the record

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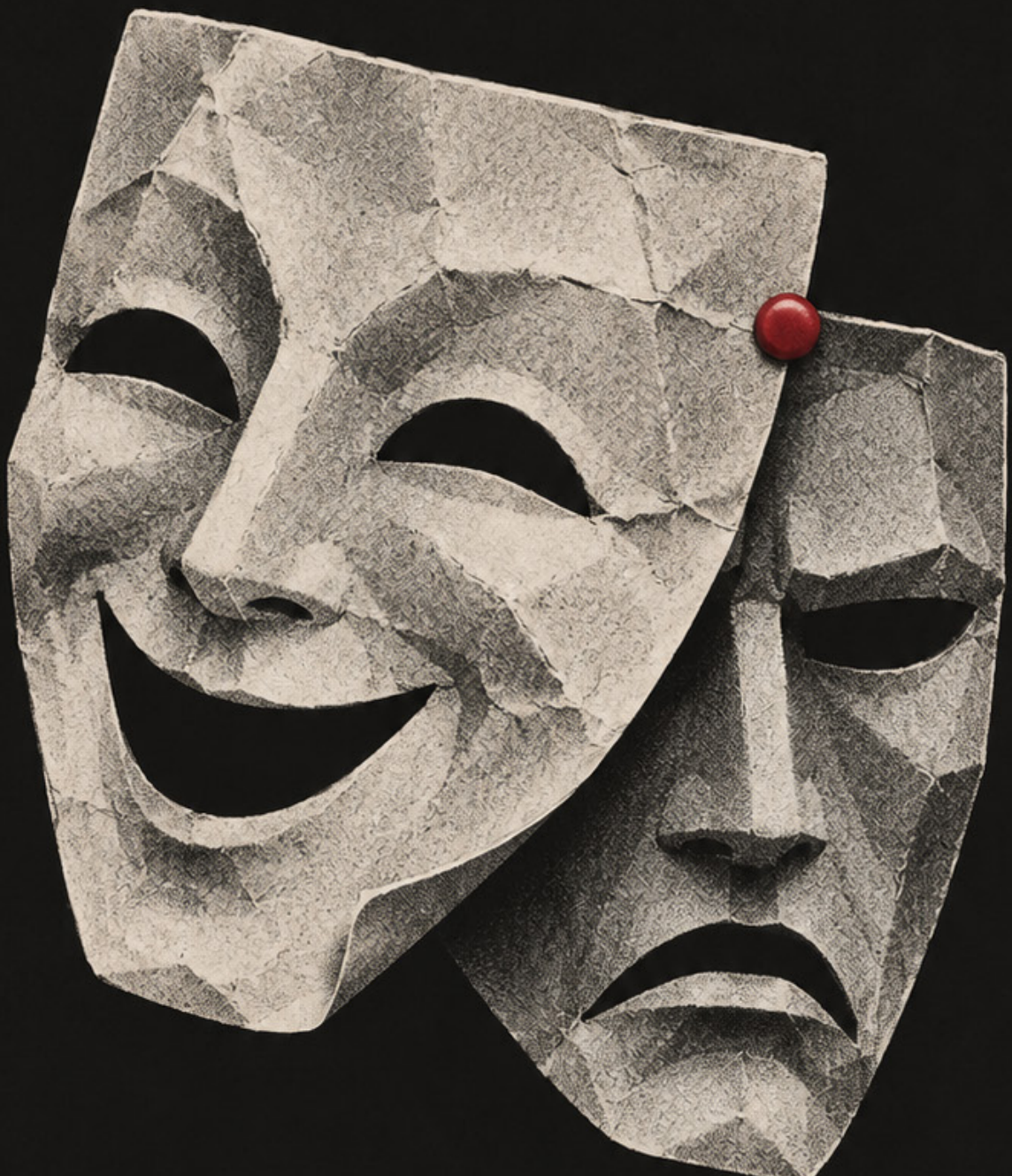
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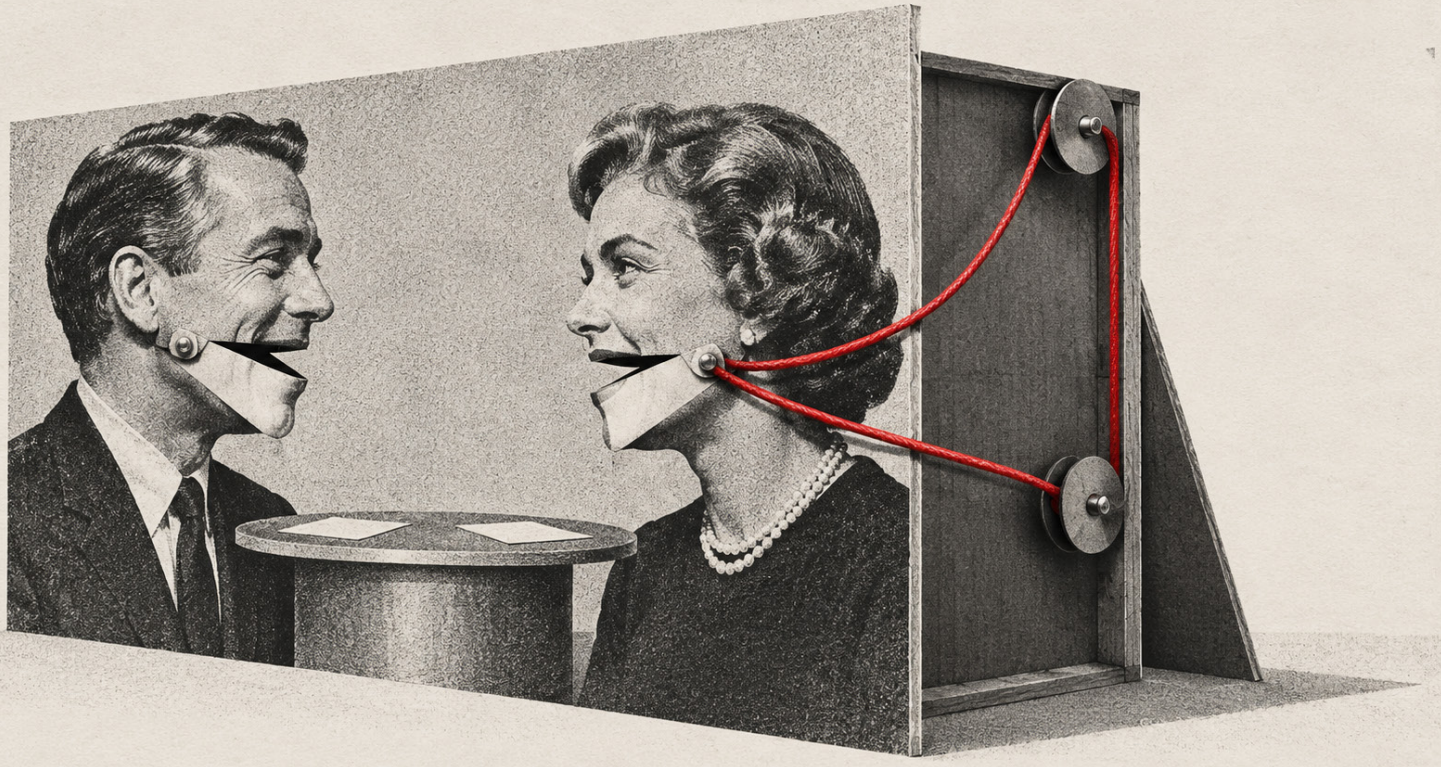
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False Paradigms of 'Moderation'

As previously published in Chronicles: A Magazine for American Renewal

By Paul Gottfried

A young man who is active in Republican politics engaged me in conversation last weekend at the True Texas Project conference in Fort Worth. He was deeply disturbed that "radical Democrats" were taking over the city council in Austin and mentioned how hard he was working to make sure "moderate Democrats" would win local elections instead. Since Republicans were not likely to prevail in these contests, it seemed to him that the next best thing was to support "moderates" on the other side.

When I asked my interlocutor why he thought this was the best course to follow, he was nonplussed. He simply assumed an alliance between conservatives and what looked like the less nutty elements on the left was a reasonable step, if his side couldn't win.

I then asked why he thought the so-called moderates were less noxious than the radicals. After all, these moderates help bring the radicals to power and they are much more likely to form alliances with the radicals than with anyone on the right. At the time this conversation took place, I didn't think of something Chronicles' assistant editor, John Howting, just mentioned to me, which is that one critical reason the "moderates" oppose Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) candidates is that the radicals sometimes sound like right-wing populists.

For example, when a DSA candidate opposes foreign wars because we are spilling blood and treasure in conflicts that don't benefit the American people, that person sounds more like Pat Buchanan than either Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez or National Review's Rich Lowry. The question is not whether the DSA member's argument is entirely true. It's just not something that a typical leftist like AOC or a neocon like Lowry would be likely to say.

Unfortunately, even those with whom I agree on other matters seem wed to a political paradigm that is entirely obsolete, but in which establishment conservatives are deeply invested. We see that paradigm on Bret Baier's Common Ground series on Fox News, which shows apparent evidence of cooperation between "moderates" from both national parties amid "rising political tensions." On Baier's show, we encounter smiling Democrats who happen to be working on some project with bland centrist Republicans, like state control of the internet to make it safer for minors or keeping a certain drug in or off the market. This, we are led to believe, is the wave of the future, if only all of us would embrace this sort of "moderateness" and understand that American democracy requires the present two-party system.

But what do we do if one of our national parties, won't consent to a law like the SAVE America Act ensuring that only citizens may vote? What if this party wants to pack the Supreme Court with Democratic stooges, and incites riots to keep as future voters 10 to 15 million illegals, whom they brought into the country and now subsidize? Wishing to make "common cause" with such a party, outside of a few pedestrian issues, may be unrealistic in our current critical situation.

Moreover, it was the same moderates who were in power under Joe Biden who caused all the mischief I've described. Why should we on the right lift a finger to help them now?

I've no idea why anyone would trust these rogues, since they would likely go on pushing their woke agenda while trying to reopen the borders. These bridge-builders to the left bear the same relationship to the DSA militants as the allegedly less radical Girondists who paved the way for the more radical Jacobins during the French Revolution. It was the Girondists who declared war on "counter-revolutionary states" and started persecuting "enemies of the revolution" even before the Jacobins succeeded to power in 1793.

One obvious reason this obsolete paradigm won't go away is that it serves obvious neoconservative ends, not least of which is that these so-called moderate Democrats are friendlier to Israel than the DSA. We are supposed to imagine that we have a centrist politics, with moderate conservatives and a moderate left with which we can share common ground. Fox News and other Murdoch outlets underline this theme nonstop, arranging for paid Democratic and left-of-center opposition figures, who yap affably with GOP regulars on our TV screens. Occasionally, some of Fox's conservative stars, like Tucker Carlson, Michelle Malkin, and Ann Coulter, stray off the ranch, but there are other certified conservatives to take their places and schmooze with Juan Williams, Jessica Tarlov, and numerous other obliging Democrats.

This is the never-ending Potemkin Village that the Murdoch family provides for our edification, and it is meant to indicate who the conservative establishment wants us to believe are the good guys and gals in American political contests. These acceptable adversaries do not include the "radicals" or anyone to the right of the establishment media. All these nice people support Middle Eastern wars and, in some cases, would like to enlarge them. Everyone in the authorized conversations is for woke moral positions, providing they don't involve gender-affirming surgery for children or overly exhibitionist gay pride parades. None of this has anything to do with our raging ideological polarization or the fact that many Americans (including this writer) stand outside of the permissible range of political and cultural opinions presented by the Fox News "moderates."

Addendum: On Tuesday I reached for my barf bag as the Murdoch-owned New York Post explained one last time that "Democratic centrist Haley Stevens" is fighting the "far leftist" Abdul El-Sayed for a U.S. Senate seat in Michigan. As I explained in another commentary earlier this week, while the woke chatterbox Stevens, who is the AIPAC candidate, could beat her Republican opponent, Mike Rogers, El-Sayed would probably lose by several points. Please point me to the real center, assuming it exists!

