weekend activity and rape was legal? Or maybe the one where you were forced to hide who you loved for fear of being beat in the street? It is necessary to recognize this privilege in yourself. Your choice in November, whether it affects you or not, will impact those around you. As a participant in democracy, you have a responsibility to not only educate yourself on the candidates and the history of American politics but also to share that knowledge with others. We, as a generation, have an immense role in the outcome of the election. I ask you to please use your privilege as an opportunity for good. Educate yourself, look out for others, and take responsibility for your actions. Whatever the outcome in November, know that your continued efforts towards equity will not go unheard. Biden's election is only a stepping stone to greater social equality, and you have a role in the rights of yourself and others. Get out there and make your voice heard on November 3rd.

Fischer: ACB is a Threat to Progress and the Court

By LEILA FISCHER

The importance of Amy Coney Barrett's nomination cannot be overstated. Not only is this the first time that a president has nominated a Supreme Court Justice whilst the country is in the midst of voting, but the nomination also comes at a time of exceptional political discord and its likely success threatens reproductive choice, consumer rights, and the capacity of regulatory agencies to protect our environment. The irony that accompanies the circumstances of Barrett's nomination has not flown under the radar either. In 2016, Justice Antonin Scalia's seat became vacant during the presidential election, and Barrett was one of the

loudest Republican voices shouting the party line that the seat should not be filled until after that November's presidential election. She noted at the time that the country's citizens should have a voice on who would nominate a Justice that would "dramatically flip the balance of power on the court." It would only be logical for Barrett to follow her own wisdom, unless, of course, it was not about principle at all, but instead about political and ideological convenience and expediency. What makes Barrett's nomination even more unsettling to many is that she is poised to replace the great Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg -- one of the most influential women in recent



Photo from WSJ.COM

American history and a champion of progressive ideals and individual rights. Barrett, on the other hand, seems fairly unconcerned about individual rights, unless you count the rights she insists on affording corporations. As a constitutional "originalist," she believes that LGBTQIA+ rights are not guaranteed by the Constitution, but must be legislated to exist. She has protested the Miranda doctrine, claiming that it unconstitutionally prevents confessions from being "freely" given. She is fervently outspoken about *Roe v. Wade*, suggesting again and again that odious restrictions on abortions are constitutional and perhaps even that states should decide for themselves. She was strangely silent when the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the right of corporations to match the backgrounds of its employees to the demographics of the communities in which their various branches sit (*EEOC v.*

AutoZone). She is well-known for her opposition to the Affordable Care Act -- which currently provides 21 million people with health insurance -- and has even gone so far as to publicly chastise Chief Justice Roberts for his authoring of a Supreme Court ruling which saved the Act. Much to the joy of conservatives, who have failed to strike down the law legislatively on over twenty occasions, the Act will again be before the Court on November 10th, and that is why -- of course -- the President is desperate to fill the seat before his looming election loss.

It seems like a foregone conclusion that Amy Coney Barrett will become an Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, and that is a tragedy. The rights many of us have championed during our lifetimes, and the rights so many have fought and bled for before our lives began, will soon be at risk.

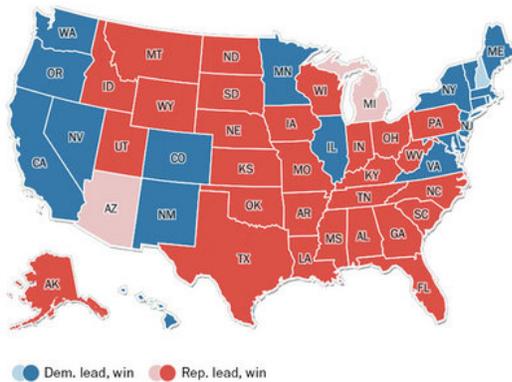


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Schenck: The Electoral College is the Wrong System for the Election

By JULIAN SCHENCK

ELECTION 2016



Electoral votes as of 1:38 p.m.



The Washington Post

Graphic from THE WASHINGTON POST

The Framers of the Constitution thought of a new way to determine the winner of the presidential election, a system which they named the Electoral College. The Electoral College gives each state's majority winner all of the Electoral College votes allocated to that state, with the exception of Maine and Nebraska. This system differs from the Popular Vote theory, where the outcome of the election is essentially just decided by whoever has the most votes. Instead of the rational Popular Vote idea, the Electoral College has remained in place since the creation of the Constitution. There have been many issues with this Electoral College idea, such as the fact that it plays a role in decreasing voter turnout, and it also does not always show who is more deserving of the position of president based on the people's choice.