Remigration or Irrelevance

By Josh Meyer

Doesn't it feel great grandstanding on how virtuous we are and how much we revere the Constitution? We put our heads down on the pillow at night with a smile knowing we got absolutely defeated and the rapid decline of America is inevitable, but at least we did our best and we followed the rules. That is the old Republican Party-happy to lose elections and their country so long as they can claim the moral high ground in their increasing Fox News guest spots.

We don't have much time left to vote our way out of the decline of America. The massive immigrant bloc vote and city doom loop communist skells made that very clear when they elected Mamdani.

The divide and conquer playbook used on the Republican Party has worked flawlessly as the MAGA Civil War casualties stack up. Arguing with friends over minutiae while our enemies open the gates and subvert us is what's happening.

There are legitimate grievances within the party that need to be settled at some point. America's relationship with the Israeli government and the handling of the Epstein files are at the core of the rift in the Republican Party.

For the last 30 years, Iran has been two weeks away from building a nuclear missile that could blah-blah-blah. Israel is apparently our greatest ally in the Middle East, therefore America must provide the money, blood, and reputational loss to carry out whatever military actions the Israeli government demands of us. For whoever needs to hear this, being critical of Israel's government is not antisemitic. That trick doesn't work anymore. Nice try though.

Vast amounts of Republican power and support have been lost because of our entanglement in Israel's war and the mishandling of the release of the Epstein files. Salvage what support we still have left and deliver on the promises made to the patriots who elected President Trump, chiefly, making America America again.

Pandering to immigrants for their votes only works for Democrats, not Republicans. Democrats have so much more to offer them. It's honestly a pretty sweet deal. Free everything, protected class status, zero requirements to assimilate, chain migration, etc. Republicans can't offer that, so stop trying to win them over at the expense of selling out the people whose ancestors built this country.

As we saw in New York City in 2025 with the election of Muslim South Asian Mamdani, the weight of the immigrant bloc vote is undeniable. He received 87% of the South Asian vote and 90% of the Muslim vote. Mamdani said in his acceptance speech that he could not have won without the immigrant vote. When we say the same thing, it's considered racist. Funny how that works.



We don't have much time left to vote our way out of the decline of America.



We carefully plan our lives and delay having children well into our thirties so that we are in a responsible financial position to raise children. The Third World hordes invited in by the Democrats do not allow their poor financial situation to get in the way of having as many children as possible.

Our burden of paying for the First World standard of living we are accustomed to and our generally smaller family size preference exacerbates our demographic replacement.

We pay the taxes to subsidize raising their children and then they outnumber us. Then they outvote us. You think this sounds like racist fearmongering? Take a walk around Queens and get back to me. Look at the statistics. 48% of Queens residents are foreign born. The Democrats loudly denounce these facts while at the same time they openly cheer on the replacement of Heritage Americans with Third Worlders.

A shock and awe campaign to denaturalize "paperwork Americans" who obtained citizenship through fraudulent means needs to happen immediately. Incentive and welfare type programs for immigrants also need to be cancelled. Once American natives are all thriving then we can look into giving immigrants handouts. Over hundreds of years, the country was built by immigrants who were allowed to come here because they had something to offer not something to take.

With the crushing blow of the Supreme Court upholding birthright citizenship based on a perversion of the 14th Amendment's original intent of granting citizenship to freed slaves, the impetus for legal and illegal immigrants to surge the country has never been stronger.

Birthright citizenship needs to be Constitutionally ended. It's laughable as a concept. There are only a handful of countries on Earth with this policy. Where are these places? They have to be those countries you've never heard of or forgot even exist until you see a single lonely person waving their flag in the opening ceremony of the Olympics, right? Nope, The United States of America has birthright citizenship and we are damned proud of it.

Talk to any leftist and even a lot of so-called Republicans and they will tell you if someone is born on American soil then they are automatically as American as Abraham Lincoln or Neil Armstrong. Ask the same leftist,

"If you gave birth while vacationing in beautiful Haiti, is your child Haitian?"

Enjoy the sound of ums and ahs while they try to figure out if it's cultural appropriation to describe baby Milo as Haitian or if they need to stick to their principals and say that anyone born in any jurisdiction is unquestionably a citizen of that place. It's a total scam and every honest person knows it. Baby Milo is not Haitian.

Another scam is the H-1B visa program. We don't need any H-1Bs, unless the visa holder is quite literally curing cancer or is in a niche scientific industry. The libertarian free market and meritocratic argument of hiring the cheapest and most qualified person for the job sounds fair in theory. In practice, hiring foreigners willing to work for low wages drives down the wages of American natives and introduces a vast amount of foreign nationals into America who will be one step closer to becoming voters, most likely democratic voters.

The "temporary" in Temporary Protected Status of "refugees" is a joke while birthright citizenship is in effect. What miniscule percentage of these refugees did not have an anchor baby while staying on our soil? They are not going anywhere as it stands.

Voter ID laws are common sense, but Democrats have literally admitted that it will hurt their chances of getting elected if passed. Democrats, who are these would-be voters without IDs who are essential, in your own words, to getting you elected? I think we know who.

Widescale deportations of illegals need to be done expeditiously and unapologetically. It has to be done humanely, but we are not going to be emotionally manipulated into conceding on amnesty. I am sure most of the illegals are nice, hardworking people with tragic and heartwarming stories from their lives. That is a nonfactor. If you are illegal you are going home. Let's be adults and not make decisions based on our emotions so we can preserve our country. The scare tactics and false propaganda from the Left caused the Trump administration to put the Border Patrol and ICE into a handcuffed holding pattern. So far, "the party of empathy" and its militant wing of Antifa and retired librarians have been an insurmountable opponent for immigration enforcement.

Red state patriots don't quite feel the demographic shift yet or they write it off as just a city problem. Increasingly, red states are finding out how quickly things can change. Just look at the proposed East Plano Islamic Center City in Texas, a 400 acre 1000 unit community. When that town is built, there will be no chance of a Republican candidate winning an election there in order to undo the Islamification of that piece of Texas. That patch of land is no longer America. That community is the blueprint for the rest of the West.

Dearborn, Michigan is 55% Muslim. The Muslim mayor told a pastor to leave town because the pastor dared to push back on the city naming a street after a Muslim Hamas and Hezbollah supporter. Muslims took over Dearborn and there is no way to change that at the ballot box. The demographics reached the tipping point needed in order to establish an unbeatable voting bloc.

We need to take our country back soon or we will not be able to vote our way out of the problems we are facing.

The Republican Party will only be an ineffectual theoretical debate platform, like the Libertarian Party, if we do not put all our efforts into remigration now.



#Pizzagate: A Case Study

By Kitty Sprague

The fall of 2016 marked the rise of #Pizzagate, the unfounded conspiracy theory that, according to the BBC, "a pedophilia ring involving people at the highest levels of the Democratic Party is operating out of a Washington pizza restaurant." Sitting in class at Columbia University two years later I once blurted out a different conspiracy theory, one of many about the Clintons, in response to a comment my professor made about Hillary. Of course, I was laughed off. "That's like Pizzagate!" exclaimed another student, clearly assuming that since Pizzagate is a false rumor he had heard about these high-level Democrats—namely the Clintons— that what I was saying about them must be false as well. There was nothing I could do or say to get the other students to believe me. Pizzagate was too powerful.

If you believe at least some of the myriad conspiracy theories out there about the Democrats—such as the Clintons or maybe even Obama or other politicians—and tried to tell someone, you've probably had a similar experience. Or maybe you never even tried because you figured they'd never believe you. Some of the theories out there are extremely scandalous, and if ever publicly proven true would induce mass chaos and confusion throughout the country. Much finger pointing about who knew but supported them anyway would ensue.

Despite its murky origins, Pizzagate is not just some random conspiracy theory that got traction on the internet because a bunch of Clinton-hating right-wing trolls decided to make up something about them, as is the narrative in mainstream coverage. Is Pizzagate true? No. However, an analysis of its effects on the population suggest it was started by left-wing sock puppets, political operatives posing as ordinary people on the internet. They were probably organized by a pro-Clinton group such as Media Matters for America, with the intent of keeping some other similar rumors that may be true quiet.

To understand how this could be, we first need to understand some basics about propaganda and conspiracy theories. Propaganda, of which Pizzagate is a prime example, works by leading victims to a conclusion but in such a way that they think that it is their own independent conclusion. It is processed via what are known as automatic processes in the brain, which are unconscious, so the victim does not realize they are being deceived. Pizzagate was designed to be perceived as patently absurd so it would be written off, but it has enough in common with other, more damaging Clinton rumors to be believed and consequently spread by people willing to believe Pizzagate, likely because they also believe these other conspiracy theories.

Importantly, there are two kinds of common knowledge. The first is obvious things, such as the fact that the sun rises in the morning. The second kind the propagandist knows you know but could plausibly assume others do not. Commonly the propagandist will explain this kind of common knowledge to earn the reader's trust so he can feed more lies. A common knowledge example pertaining to conspiracy theories is that people who are willing to believe things outside mainstream thought are generally willing to believe things that are deeply ludicrous or, at worst, literally impossible.

Pizzagate leads the typical leftist who rejects it to two conclusions. First, it subliminally creates a concept in their minds that people who believe Pizzagate and other related conspiracy theories—and hence oppose the Democratic Party—are gullible idiots. Pizzagate has also likely been astroturfed, made to seem like more people believe it than actually do to bolster this effect. Second, it creates a self-concept that they are the smart ones for rejecting it. These leftists understand that people who are not thinking along mainstream lines are vulnerable to believing falsities, and think, at least on a subliminal level, that they are smart for knowing this and rejecting lies.

This arrogance also makes them more resistant to changing their views because their own self-image is at stake if they are wrong.

Like all propaganda, Pizzagate also has behavioral goals—in this case for both believers and nonbelievers. By mixing possible truth with lies, the propaganda causes believers to spot what they believe to be true or nearly true and consequently believe the lies. Seeking to discredit the right, the media will also perpetuate the idea that many on the right believe it. Nonbelievers on the other hand will spot the obvious falsity and write off any truth presented alongside it. Thus, I was unable to convince my fellow students that Hillary Clinton is bad news.

Pizzagate is far from alone in the world of disinformation campaigns; QAnon, a prominent conspiracy theory originating on 4chan, a message board famous for containing highly dubious information, mysteriously first appeared in 2017. An anonymous source claiming to have high-level access to government secrets, Q has posted numerous damaging claims about high-level Democrats, in addition to other far-fetched ones. Subsequent accounts ending in "anon" allegedly from other government agencies have continued the conspiracy theory.

A Google search will suggest QAnon grew out of Pizzagate, though it likely does not come from the left as it contains claims the Democrats would never want the public exposed to, even paired with obviously false claims. Unsurprisingly, newscaster Savannah Guthrie, working for left-wing NBC News, once tried to pressure Trump to denounce it in a 2024 interview (she failed). Given the extent to which QAnon has been promoted by right-wing figures, it may well be Trump behind it. It certainly has gained significant traction in right-wing circles.

QAnon is more than your average disinformation conspiracy theory. Whoever is behind it is engaging in an extremely sophisticated effort to manipulate public opinion. As with Pizzagate, it probably seeks to influence believers and, by manipulating the press, non-believers. It very clearly is mixing fact and fiction, for example. Any extrapolations from it could also well be false—after all, propaganda deliberately often leads people to incorrect conclusions. Ultimately, whoever is behind it may well be accomplishing more than one objective with it, though one can only speculate what those goals might be. Are there truths in there that are not obvious truths that Q wants kept secret? Maybe. Its claim that Mueller and Trump were conspiring together is not impossible.

For the most part, the most well-known conspiracy theories out there are either disinformation campaigns or they're true. But how do we know what is true when there is so much out there to deceive us? Realistically, we cannot always know, all we can do is be self-aware. Understanding basic propaganda techniques such as mixing fact and fiction can help you to avoid some of the cognitive traps these theories set. What's more, people tend to want answers and are uncomfortable with ambiguity. Catch yourself if you find yourself jumping to conclusions. Feel free to delay judgement if you don't feel you have sufficient information to make an educated guess. Ask yourself: is this conspiracy theory even theoretically possible? Additionally, if you think about people's motives you start to see things you wouldn't otherwise see. Does anyone gain from this conspiracy theory? If yes, who? Finally, a single random person alone cannot bring about a prominent conspiracy theory like Pizzagate. Think about how the conspiracy theory is playing out among people and see what you can find out about how it got started.

If indeed many of these conspiracy theories are true remains to be seen. The Trump administration likely cannot arrest high profile Democrats for any major crimes, even despite a practically infinite amount of evidence, because the press will too easily pronounce it "political revenge" and convince at least half the population, which does not want to believe it in the first place, to reject the charges. All the loyal Democrat voters would have to face the fact that they've been supporting a lie all along and would resist facing the truth as much as possible. This is why charges of this magnitude from a Trump administration would sink the Republican Party and enable the Democrats to seize permanent power in Washington D.C. by packing the Supreme Court, as they have vowed to do. However, if indeed these rumors are true, exposing them would certainly be vital to the preservation of the Republic. The question remains: could a subsequent Republican president with more mainstream, anti-Trump credentials make it happen? Perhaps. The jury is still out.



Ditching the Conspiracy Theory Drug

By Brooke Brandtjen

Young Americans are fully aware that they're growing up in the age of disinformation. The Covid pandemic radicalized an entire generation of previously apolitical students, who suddenly realized that their parents, teachers, and worst of all, the entire federal government, could disenfranchise their entire lives on a whim. The subsequent trial of Anthony Fauci, in which he pleaded the fifth dozens and dozens of times, proved that one power hungry doctor was willing to wreck the entire social fabric in service of his own vanity.

While Covid is perhaps the largest misinformation operation of our lifetime, there have been many others, ranging from Russiagate to the Hunter Biden laptop. The "Fine People" hoax, the Twitter files, and the Fauci diaries all proved that there were nefarious influencers intentionally seeking to discredit conservatives. Republicans have been targeted by the deep state and subversive Democrats. In the past few decades, the left has enacted schemes a thousand times worse than Watergate.

It's easy to be cynical and conservatives have a right to be conspiratorial, yet part of rebuilding trust is through verification. The Trump administration has repeatedly proven that there have been plots to influence American politics. Earlier this year, Marco Rubio and the State Department revealed that Cuba had been engaged in a decades-long operation of infiltrating and affecting U.S. politics. The small country used its limited resources to slowly train groups of radical communists before sending them into America. Cuba has been responsible for some of the most dangerous terrorist organizations, such as The Weather Underground, as well as helping orchestrate militant Black Power groups and BLM.

President Trump also released a slew of previously classified documents pertaining to China that revealed how the communist regime had been interfering in American elections and stealing American voters' personal data. China, much like Cuba, had also been attempting to infiltrate the U.S. media, using influencers and establishment media personalities to stoke racial tensions and undermine Trump in 2020. The Trump administration has gone out of its way to release reports proving that these schemes were fact, not fiction.

In light of these circumstances, it's hard not to want to grab a tinfoil hat and start giving credence to every conspiracy theory that stumbles across your X feed. Some of them are very entertaining, like the Mark Zuckerberg is a lizard joke that's been circulating for years, while others have more dire consequences (Ahem, Candace Owens). In moments of anger and frustration, we are all susceptible to conspiratorial thinking, theorizing about who really killed JFK or whether or not Americans landed on the moon.

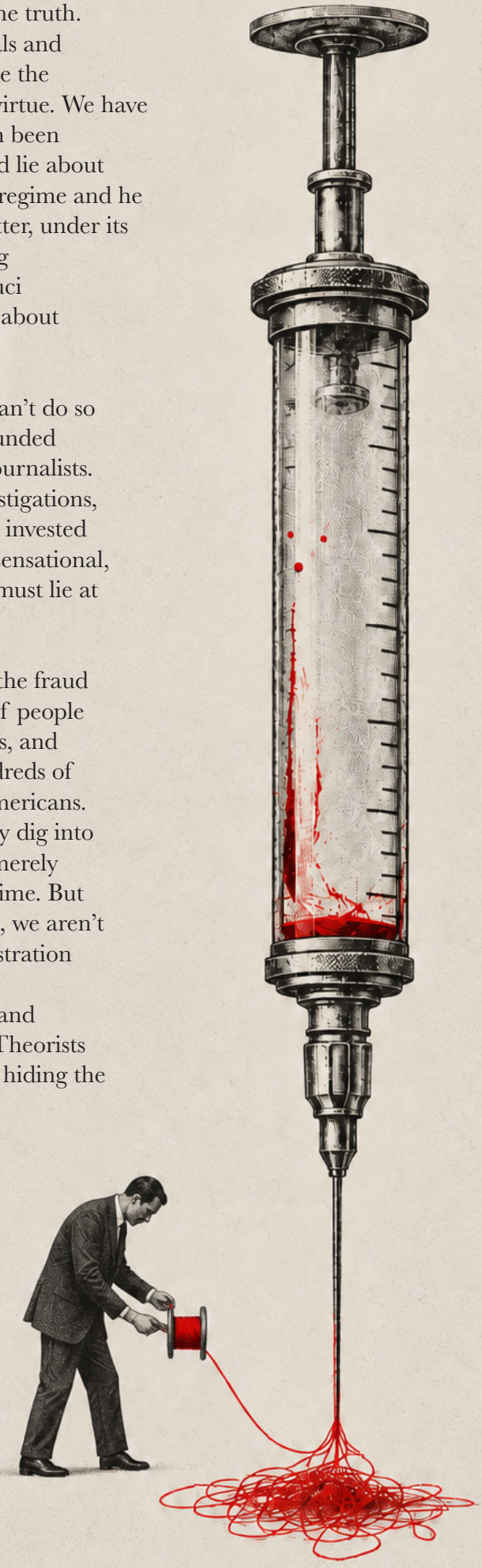
In high school, I had a history teacher who would get breathlessly angry when students suggested the moon landing was fake. Kids used to bring it up to ragebait him, knowing it would lead to a twenty-minute monologue that would eat up class time. But his rationale for outrage was correct: The conspiracy that America never went to the moon intentionally undermines American exceptionalism. The consequence of endless theorizing done with little evidence, is that we erode the accomplishments of great American heroes. The theory sabotages our own history.

As conservatives, it is our duty to seek out the truth. If the Democrats are the party of untethered morals and policy based on feelings, the Republicans need to be the party of unwavering honesty and policy based on virtue. We have every right to question authority, and we have often been vindicated in our quest to do so. Hillary Clinton did lie about Donald Trump being a puppet for Putin's Russian regime and he never called white supremacists "fine people"; Twitter, under its previous owner, was censoring and shadow banning conservative accounts and journalists; Anthony Fauci knowingly lied about the origins of Covid and lied about the efficacy of the vaccine.

However, if we want to seek the truth, we can't do so through specious claims, finger-pointing, and unfounded allegations. Conservatives need to become better journalists. Our pursuit of truth must lead to hard-hitting investigations, pursued over the course of time by people who are invested in discovering the truth. Sometimes the truth isn't sensational, and it frequently feels a little unsatisfying, but that must lie at the heart of our movement.

Until Nick Shirely investigated it, much of the fraud in Minnesota was a "conspiracy theory." Rumors of people stealing money, funneling it through false businesses, and taking advantage of the system to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, sounded fake to mainstream Americans. All it took was one ambitious young man to actually dig into the facts for the truth to surface. Conspiracies are merely defined as "secret plans," and they happen all the time. But unless we are proving them to be true in good faith, we aren't making any progress. Last year, the Trump administration released a bevy of documents regarding the JFK assassination, which provided no new information and confirmed what all previous evidence had shown. Theorists alleged that a vague and nefarious "them" was still hiding the truth. Of course, they had no proof.

The question lying behind this is, ultimately, how does this help the conservative movement? If we want to create progress and make a meaningful impact, we can't subject ourselves to the doomer position that everything is a conspiracy and all is lost. We must stake a claim in the truth, seeking out what is honest and good with the intended purpose of preserving and saving America.





Alea Iacta Est

Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon

By Matthew Perry

The sloping snow heaps quilted the hidden earth.
He warmed his hands inside the saddle's girth.

The mustering men's steel shields clanged on scabbards,
some tents were folded, under the chirping of birds,

even in winter's depths, the birds sang tunes,
a chiming symphony above snow dunes.

Scraping snow off their tents, the legionnaires
moved swiftly to assemble in their squares.

When Quintus Cassius and Antony
arrived, he gave a speech on being free,

and never yielding to senators too fat
to brave snow, ride a horse, or face combat.

He mounted his horse as all the men dispersed.
His steed went from a trot to rapid burst.

A looming snowdrift made his horse slow, halt.
He led through snow mounds past a catapult.

First Cohort crossed a frozen river's flow,
their march deaf to distant words from Cicero.

It's Hip to be Square:

How Radical Posturing Engineers Girard's Surrogate Victim

By Nick Barnes

Every political movement eventually accumulates more internal tension than it has the means to resolve. In an organized institution, that tension gets managed through formal channels, votes, leadership decisions, or expulsion by rule. Political movements rarely have any of that. Anyone can show up, claim a seat, and call himself a believer. And a movement already losing ground on the national stage is the least equipped of all to turn anyone away. The tension has to go somewhere else, and since it cannot be resolved through argument, it looks instead for a person to attach itself to. The anthropologist and philosopher René Girard spent his career studying exactly this kind of resolution, the way primitive communities without formal mechanisms for handling internal conflict settle it instead onto a single member, and the pattern he identified in archaic religion applies with uncomfortable precision to the ordinary man who throws himself into a movement's most extreme wing believing he is proving his loyalty. Functionally, your based zealot is often just volunteering himself as a sacrificial outlet.

A particular kind of person falls for this. They're usually unremarkable ne'er do-wells who disguise their fetish for self-flagellation as integrity. While this archetype has always existed, today it has burgeoned online where nothing is being built because the crowd being performed for does not vote, does not donate, and does not organize. They can't; most of them aren't citizens but more on that later. This act of online theater becomes the entire opus of the agents political action and since nothing is ever good enough, nothing needs to be accomplished. Best to just relax and let the chips fall where they may, then, from the ruins they will pick up the pieces and rule.

Girard's scapegoat mechanism, developed across *Violence and the Sacred* and later *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, holds that communities under internal strain resolve their tensions not through reasoned adjudication but through convergence on a single victim. Tribal communities under the pressure of internal rivalry and resentment would converge on a figure to absorb the violence threatening to tear the group apart, and the critical detail here is that figure's position relative to the group. Girard describes the ideal candidate as an "exterior or marginal individual," someone integrated enough to be recognized but never so central that removal would provoke retaliation from within the community itself. Too close a kinship to the group and the sacrifice fails as it would be starting a feud rather than ending one which is why the victim had to sit close enough to absorb the group's disorder and far enough away that no one would care to avenge him.

Girard believes that sacrifice exists to protect a community from its own violence by prompting it to choose victims from outside itself. The mechanism depends on the outsider status of the one sacrificed just as much as it depends on concealment of the intention of the act. The community cannot recognize what it is doing, or the ritual loses its power to unify. Guilt gets assigned retroactively, and the myth of that guilt becomes the story the group tells itself about why the crisis happened at all.



You can map this structure onto political organizations, movements, parties quite well. A movement manages its internal frictions well enough to function, but pressure accumulates regardless of strategy, resources, and who gets credit when things go well. When that pressure requires release, the group rarely identifies its actual structural cause and looks instead for what Girard would call the surrogate victim. This is the member of the tribe who throws himself furthest to the extreme on every question, ostracizing himself from the core group, hoping to be noticed and rewarded for his conviction. Staying inside a coalition's actual structure, fighting from within rather than styling oneself as its extreme edge, is therefore not a failure of nerve but closer to structural self-preservation, and Girard's framework suggests it is the more rational position, not the more timid one.