Take the 2016 election as an example of

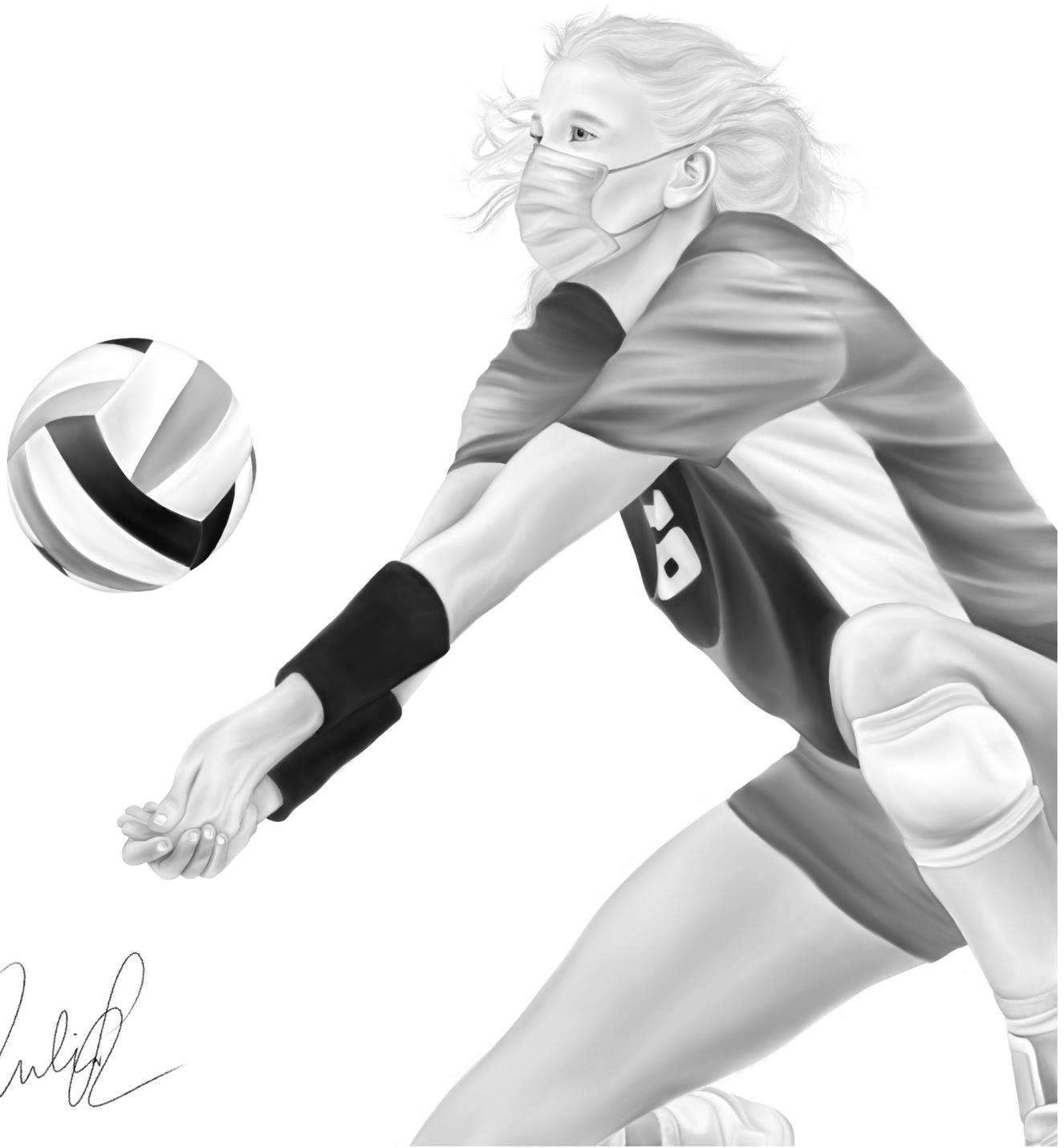
the issues that exist with the Electoral College. Current President Donald Trump won the election due to the Electoral College, receiving more Electoral votes than his opponent, Hillary Clinton. He was able to win the "swing states" in the election, otherwise known as the states "not already determined to be won" due to past elections. The amount of swing states in each election is typically around 12, according to FiveThirtyEight. Think about that: 41 other US states were already considered entirely won by either party before the election even began. This factor certainly decreases voter turnout for the elections, since Democrats that are in Republican states, for example, know that their state election has a definite outcome, with an overwhelming majority of Republicans in the state taking control of the state's electoral votes. If people live in non-swing states, and

their party is the minority in that state, it is somewhat reasonable to think that their vote does not count, and they would be, in some ways, correct.

This is because no matter how many party minority voters exist in each state, their votes will have no impact in the dishing out of Electoral College votes from that state. A state can be very close like Michigan was in 2016 with Trump winning by 0.3% over Clinton, but that close state winner will still receive all of the Electoral votes toward their tally. However, in states where the race is not going to be very close, due to past elections and poll projections, there is seemingly no need to go out and vote if you belong to the party minority in your state.

There are only two states that do not hand out Electoral votes in the "winner take all" fashion. These two exceptions, Maine and Nebraska, allocate two of their votes to the majority winner, as well as one to each of the winners of each congressional district, rather than giving the statewide winner all of their Electoral votes. While this strategy is better than the others, it still does not encourage party minority voters to exercise their constitutional right to vote, since their district may definitely be going one way or the other.

Overall, voter turnout has certainly been impacted by how people feel as they go to cast their votes and the impact they feel like they will have in determining the outcome of the election. It also diminishes a huge majority of overall statewide minorities, as their votes really are not represented in the tally of Electoral votes. For these reasons, I believe that the Electoral College should be abolished, and replaced by the Popular Vote system, where everyone's vote is better represented in the final outcome of the election.



Artwork by JULIA REICHMAN

THE WORLD