The Republican Party's own founding appears to complicate this argument, and it is worth addressing directly rather than around it. The GOP began as a breakaway movement against an establishment, Whig and Democrat alike, that had failed to confront the defining crisis of its era, slavery, and it is tempting to read that history as proof radicalism can win. Through a Girardian lens, it actually proves something much narrower. The party system of the 1850s was not a stable order experiencing ordinary internal friction. Whigs ousted their their own sitting President in 1841 but this was insufficient as a surrogate victim (remember the victim must be on the fringe to assume guilt). It was in full collapse, a genuine sacrificial crisis in Girard's sense, a moment when the existing mechanisms for managing conflict had already failed entirely and a new order had to form or the old one would come apart. A new center emerged because the coalition's founding mechanisms no longer worked at all, not because rank and file members postured at the edge of an otherwise functioning party. Almost no member caught up in today's radical fringe is operating in that condition. Extremity gets performed inside a coalition that remains functional, and the effect is not the founding of anything new so much as the marking of a boundary for an order that already exists, letting everyone else define the acceptable center by pointing at what stands outside it.

A second mechanism runs alongside the first, and it is in some respects crueler. The overzealous member is not always expelled by his own coalition. Just as often, he is adopted by the opposing one instead. Girard's account of mimetic rivalry describes how opposing sides do not simply hate each other, they become fixated on each other, treating the other as what he calls a model and obstacle. An adversary that must be simultaneously defeated and needed. The eternal, you become what you hate rule. Two financiers locked in competition attended different but similar Ivy League schools, go to different but similar social clubs, work in different but similar financial institutions and yet say: “I can’t stand that guy, we couldn’t be less similar.” A highly visible extremist is useful to an opposing coalition precisely because he is easy to point to and easy to caricature as representative of the whole. He also attacks his own tribe, offering more ammunition to the memetic rival, even openly advocating for protest votes in the adversary’s favor. Yet, the moment a more useful foil appears, or the rivalry itself moves on, the arrangement ends without ceremony because partnership was never really on offer and their usefulness to anyone has died.

The online apparatus that manufactures a sense of deserved scrutiny in its own right, because it rarely reflects what it claims to. When X began labeling where its users actually post from, it accidentally answered a question the loudest accounts had spent years avoiding, namely, who is actually listening. The results were not flattering. Independent researchers tracking the rollout identified prominent accounts pushing "America First" content that turned out to be posting from Eastern Europe, Morocco and Pakistan.

The scale beneath these individual cases is larger and more organized than a handful of exposed accounts suggests. An analysis published by the Network Contagion Research Institute documented entire networks built around this same branding, accounts using "America First" language while tied to coordinated bot farms, with account creation timed to spike at politically opportune moments and synchronized amplification of identical narratives during a crisis. The genuine psychological disorientation among the American audiences consuming it is sufficient enough to magnify domestic schisms and erode trust in the coalition.

Researchers at Clemson University's Media Forensics Hub identified a domestic network of at least 686 accounts that posted more than 130,000 times in a matter of months, using large language models to generate replies that simulated grassroots enthusiasm for specific candidates in live Senate and primary races. No clear foreign sponsor was identified, and the operation's focus on particular American political contests pointed instead to a domestic effort manufacturing the appearance of consensus where none organically existed. Even setting aside coordinated operations entirely, the baseline distortion is substantial. Published estimates place the share of bot accounts on the platform at 9 to 15 percent, with that share rising specifically around the contested political moments when a movement most wants to believe its crowd is real. None of this proves that any particular audience is fabricated, but it does establish that chasing the loudest applause offers no reliable way of distinguishing signal from manufactured noise, and the habit of trying has generally been abandoned. The size of the bot farm gets mistaken for the size of the "movement", and an entire political identity gets built on a measurement that was never real.

The hard numbers crush the fantasy though. A YouGov poll conducted between October and November of 2025 found that only 4 percent of Americans between 18 and 29 describe their own politics as far-right. That is the smallest share of any age bracket measured, lower than the figures for 30- to 44-year-olds, 45- to 64-year-olds, and those 65 and older. The same poll found that 14 percent of that age group identify as far-left, the highest share of any bracket. Staking an identity on being the most extreme voice on the right, at that age, is therefore not riding some rising wave, and the numbers do not even make the position representative of its own generation. Most of his peers will never meet another person who claims that same position, sacrificing himself to a movement that, statistically, hardly exists. Completely ruining his own life for the sake of a meme and thus rendering himself permanently impotent.

The mechanism almost functions like a plumbing system by removing its most inept and useless actors. The farther out toward the fringe a member drifts, the more thoroughly he quarantines himself from anyone who might otherwise take him seriously. The instinct to fix this by recruiting, by trying to drag the fringe into the mainstream and expand the faction, only accelerates the process. Reaching outward does not produce a more central position. It confirms to everyone watching exactly how dangerous the association has become, and the tribe responds by pushing the offending member further to the edge rather than following him toward it. A following and a voter base are not the same audience, no matter how identical they look from inside a timeline.

Both paths, expulsion by one's own coalition and adoption by the opposing one, terminate the same way. The mechanism is the one Girard identified in tribal law, where an outsider absorbs the group's accumulated tension and is released without ceremony, because the function was never to belong so much as to be visible. What should give pause to the rank and file member drawn to the posture of maximal radicalism is that no conspiracy is required to produce this outcome. Nobody arranges it. There is no ambush, only an audition for the role, offered up publicly and repeatedly, with the attention it earns mistaken for actual influence. The coalition does not need to search for its boundary marker. The position has already been volunteered for.

We often hear about the soul of a nation from parties and factions who claim to be its rightful arbiters, as though the soul were an empty vessel waiting for whichever movement shouts loudest to fill it. It is not. The soul is the tribe itself, built slowly over centuries by people who did the actual work of building it. That alone already gives it a shape, inherited rather than invented, that every new arrival is asked to join rather than replace. Every generation produces someone convinced his particular conviction should be the one exception, the belief so urgent it finally earns the right to remake the whole inheritance in its own image. The tribe's entire history is the record of that insistence failing. It absorbs what strengthens it and quietly lets go of what only ever wanted to replace it, and the fringe actor described throughout this piece is only the latest and smallest version of a pattern the tribe has survived many times before, usually without even remembering his name. The change that strengthens the soul, however, is different. It's like the voice within us, quiet and from within.





President Stefano L. Forte's Speech at CPAC Hungary

"A Constellation of Nationalisms"

Delivered March 21, 2026

Hello everyone, my name is Stefano Forte, and I am the 77th President of the New York Young Republican Club; The largest and oldest Young Republican Club in the country, with nearly 2,000 members.

I would like to thank Miklos Szantho, The Center for Fundamental Rights, the entire CPAC Hungary team, the entire NYYRC delegation including our Policy Chairman Dovid Holtzman and our Design Chairwoman Becky, who happens to be my beautiful fiancée.

We are here today in CPAC Hungary, representatives of the greatest nations in the world, joined by a common purpose: we do not want to lose our countries. We gather as Western civilization reorganizes itself against a dual threat, a terrible threat, a threat that requires a contribution from each of us to resolve. First, eight decades after the founding of the United Nations, and forty-five years after the fall of the Soviet Union, we are finally understanding the consequences of liberalism and the failures of the rules-based international order which has failed to provide rules OR order, and has only served the interest of the international globalist elite.

Second, we face the threat of mass immigration of non-Western people to our nations, and the gradual loss of our national identities. The great values that once built the West – Christianity, the European Enlightenment, and Anglo-American liberties – are in decline in the same lands where they once arose. They are in decline because a society built on moral relativism cannot stand. Relativism is incapable of defending ***any*** set of moral values – including the value of civilization itself.

Under Prime Minister Viktor Orban's leadership, Hungary, more specifically Budapest, has emerged as the international capital of conservatism. We, representatives of the West, are united in this room as a constellation of nationalisms and we are united by a desire to find a new path for our countries, a new path that will emerge from the ash-heap of liberalism.

If Budapest has become the international capital of the right wing then New York City has become the international capital of the left wing. Nothing made that more clear than the election of

Zohran Mamdani. Zohran Mamdani is the culmination of decades of runaway migration, he himself a legal immigrant who hates his host country in charge of its greatest city. He is the perfect example of an unassimilated immigrant.

Two weeks ago, two terrorists, inspired by ISIS, threw a nail bomb at a group of right-wing protestors in New York. By the grace of God, the bomb failed and untold lives were saved. Instead of condemning the terrorists, Mayor Mamdani initially condemned only the protestors – calling them "despicable and Islamophobic." The next day he started his speech about the bombing citing white supremacy as a contributing factor. 25 years after 9/11, New Yorkers have forgotten who we are.

But some of us have not forgotten.

We have not forgotten that a people – with their God, Family, and sovereign land – are what makes a nation. We must remember this so we can remember who we are.

In 1686, during the siege of Buda by the Holy League, a wall of the Mattias church - used as a mosque by the Ottoman occupiers of the city - collapsed due to cannon fire. It turned out that an old Madonna statue was hidden behind the wall. As the sculpture of the Virgin Mary appeared before the praying Muslims, the morale of the Ottoman garrison collapsed and the Hungarian morale rose with a holy fervor.

The city was liberated on the same day.
Invaders may occupy our lands but they can never occupy what is in our walls or what is in our heart or soul.
Sometimes we just need reminding.

The ideological retaking of New York, Berlin, London, Constantinople, Paris, and Prague is worth this fight because our sovereignty is worth it, Western Civilization is worth it, our faith in Christ is worth it.

If we pretend all values are equal, then Western civilization is just a value among values.

Remember who you are, Westerner! New Yorker! Hungarian! Do not let your legacy become the past, because your brightest future is yet before you. Our God and our forefathers have granted us this legacy. Our forefathers fought and died to give us our inheritance. We cannot be the generation that squanders it.

Preserving our countries demands not the worst in us, war and imperialism, missiles and bombs, but the best in us: a sincere love for our sons and daughters, a reverence for our past, and prayers for our future. It demands faith and honor; it demands a deep, abiding faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the affirmation of our Christian heritage.

Westerners, we CANNOT REVERSE, so we must move forward. We CANNOT give up, so we must push on. For the love of our fathers and for the love of Christ, it is our sacred duty to bear our crosses and continue. This is why the New York Young Republican Club is proud, honored, and thrilled to endorse Viktor Orban for Prime Minister of Hungary in the coming election. He is one of the few men who could assist our great President Donald J. Trump bring peace to Europe, Prime Minister Orbán is the proud creator of the constellation of nationalisms united at CPAC Hungary, the man who made Budapest the international capital of conservatism, and the leader Hungary deserves.

God bless Hungary, God Bless the New York Young Republican Club and God Bless the United States of America.

Departure

By Matthew Perry

Departure has sometimes been the path they called
him up for, in the contract he never read.
He'd find his strength, like a warship's steel bulkhead.
Just past the submarines and ships and sprawled
rows of wood piers, he reported as decreed
with his new gas mask and fleece. His feet would bleed
from boots too narrow. Over there he would need
dog tags in case they had to know the dead.

He shoved his hands inside his dark peacoat.
Downwind from the destroyer's five-inch gun,
he stood ready to go off and devote
months of his life. They lined up, one by one.
He ignored the empty feeling in his throat.
He would miss the birth of his sister's first-born son.





The Prescient Fight in the Academy:

Why We're Losing & How to Fix It

By Marie Auret

It has long been a mistake of conservatives to believe that a university graduate will "see the real world" and recant the beliefs they learned in college. In fact, most teenagers believe what their professors teach them. A system that goads our high-achieving teenagers into a seminary for progressive ideology, which is what the collegiate liberal arts have amounted to, is a threat. When liberals control the academy, set the terms, own the semiotics, frame the question, they control the logic and aesthetics of the conversation. In turn, we have been utterly incompetent at stopping them.

There are more than 8 leftists for every 1 conservative throughout our collegiate institutions (Langbert). In front of students and in papers which they voluntarily publish, leftists critique white fragility (Diangelo), argue that "white tears" are a form of racism against people of color (LeMesurier), and contend that not judging someone based on their skin color is a form of colorblind racism (Diangelo, 69). They write books about how to dismantle the Christianity's role in politics (Tyler). They teach that transgenderism, the second most watched category on Pornhub in 2025, is the next wave of civil rights (PornHub Insights) (Fyfe). They fiercely believe that to disagree with a man wearing fake breasts is the same as to kill his identity and genocide his people, emotionally at least (Kidd). This follows the logic of how women can be emotionally raped (Coluccia). They write graphic descriptions of anything but male-female intercourse in trendy new fiction such as Stag Dance, Disappoint Me, A/S/L, When the Harvest Comes, et cetera, all of which came out in the past two years from big publishing houses. They use Marxist, Freudian, Deconstructionist lenses to analyze texts that are neither Marxist nor Freudian nor modern in any sense (too many examples to cite). In the social sciences like sociology they make statements concerning BLM. In psychology, they demand that treating the mental health crisis with anti-family, anti-tradition, hyperindividualistic affirmation therapy is as scientifically sound as an MRI scan, even though a third of the American population is in therapy and their treatments consistently prove ineffective at alleviating our society's rates of mental sickness (Ducharme). There is no question as to whether the university is biased towards leftists. It is not arguable. The point is that this matters. The teenagers who have been taught to believe that there is a trans genocide occurring will not stop believing it when they enter the workforce.

The uptick of anti-white scholarship began in the mid-2000s, and a decade later we began to see these beliefs manifest in major memetic and cultural institutions like journalism, art, public education, and Human Resources of major corporations.

Between 2019 and 2021, 88 companies on the S&P hired people of color for 94% of their open positions and hired white candidates 6% of the time,

which Bloomberg published with a laudatory connotation ("Corporate America Promised…"). Only two white men total have made it on the New York Times Notable Fiction List since 2014–only two

up to now, for an entire decade (Savage). Freedom, Georgia, was established as land for black people that whites may not enter, which the New York Times heralded with the pun "Let Freedom Ring in Georgia," (Cohen). Columbia University held six different graduation ceremonies, one for every race, except for white people, in 2020 (Dorman). Meanwhile, conservatives threw up our hands to concede, "Well, they're entitled to their opinion!" "We have to remember they have good intentions!" "They don't think of it as killing a baby; so it's okay (even though it factually is killing a baby.)" "I don't mind as long as they're not doing it to me." Perhaps conservatives believed that their leftist ideas were so ridiculous that they could not be sustained. Nonetheless, with a critical mass of soldiers to march behind a lie, a false belief can absolutely be perpetuated. Perhaps conservatives believed it was just kids experimenting with ideas.

The problem is that there are victims of this scholarship. Foremost, children. When Judith Butler proclaims that, "gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which 'sexed nature' or 'a natural sex' is produced and established as 'prediscursive,' prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts," it sounds theoretical, but it translates to "There's no such thing as male and female complementarity," (Butler, 11). She's saying that the idea that a kid should have a mom and a dad is not natural. Why not make your kid affirm your gender identity? Why not have your six young gay lovers live in your house with your kids inside? Why not let people rent other women's wombs to purchase children who are not theirs? Why not barter and sell babies? Who's really to say what a house should look like? This is a direct product of scholarship that insists there is no difference between a child raised by their married biological parents and a child raised in a homosexual union (What does the scholarly…). They expect us to believe that early childhood music lessons critically affect cognitive and emotional development, but growing up motherless or fatherless does not? (Miendalarzewska). It entered the world with the terms the liberal ideologies set and conservatives found ourselves awash trying to talk back to something they couldn't conceive as possible a decade earlier.

Another victim group is the LGBTQ community itself. Gay people abuse their domestic partners and suffer from mental sickness at rates extraordinarily disproportionate to the general population. 60% of gay men and 63% of lesbians reported experiencing intimate partner violence compared to 13.9% of straight men and 23.6% of straight women ("The national intimate…"). Lesbians and gay men are 3x as likely to experience mental issues and 4.2x as likely to attempt suicide (King). Consequently, since the academy began its push to control the semiotics and aesthetics which would normalize gayness, the rate of gay identification for Gen Z has surpassed one-fourth of the entire population ("A political and cultural…"). The last victim group, most obviously, is the academy's open discrimination against white men in affirmative action and its more subtle forms.

Older Republicans have made demands such as "The classroom should be politically neutral," over and over again with relatively little impact. They do not fully grasp the nuances of university culture. In its most benign form, for example, if a flamboyant professor asks his students to write an essay about transgenderism, a Christian student might profess his beliefs of male and female and be assigned the grade of a C. That Christian student knows that he's been assigned the low grade due to the stance he had taken, but when he approaches the professor, the Christian student is told that his essay didn't "demonstrate nuance," didn't "engage in deconstruction," didn't "respond to the prompt," or something else like that. If the student tries to appeal his grade, other professors can dogpile him as they control the language, expectations, and terms of the assignment. He has undertaken a massive personal drama that has cost him a blow to his competitive GPA.

The hiring practices of many universities parallel this. For example, say 4 out of 5 applicants are white men and 1 out of 5 is a minority female, and the minority female is offered the tenured-track position. All four of those men know that they have been discriminated against, but their rejection letter is a legal script that the woman, although less qualified, is "a better fit." It is hard to legally prove who is a better fit, so the four white men walk away while taking no action. This minority female acts like the flamboyant professor described above, "centering" those who agree with her and "marginalizing" those

who do not. The same pattern is true of firing practices. If a faculty member takes heat over a controversial tweet and finds two months later that his contract will not renew, he has not been fired for cause in a legally actionable way, as the institution has no obligation to renew his contract. It is nonetheless apparent to everyone involved that he was fired for cause. Thus, it is difficult for individuals to bring forward complaints because it is difficult to prove the cause of grievances, but the evidence of ideological capture is overwhelming. So, what can we do?

Perhaps ironically, progressives have already established the legal doctrine to address this: disparate impact. If Sheetz can be sued on the basis of disparate impact because 13% of America is black where 12.2% of their workforce after a criminal history screening is black, then surely conservatives can bring forward a complaint of 44% of the country being conservative when less than 10% of faculty identify as such. Of course, political ideology is not a protected class of civil rights, but religion is. It is not hard to find anti-Christian papers throughout public universities and they need not be tolerated.

The second is to realize that academics have up to now sustained the expectation that they can publish without accountability to the public. Academic journals cost hundreds or thousands of dollars per issue to access. The subscriptions are so expensive that many public libraries cannot afford them and, thus, the public has been excluded from their conversations, which is how they form such silos. Perhaps if they had to defend their scholarship to regular Americans, or if citizen journalists could access their material, they would not so openly bloviate about the evils of an entire racial class or document methods to systematically dismantle Christianity (Tyler). A law that requires that every paper that comes out of a public university be readily accessible by the general public would end this, include the people they hate in the conversation, and increase accountability through citizen journalists.

Why stop there? Every syllabus in a public university should be accessible by the general public. That way, we can know what they're teaching our teenagers. Of course, it's important to recognize that there are some legitimate reasons to show texts that might not be compatible with Western civilization. For example, a comparative religions class that presents structured readings of the Quran, the Bible, and the Dao de Jing has legitimate reason to show this material. In this, the Bible was presented as a legitimate contribution to the subject matter. This example is wholly different from entering a required general education English class and being hit with a curriculum better named We Love Homosexuals Here.

Finally, we should escalate hard in Red states. There is no reason that the general public of Alabama and West Virginia should be funding woke scholarship. Faculty should not be entitled to public money when they are working against the public's interest. That's why I think there should be a massive audit of every piece written by a tenured faculty or adjunct in the most conservative states in the country and that audit should be sent to the state legislatures. They need to defund departments. They need to prohibit professors from saying their preferred pronouns to their students, implicitly or explicitly requiring them to perform gender ideology. In West Virginia, it is legal to conceal carry on campus but few do because the behavior is highly stigmatized. Perhaps the state legislature can clear that up by mandating a letter from a committee in the state legislature be sent to everyone at the beginning of each semester that includes statements like: "It is no more acceptable to say, 'I'm done with white men' or 'No more white men' than 'I'm done with black women' or 'No more black women.' These statements, although protected by free speech, are discrimination," and "If you are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy, we have life affirming centers that will help you. Abortion is illegal as we believe it is the act of killing a baby," and "All people are allowed to conceal carry on campus," which is true of West Virginia state law.

We cannot fight the culture war without addressing how they make their minions. We need to act now, while conservatives are still in the White House for escalation power. Potential remedies include filing disparate-impact lawsuits, requiring public access to publicly funded scholarship, requiring public access to course syllabuses, conducting faculty audits in conservative states, and allowing state governments or governors to send students a letter at the beginning of each semester articulating the values of the state's constituency.





9/11: 25 Years Later

The Scariest Day in America, Vows to Never Forget

By Francisco Olvera

Let me first briefly introduce myself. I am 55 and have lived in New York City most of my life. I am not what you would call a young conservative, but rather a conservative who grew up with Reagan in office and his 1984 landslide win.

Most people reading this article were either very young or likely not yet born on 9/11. We thought the first crash had been an accident similar to the B-25 Mitchell bomber that crashed into the Empire State Building in 1945 and were getting ready for another day of work. Some of us watched the second plane crash into the South tower from the safety of a TV set mere minutes before the work day would have started while eating a bagel or drinking coffee. Some of us experienced it living in NYC and some lived it surviving the destruction of the World Trade Center. I watched the second plane hit on live TV while getting ready for work at the broker firm I was employed at as a local area network administrator.

In a split second, the whole city went into a full lockdown —no cars, no planes, no subway (other than those trapped underground), limited cell phone service (due to overwhelming use), full news censorship across the United States and law enforcement everywhere. People walked like zombies trying to get home, many covered in soot. I had to rely on international media like BBC and ITV since England had no censorship and no geographical restrictions, with open broadcast worldwide. I spent practically three days without sleep also watching and listening to state-censored news.

I knew people who lost loved ones. This was common for many people living in NYC. I was one of the lucky ones who did not know anyone who died that day.

A friend of mine worked two blocks away from the WTC and had no choice but to breathe the air full of toxins and minute human tissue after the buildings collapsed. My friend stopped going to work all of a sudden and the last time I saw him he had an oxygen tank with him. He told me that pulverized bones were trapped in his lungs and that they were giving up. Shortly after, he disappeared from our social circle his wife stopped answering emails. I do not know if he is still alive. Most likely, he left us too and is greatly missed.

Lives were never the same. We were afraid of the next attack. Yet we were New Yorkers, and thought of ourselves as tough. All of us saluted the police, firefighters, paramedics and other first responders. We were proud of our military and grateful to anyone in uniform for putting his or her life on the line to protect us. For a brief moment in the history of this city, there was practically no crime. Even the worst of the city behaved and respected the rest of it.

We were all proud to be American regardless of political affiliation, religion, or genetic markers such as race and ancestry. Nevertheless, we were suspicious of many foreigners who we knew deep inside were up to no good. This was not a form of bigotry—we were simply afraid.

Each person had his or her own trauma. I lost my job at the broker two weeks before Thanksgiving 2001 since the market had collapsed shortly after the attack.
I spent eighteen months unemployed or barely making any money at times, though that is a story for a different day.

Additionally, I could not hear a siren without thinking that we were under attack. Although I got a job in late 2003 merely two blocks away from the WTC, it took me another two years to be able to walk there. A quarter of a century later, I still get a strange feeling walking by it, for it remains hallowed ground.

A quarter of a century later, the city has been taken over by people who do not like—or maybe even hate—America and have no interest in respecting our laws or values. Liberals have adopted the failed godless and political dogma of Marx, Lenin, Mao, Castro, and other undiagnosed sociopaths. Liberals have put a Muslim born abroad with little to no assimilation as the Mayor of NYC.

The city has gone from being suspicious of Islamists to having an Islamist as the leader of political dogma.

While many ignorant liberals and some so-called conservatives will join the enemy trashing America on 9/11, many people have asked the Mayor not to attend the ceremony at the WTC.

Two generations of leftist propaganda allegedly paid for by enemies of the United States later, young Americans as well as older Democrats (former hippies and yuppies, often well-educated) hate their own country, their own traditions, and even God Himself. These new young Americans often reject God, with atheism and ungodlike behavior such as determining that some people are born in the wrong bodies. They also reject America, bearing no respect for the country, the flag, or the anthem, and have adopted woke ideology (men in women's sports and in women's bathrooms, protecting illegals including murderers and rapists, and attacking law enforcement especially Immigration and Customs Enforcement). This same behavior is also happening across the United Kingdom, including the Commonwealth.

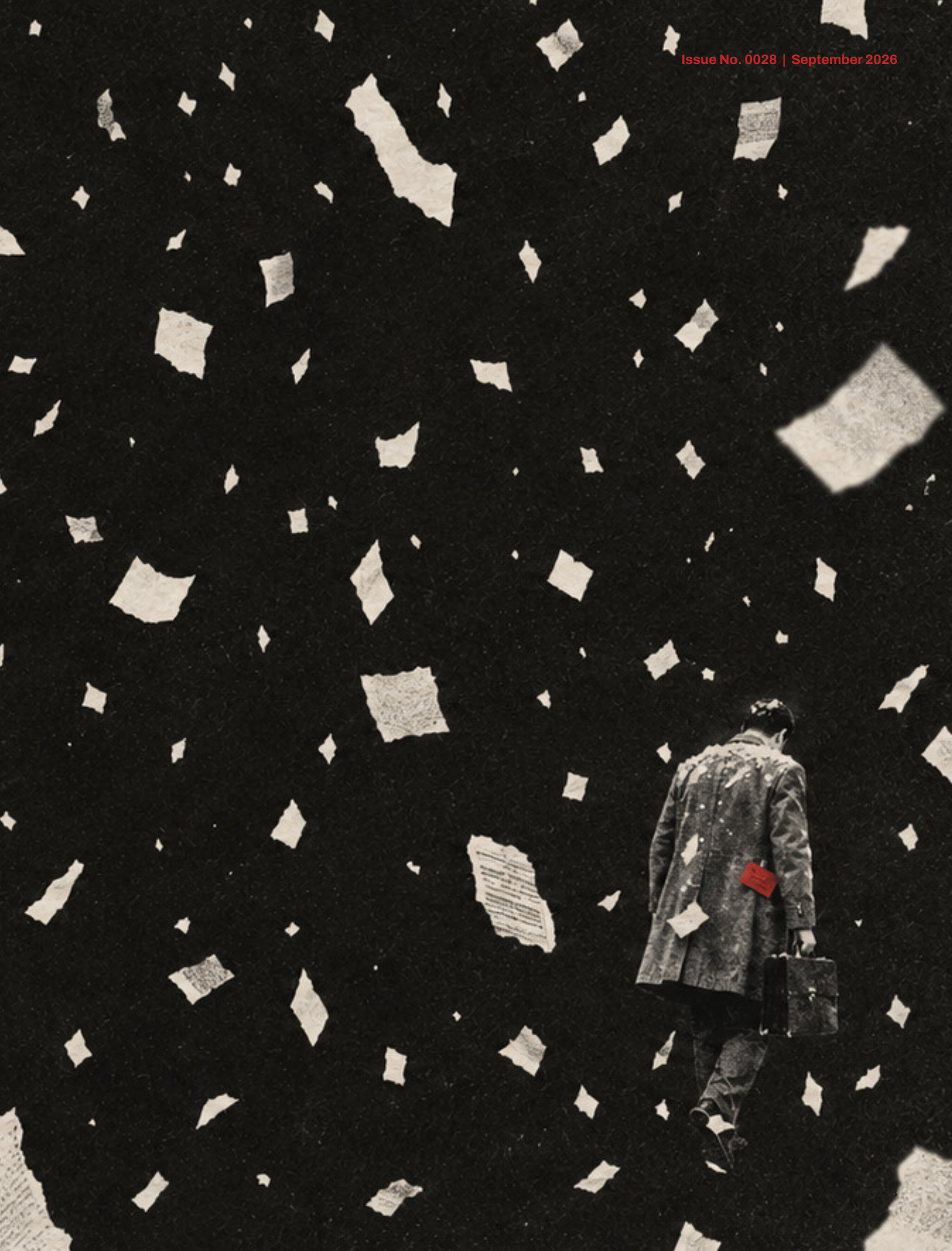
What can we do to rescue the country from the insanity of wokeness?



1. We need to elect men and women with conservative values, respect for God, and love of country (in that order).
   A. We must return to conservative values and not emphasize political party affiliation. There are many Republicans who have little to no conservative values, honesty, or the will to support Donald Trump in making America great again. There are men and women from other political parties including Libertarians and even Democrats who indeed love the country and want to do the best for Americans – not push some delusional fantasy like the woke agenda and its hundreds of genders.
   B. We must trust God and follow the Bible. We do not need people who can merely quote the Bible from memory or go to church based on the Gospel (not on some social construct like colorful flags, promotion of abortion, or other depraved behaviors) every Sunday. These men and women seem admirable, but we need people who see God as their guide to serving Americans, whether they follow the Torah or the Gospels.
   C. At times, love of country may be more important than being Jewish or Christian. If the men and women in government do not love America, they do not have our best interests at heart. We do not need traitors or anyone working for the interests of other nations in any level of the American government. This is why many want only men and women born and bred on American soil to serve in the government, even though the latter would stop Americans born abroad who love this nation from serving – myself included.
2. We need to educate people, especially the young. Many children have learned fake history tailored to push some liberal agenda and not the real events that happened on 9/11 and its aftermath.
   A. The latter excludes whether George W. Bush did the right thing invading Iraq out of revenge or signing the Patriot Act. Honestly speaking, we all wanted revenge. Someone had to pay for the murder of close to 3,000 people and having American soil attacked (what many see as the violation of our national innocence). We had our revenge, took out terrorists and hoped to make the world safer one piece of land at a time.
   B. We need children to know that a sick interpretation of a religious and political dogma was responsible for the death of many on 9/11. Children need to be taught that Americans are not the antagonists in this story. They need to know that we do not need to submit ourselves to foreigners. On the contrary, foreigners must assimilate and become Americans if they want to live here.
   C. Most importantly, children need to learn real history and not accept made-up stories that promote agendas trying to rewrite the past.
3. We need to celebrate that we are Americans, that we are free, that we have a Constitution, that we do not all think alike, that we do not all look alike, and that this nation was founded by God-fearing men and women. We need to celebrate our history with the Bible on one hand and Old Glory on the other as cartoonish as it may sound.
   A. The latter does not mean that we are going to celebrate that many are simply too stupid to give it all away. We must hold on to what made America, not what these ignorant individuals want to create – some utopia where everything is free, where anyone gets everything without effort, where some people see themselves as oppressed by others rather than by their own insecurities, and where America is the antagonist of history. We must never accept the liberal agenda and its lies.
   B. The USA just celebrated 250 years since its independence. Many of us celebrated and thanked God for this nation while others cursed it. I do not understand this level of ingratitude from many people. If they do not like this nation, they should leave rather than trying to destroy it.
   C. We should embrace our freedoms. Many of us would be executed for thinking or saying how we feel freely in many parts of the world. Many of us would be killed for following the religion of our choice without trial or mercy. Many people have never lived in these parts of the world and take for granted the freedom this nation provides. Many Americans died for the freedom that we have and enjoy and we are obliged to honor it and celebrate it.

In short, may God bless America and NYC this 9/11 and every day.

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Ideological History of Iran:
A Guide for Young Republicans

By Sarah Kennedy

Iran has long since captured the Western imagination. It is intertwined with the stories of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Israelites. Some of the most consequential conflicts in human history have crossed its plains, from the raging wildfire of Islam to the Turkic conquests, to the Great Game between Russia and Britain. Its art, music, and sensibilities have sparked fashion crazes and intense scholarly fascination. Modern liberal academics refer to this phenomenon, derisively, as Orientalism, a concept popularized by the radical Arab scholar Edward Said. Even today, Iran is arguably the topic dividing the MAGA movement. Although our differences run deeper than Iran policy, the Iran war has truly laid bare the conflicts and tensions within Republican politics. To create a more informed discourse, I will lay out a simple sketch of the history of Iran to spark interest in this fascinating and endlessly relevant country.

Iran is also interesting as a case study: what do you do when you win? When Trump won in 2024, this was the biggest question. Republicans, afraid for decades of government power and used to critiquing the most significant forces in our society, suddenly found themselves with power to wield. I would describe the MAGA civil war as a debate over what to do with power. Everyone could get along when we were just critiquing the left and functionally powerless. Divisions come when there are decisions to be made. Of course, Trump's shocking victory in 2016 and decisive win in 2024 are not the same as the Islamic Revolution, but they both represent a challenge to the establishment and a new ideology coming to the fore.

Few lay people understand that the ideology that undergirds the Islamic Regime was essentially an entirely new school of thought. For those of us in the West, the challenges that modernity poses to Christianity have been part of the fabric of our civilization for almost 400 years. As new ideas and technologies evolved slowly, religious thought was able to address each in turn. This has been an iterative process since the enlightenment. However, for the Islamic world, these theories and ideas were all released at once onto societies that were not prepared to accept them. The major empires of the Middle East, such as the Ottomans and the Qajars, were weak when Europeans brought their way of governing and thinking. Religious authorities and Islamic political theory were not prepared to address new ideas, changes to the political landscape, and new technologies.

To refocus on Iran, during the colonial period it was ruled by the Qajar dynasty, a Turkic dynasty that had become fully Persianized. Although Iran was never fully colonized, it had conflict with both Russia and England and accepted infrastructure and other concessions at terrible rates for the Iranian people. The Qajars were weak, and during the chaotic period following the 1907 Constitutional Revolution, in 1925 a Persian Cossack leader, Reza Shah claimed the throne. He, inspired by Ataturk in Turkey, attempted to modernize Iran. He introduced measures to Westernize the country and even at one point attempted to ban the hijab. During World War II, Reza Shah was technically neutral, but leaned towards the Axis powers. The British feared that he would ally fully with the Axis and instigated a coup d'etat, which put his 21-year-old son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, on the throne. During the rule of both Reza Shah and Reza Pahlavi, Iranian theorists were trying to understand how an Islamic state could be governed in the modern world. Traditionally, Islamic states relied on a king, or khalif, to impose divine

order. Iran had a monarchy, but what is a devout Muslim to do when the monarchy rejects Islamic principles? If there is no king, who should rule, and how?

This question was asked throughout the Middle East, and responses took on different flavors in different places. It is only Iran, however, that managed to create a cohesive ideological framework to cope with these challenges to traditional social structures. Unique among Middle Eastern countries, Iran is a Shia country, with an established clerical hierarchy. Iran also had a strong tradition of French education, and many Iranians went to France for further study. There they were exposed to Socialism and other ideologies. Writers like Ali Shariati tried to meld these two schools of thought and created something new: Islamic Socialism.

This is not the type of red-green alliance we read about in Europe today, which is very much a marriage of convenience between delusional Westerners and hard-core (usually Sunni) Islamists. Instead, it is its own unique ideology, fusing Socialist theory with traditional Shia understandings of jurisprudence. It is jurisprudence that is the key concept there. The ideology of the Islamic Republic is centered on the concept of Vilayat-e-faqih, or rule by jurors. This concept, interestingly, is most similar to Plato's idea of rule by philosopher kings but with an Islamic twist. The idea is that well educated religious clerics are judges, who can determine laws and govern while they wait for the Mahdi, the Messiah, to come and govern with perfect justice.

During Reza Pahlavi's reign, new ideas like these circulated. In 1964, in response to growing protests, the Shah asked the Iraqi president to exile influential cleric Ruhollah Khomeini. He went to France, where Western leftists helped him to produce tapes of fiery speeches that were smuggled into Iran. He preached against Western decadence to be sure, but he also had a positive vision for the future. An Iran that would be decent, moral, faithful, and equal. When he returned to Iran in early 1979, the crowds at the airport are thought to be some of the largest ever assembled in human history.

After the heady days of revolution, in which the Shah fled the country and Ayatollah Khomeini assumed control of the state, the Iranian regime would harden in a brutal eight-year war with Iraq.

During this conflict, unarmed young men wearing funeral shrouds charged over Iraqi minefields, attacking soldiers in trenches with only their fists.

The Iraqis used chemical weapons against Iran's civilian population.

The dreams of the Iranian Revolution were crushed by the terrible decisions of its leaders. Ayatollah Khomeini lived longer than anyone thought and died in 1989. His successor, Ayatollah Khamenei, lacked his predecessor's genius and watched as corruption, graft, and incompetence splintered the Iranian state. Massive protests known as the Green Revolution swept the country in 2009 when a rigged election laid bare the failure of Iranian democracy. There were more large uprisings in 2022 after a woman was beaten to death for improperly wearing a hijab. More followed in 2025 over the ongoing water crisis, and then in the winter of 2026, we saw perhaps the regime's largest ever action against its own people.

Many people are unaware of the full details of this history. As a political scientist, I'm fascinated by the spread of ideas. I love the story of Iran because it shows the power of unifying ideology, how electric it can be. Trump had a piece of that magic and through rambling speeches and a strange cast of staff members, created a new ideology for the American right. The question now, which is also the question that Iran faces, is what we do with that new ideology. How do we carry America First into the future without Trump? What does it look like for people who believe in small government to wield government power? MAGA has not and cannot answer those questions. It's why we're tearing each other apart right now. It is my hope, however, that new ideas will emerge from the fighting that we can rally around, so that the revolution does not go unfinished.

Has Trump been a successful president?

By Andrea Widburg

If you define success to mean a president who has reshaped American institutions in lasting ways, yes, Trump has been one of America's most successful presidents.

Here's a provocative thought for you: Both Barack Obama and Joe Biden were hugely successful presidents. That's not because they made life better for Americans or made America more secure and prosperous. Instead, it's because they reshaped America's institutions in lasting ways consistent with their political values.

On the eve of the 2008 election, Obama promised that, if he won, his goal would be "fundamentally transforming the United States of America." He kept that promise.

During the Obama and Biden years, a short list of that promised transformation included making DEI, CRT, LGBTQ+, SEL, and other alphabet causes central to federal governance, opening the border, breathing new life into Iran, creating dangerous vacuums in Afghanistan and Iraq because of poorly conducted troop withdrawals, weakening the U.S. economy and driving up prices with the green energy program, turning the military into a progressive social experiment, dramatically increasing the cost of healthcare, and weaponizing the government with the Russia Collusion Hoax and lawfare after Trump left office.

As we near the halfway point of Donald Trump's second term, the question is whether he, too, will be a successful president. His first term was unsuccessful, in part because the Republican Congress refused to back many of his initiatives (especially overturning Obamacare) and in part because the politicians willing to serve in his administration were, at best, "meh" and, at worst, disloyal. President Trump had to rely on executive orders to effectuate change, while battling the Russia Hoax and ludicrous impeachments.

Nevertheless, from 2017 through 2019, the economy was thriving; the government was growing more slowly; the war in Afghanistan was being managed toward a successful conclusion; Iran was getting put back in a box; and Trump was ending the climate change agenda.

Then, in 2020, the Democrats used racial grievances to terrorize American cities and weaponized a Chinese lab-created virus to stop the economy in its tracks. Trump could no longer govern. Add in mail-in voting and ballot harvesting, and it was almost inevitable that Biden, a man with incipient dementia and a long history of foolish political stands, was ushered into the Oval Office.

Unsurprisingly, within days of taking the oath, Biden reversed every one of Trump's executive orders. And while the modern judicial rule is that a Republican—or at least, Trump—may not reverse a Democrat president's executive orders, there is no corollary rule for a Democrat president reversing a Republican's executive orders.

In a spectacular comeback, though, Trump fought his way through the lawfare and the calumnies to win the presidency a second time.

In this iteration, Trump is not a neophyte. He came into office loaded for bear, with a focused agenda, and surrounded himself with equally focused people who do not fear the media. For example, Elon Musk exposed government waste and fraud, Pete Hegseth has returned the military to a warrior ethos, Scott Bessent is using the Treasury's power to bring enemies to heel, and Kash Patel is cleaning house at the FBI, where upper-level management had become ideologically corrupt.

No wonder then that in less than two years, and despite aggressive, often unconstitutional pushback from leftist judges, Trump has been very successful:

- He got Congress to cut taxes, strengthening the economy enough to withstand the stress of the fight over the Strait of Hormuz.
- He devastated Iran's nuclear program and is slowly strangling Iran's economy, dramatically reducing an existential threat to America and the West as a whole.
- He forced NATO members to step up their spending and treated harshly those who refused to pay or did not assist with the Iran War.
- He's shut down illegal immigration and begun shipping out the worst of the illegal aliens in America, aided by Congress passing the Laken Riley Act. We've also seen dramatic drops in America's drug deaths.
- He presided over a historic drop in violent crime. Between deporting violent illegal aliens and bringing the National Guard to America's worst cities, Trump gave us a safer country.
- Working with Pete Hegseth, he's returned our military to a fighting force, not a woke college campus, and young men and women are once again eager to join.
- He's helped revitalize America's fossil fuel industry and is bringing nuclear energy back to America.
- He's used tariffs to force fairer trade agreements, bring massive foreign investment to America, and get American companies to bring factories back home.
- He drastically shrank the federal workforce and reduced economy-stifling regulations.
- He ended the USAID slush fund that used taxpayer money to fund leftist programs at home and abroad.
- He has supported Israel against its existential enemies.
- He has supported Ukraine against Russian aggression.

And that's just a short list. However, what's even more important for determining whether Trump's successes will last is that controlling legal principles have changed on his watch too. In the last 20 months, the Supreme Court has held, among other things, that

- the president has broad authority to remove executive officials;
- lower courts' power to issue nationwide injunctions is sharply limited;
- women's sports may be restricted to biological women;
- states may restrict so-called gender-affirming care for minors;
- parents may opt out of LGBTQ+ instruction in public schools;
- states may exclude Planned Parenthood from Medicaid programs under certain circumstances;
- mental health counselors may talk to minors troubled by their LGBTQ+ inclinations;
- Second Amendment protections remain robust; and
- a Republican president may end a Democrat president's grant of Temporary Protected Status.

These decisions matter because, unlike executive orders, the next Democrat president cannot sign them away. They have changed the legal landscape in areas ranging from presidential power and judicial authority to sex, parental rights, and the Second Amendment. That is the sort of institutional permanence Obama achieved—and the standard by which Trump's second presidency will ultimately be judged.

Things are not perfect. Congress is still dragging its feet on important issues, most notably the SAVE America Act. Lower courts are still thrusting spokes into every wheel. The Democratic Socialists of America are taking over the Democrat party. And on the right, sadly, we have neurotic, paranoid, antisemitic, and increasingly anti-American figures like Tucker Carlson and Candace Owens.

Nevertheless, on the record to date, Trump's administration is a success. He's keeping as many promises as possible despite opposition; he's reverting America to a "normal" last seen during the Reagan years; he's got Iran in a box and is curbing China's reach; and he's even managed to induce a cowardly, reluctant Congress to enact laws that will have a lasting effect.

So, no matter the left's and GOP fossils' demoralization campaign, do not be demoralized. If we stay the course, Trump, like Obama before him, will rank as an enormously consequential president. Only this time around, the consequences will be good for individual Americans and the entire nation.

Andrea Widburg is the managing editor at American Thinker.

The Left's MAGA Civil War

By Kitty Sprague



In the dynamic world of politics, we find ourselves with what appears to be a schism on the Right, which the media has dubbed the "MAGA Civil War." Several high-profile right-wing influencers have turned on Trump over their disagreement with the US intervention in Iran, sparking speculation that Trump is losing his influence over the Right. While the extent to which Trump is losing influence is debatable given the victories of Trump-endorsed candidates in recent elections, the significant following of these influencers is nevertheless evidence of real sentiment. No doubt seeing an opportunity to smear Trump and his coalition as incoherent right before midterms, the left-wing mainstream media has successfully put the focus on them while quietly watching. However, it seems there isn't political conflict in our society today that doesn't have the Left's fingerprints on it, so the question bears asking: to what extent is the Left responsible for this "MAGA Civil War"?

These influencers would not have the number of followers they do were it not for Barack Obama and his cohort of shameless propagandists on the Left. These propagandists seek to divide the nation by cooking up anger within their base by doing everything they can to maintain a belief that extreme prejudice exists against members of historically oppressed groups like women, racial minorities, and more recently, Muslims.

They then weaponize this anger about alleged injustice toward these groups to silence anyone who criticizes their politicians by labeling critics racist, sexist, or Islamophobic.

If you are on the right wing, you're probably very aware of this tactic.

A vicious cycle ensues. A no doubt deliberate effect of this tactic is the creation of an angry segment on the Right whom they label "extremists." Given that their identities are being weaponized against them to silence their political speech, these right-wing individuals instead express themselves in ways that target these historically oppressed groups, which only gives the leftist propagandists evidence to point to when they make their case that the Right is sexist, racist and more recently, Islamophobic. This only further amplifies left-wing anger that they can weaponize.

Enter right-wing influencers Nick Fuentes, Megyn Kelly, Tucker Carlson, Marjorie Taylor Greene, and Candace Owens. These influencers tap into this anger for both financial gain and to promote their own worldviews. However, with their pursuits they only fan the flames of this right-wing anger. What's more, a separation forms between these agitated right-wingers and more level-headed Republicans who are then perceived as weak and not truly MAGA. These more moderate, mainstream Republicans, including many elected Republicans, recognize good ideas such as anti-sexism, anti-racism, and support for Jews and Israel for what they are and are not interested in giving the Left evidence for painting the Right as prejudiced. We must not let this phenomenon tear the Right apart.

It's worth diving more deeply into how the Left angers the Right and why right-wingers respond as they do to better understand the role these influencers play as well as how the Left translates anger over identity issues into political power. These dynamics are relatively complex, especially since the Left uses other tactics besides silencing people to anger those on the Right.

The first main group the Left targets is men. One way they do so is by exploiting the ambiguity inherent in many sexual assault claims. Women accusing men of sexual assault are painted as victims by the Left—unless of course they're accusing a prominent Democrat. We must always "believe" such women, says Hillary Clinton. True, men are not angels—but neither are women. Unfair demonization of men has prompted many women to point fingers at men for sexual harassment or assault. However, what if the woman is lying? Too often, she is—because she can. In this post-#MeToo era, men must walk on eggshells around women, which understandably stokes their anger.

These men consequently display displaced

aggression, seeking to spite the Left's cultural "rules" it forces on society as social controls, namely political correctness. Since political correctness forbids them from using this word or engaging in that behavior, they get revenge by doing or saying just that. They may be too afraid to step out of the Left's line themselves, but they will flock to someone who will. Nick Fuentes isn't afraid to make absurd declarations like "women want to be raped," because there are men out there who want to hear that. They turn to Fuentes because they are fundamentally angry about the political repression and hostility they face by virtue of being male as opposed to a belief in male superiority over women. Fuentes represents an emotional relief that comes with feeling like the Left is being spited—though for him there's money to be made. The left-wing propagandists, in their quest to divide and conquer the nation, point to Fuentes and his popularity to perpetuate anger on the Left against men.

The Left also foments anger on the right by creating racial tensions, specifically targeting whites. Barack Obama is extremely careful with how he discusses race. He knows better than to simply come out and declare any one group to be "bad" in some way. What he normally does instead is insinuate that America holistically is racist, like when he said in a 2014 interview with BET's Jeff Johnson of racial tensions that "This is an American problem." Consequently, whites, particularly right-wing ones, become targets of hate simply for their skin color. Notably, Obama did miscalculate once when he suggested that black men were sexist for not supporting Kamala Harris. Specifically, he said: "You're thinking about sitting out… Because that's what being a man is? Putting women down? That's not acceptable." He faced genuine backlash that may have even cost Kamala some votes in 2024 because he was explicitly targeting a specific group.

Since there is no specific Left-wing target to counterattack—Obama has not directly attacked the Right in a way that could justify making himself a target—the Right expresses their sentiments with racist speech such as in Charlottesville, VA, where they displayed confederate flags. What's more, they are happy to hear Nick Fuentes use the N-word. These right-wingers don't realize that they only fuel the cycle of hatred from the Left causing right-wing anger and racist activity, giving the Left racist behavior to point to as they brand the Right racist. To be clear: this is not to exonerate targeting minorities. We should acknowledge, however, the role of anger due to political repression in racist behavior when present, even though this has no bearing on the wrongfulness of racist activity.

The third identity group they target is Christians.

The most pertinent way the Left foments anger on the Right is through its embrace of Islam.

The first main group the Left targets is men.

Many Christians fear their faith is under attack. Given that many of these individuals on the Right are deeply Christian, many turn to antisemitism as well in their embrace of Christian Nationalism. If members of an identity group develop emotions such as anger and fear concerning their common identity, they collectively start to view the world in terms of "us versus them." Notably, Fuentes said of willingness to use the widely perceived antisemitic phrase "Christ is King" that "It's a very quick way to identify who is with us, who is a part of the church and the body of Christ, and who's outside of it." When confronted as to whether he would publicly use this phrase, Ted Cruz demurred, citing the antisemitism associated with it. He faced much backlash.

The cohort of ex-Trump supporting influencers amplifying antisemitism does not end with Fuentes, however. While it is impossible to prove that Megyn Kelly and Tucker Carlson are motivated by antisemitism, which they claim they are not, it's worth noting that both have long had issues with Trump. Tucker Carlson declared of Trump that "I hate him passionately" in a text in 2021. Megyn Kelly has long feuded with Trump since he insulted her after her questions at the first Republican debate in 2015. However, regardless of Kelly and Carlson's motives and whether they are giving accurate commentary, an antisemitic base will be more likely to gravitate towards their message opposing the Iran intervention, which only stirs up more antisemitism.



As for the other main ex-Trump supporting influencers Candace Owens and Marjorie Taylor Greene, it's one thing to oppose Trump's policies, but to flirt with the Left might be undercutting their influence, making them look like they have Trump Derangement Syndrome rather than thoughtful policy critiques. Marjorie Taylor Greene went on The View trashing Trump. Candace Owens warmly received Hunter Biden on her show. Additionally, Fuentes has declared he will now be voting Democrat. This might well limit their influence.

The question of whether this right-wing conflict will translate into people not voting remains. While these influencers may bring emotional relief and stoke right-wing division, people recognize the larger political threat that the Left poses. So long as Trump is seen as the principal, most powerful defender of the Right against it, he will hold sway, which is why he so aggressively touts the record of his candidates' winning primaries. Additionally, this anti-Trump rebellion has no official leader behind whom they are all uniting, making it likely insufficient to topple him. Presidents must make tough calls, and sometimes the right decision isn't the popular one. Ultimately, only Trump has the political sophistication to do the right thing while fighting the Left and managing the anger it creates on the Right. No matter how unruly his base gets, MAGA is truly Trump's movement, and it always will be.

Supreme Court Review 2026

By The New York Young Republican Club Law Committee

"[The judiciary] may truly be said to have neither FORCE nor WILL, but merely judgment."
— Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 78



The Justices had plenty to exercise their judgment on this term: a President testing the boundaries of his power, a frontal assault on birthright citizenship, and cultural battles over race and women's sports. Away from the bench, threats against the Justices continued to mount, prominent lawmakers renewed calls to expand the Court and tensions between the judiciary and the Trump administration repeatedly spilled into public view. An eventful year at One First Street.

Boundaries of Executive Power

The Trump administration has spent the past two years pushing the boundaries of executive power. This term, the Court reinforced the President's control over the executive branch while imposing limits on his ability to exercise powers that belong to Congress.

By statute, the President can remove a Federal Trade commissioner only for "inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office." President Trump fired Democratic commissioner Rebecca Slaughter, stating that her continued service would be inconsistent with his administration's priorities, without reference to the statutorily provided justifications for removal.

The Constitution provides that "the executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States." Ordinarily, this means that the President must have control over officials exercising executive power, including the power to fire them. However, in the 1935 case Humphrey's Executor, the Court upheld the FTC's removal protections, reasoning that the Commission did not exercise purely executive power.

In Trump v. Slaughter, the Court sharply limited Humphrey's Executor, finding that the modern FTC clearly exercises executive power. The result strengthens the presidency: an agency exercising executive power generally cannot be made independent of the person in whom the Constitution vests that power.

The Court tempered this ruling in Trump v. Cook. Roberts and Kavanaugh joined the three liberal Justices in upholding "for-cause" removal protections for governors of the Federal Reserve Board. The majority relied on the Federal Reserve's unique historical tradition of independence.

The Court struck a more direct blow to executive power in Learning Resources, Inc. v. Trump, invalidating the centerpiece of the President's economic agenda: his sweeping tariffs. In response to national emergencies concerning drug trafficking and trade deficits, President Trump imposed tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977 (IEEPA). The statute allows the President, during certain emergencies, to "regulate . . . importation."

The Constitution explicitly gives Congress the power to impose taxes and duties. While Congress may delegate portions of this authority to the President, the majority found that IEEPA's power to "regulate . . . importation" did not authorize the President to impose tariffs.

Upholding Birthright Citizenship

The blockbuster case of the term was Trump v. Barbara. The Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in the aftermath of the Civil War, provides: "All persons born . . . in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States."

Shortly after assuming office, Trump signed Executive Order 14160, "Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship." The order relied on the theory that children born in the United States to mothers who were unlawfully or only temporarily present were not "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States—and therefore were not entitled to birthright citizenship—unless their father was a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

The Court's majority opinion, penned by Chief Justice Roberts and joined by Justice Barrett and the three liberal Justices, found the Executive Order unconstitutional. The opinion held that children born in the United States to parents who are unlawfully or temporarily present are nevertheless "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States and therefore citizens at birth under the Citizenship Clause.

Justice Kavanaugh sided with the majority to

invalidate the Executive Order but took a different route. Kavanaugh relied on a federal statute that defines who is a citizen at birth and closely tracks the language of the Citizenship Clause. He concluded that the statute, properly interpreted in light of its mid-20th-century enactment, grants citizenship to the children covered by Trump's order.

Because the President cannot override an Act of Congress by executive order, Kavanaugh reasoned that the order was unlawful. His opinion nevertheless leaves open the possibility that Congress could amend the statute to adopt the additional exceptions contemplated by Trump's order without violating the Citizenship Clause.

Thomas, Gorsuch, and Alito went further than Kavanaugh, rejecting his interpretation of the federal statute and arguing that its language should be understood consistent with the Citizenship Clause's original meaning. Through detailed examinations of the history surrounding the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, the dissenters concluded that "subject to the jurisdiction thereof" required something more than mere physical presence. Thomas specifically focused on domicile—the parents' permanent legal home—as necessary to confer birthright citizenship. The three Justices concluded that Trump's executive order was consistent with the Citizenship Clause and therefore lawful.

Although the decision was undoubtedly a major loss for the Trump administration, it is important not to lose the forest for the trees. Just a year ago, many Court commentators expected an overwhelming decision upholding birthright citizenship. Trump's executive order, the ensuing public debate, receptive legal scholarship and the opinions of four Justices have moved what was recently treated as a settled constitutional question squarely back into constitutional debate.

Protecting Women's Sports

For the first time, the Court weighed in on the cultural battlefield of women's sports. In West Virginia v. B.P.J. and Little v. Hecox, the Court considered similar West Virginia and Idaho laws prohibiting biological males from competing on female athletic teams.

All nine Justices agreed that B.P.J.'s Title IX claim failed as presented: Title IX regulations permit schools to maintain separate teams for each sex and B.P.J. had conceded for purposes of the case that "sex" meant biological sex.

The opinions nevertheless revealed the cultural chasm among the Justices. Justice Thomas wrote that "[s]ex is an immutable . . . [and] binary" characteristic and that using "language to obscure reality . . . is to lie to the public." Justice Sotomayor, by contrast, wrote that B.P.J.'s "sex was identified as male at birth, but she has known from the time she was 'very little' that she is a girl."

The Justices split 6–3 on Equal Protection. Applying intermediate scrutiny, the majority held that restricting female sports to biological females was substantially related to the States' important interests in competitive fairness and safety.

While the case wound through the courts, B.P.J. competed on the girls' track team—and in 2026 won West Virginia's Class AAA girls' state championship in shot put. Paislee Babiczuk finished second.

Ending Racial Gerrymandering

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act prohibits voting practices that deprive citizens of equal opportunity, on account of race, to participate in the political process and elect representatives of their choice. Meanwhile, the Equal Protection Clause subjects state racial classifications to strict scrutiny, the most demanding standard of judicial review.

These principles collided in Louisiana v. Callais. Louisiana has six congressional districts but only one majority-Black district, despite Black Louisianans comprising roughly a third of the population. After a federal court found that the Voting Rights Act required a second reasonably configured majority-Black district, Louisiana drew one.

The Supreme Court held that the VRA did not require that second district and therefore could

not justify Louisiana's intentional use of race. As Justice Alito wrote, the VRA "was designed to enforce the Constitution—not collide with it." Still, lower courts had applied it in ways that forced states "to engage in the very race-based discrimination that the Constitution forbids."

Pre-Callais, the VRA had an asymmetrical partisan effect that generally benefited Democrats. Because minority voters disproportionately vote Democratic, §2's requirements have generally constrained Republican mapmakers more than Democratic ones in states with large minority populations. The decision will have a meaningful impact on elections moving forward.

Rapid Fire

First Amendment: Struck down limits on how much political parties can spend in coordination with their candidates (National Republican Senatorial Committee v. FEC). Colorado's ban on "conversion therapy," as applied to a counselor's talk therapy, discriminated based on viewpoint and therefore required strict scrutiny (Chiles v. Salazar). A government subpoena demanding a nonprofit's donor information creates an injury sufficient to sue without waiting for the government to enforce it (First Choice Women's Resource Centers, Inc. v. Davenport).



Second Amendment: Licensed gun carriers do not need a property owner's express permission to carry handguns on private property open to the public (Wolford v. Lopez). The government violates the Second Amendment by prosecuting a person for possessing a firearm based solely on regular marijuana use (United States v. Hemani).

Law Enforcement: An officer may enter a home without a warrant if there is an objectively reasonable basis for believing that an occupant is seriously injured or imminently threatened with such injury (Case v. Montana). Obtaining a person's location data through a geofence warrant constitutes a Fourth Amendment search (Chatrie v. United States).

Elections: Federal Election Day laws do not prohibit states from counting ballots cast by Election Day but received afterward (Watson v. Republican National Committee).

Immigration: Immigration officials need not process asylum claims of noncitizens who have not crossed onto the U.S. side of the border (Mullin v. Al Otro Lado).



Apathy Kills Business

The Habit of Staying Out of It Could Cost Your Business

By Sean McMahon



The first time that I truly understood the problem, it was through a phone call on a Friday afternoon. Melissa, an owner of a local restaurant in Tempe, called me in a calm yet flustered manner about how the city had treated her business. She walked through it detail by detail, every grievance she had with how the city council treated small businesses, from beginning to end. Ranging from navigating the tax filing process to sign ordinances; and what struck me wasn't the complaint. It was that she wasn't afraid to take it straight to council and say it out loud. Melissa, it turned out, was the exception.

Most business owners I meet aren't like her at all. Most of them are the man at the auto shop or that jaded boutique owner who wants nothing to do with politics. A lot want to put blinders on and run from these hard conversations.

Glenn Haywood of Good Works Auto Shop has run his shop for years, and when the conversation turned to the city, he wasn't angry. He was checked out.

Politics, in his mind, was something that happened to him. A set of rules and fees handed down by people he'd never met, in meetings he'd never attend,

with outcomes he was sure he couldn't change.

"People like me don't move people like that" was the whole of his relationship to politics. So, he did what a lot of owners do: kept his head down, ran his business, and hoped the city would leave him alone, until I talked with him as he was working on fixing the coolant of a customer's Jeep in his auto shop.

I sat there as he talked about his story of why he checked out of politics, and I knew the simple answer to it. It was apathy.

I want to sit with that apathy for a minute, because it's the real subject here. It was more of fear, rather than courage. The most common relationship a small business owner has with local politics isn't opposition. It's avoidance of having these honest yet tough conversations.

Arizona is a hyper-polarized state where owners do not want to throw their voices into the conversations, as they fear consumer boycotts due to their political opinion about a certain issue. Business owners are pragmatic operators. They spend their days on things that produce a result: you fix the car, the customer pays, the problem is solved. Politics is the opposite of that. It's slow, it's abstract, the feedback loop runs months or years long, and half the time nothing visible happens at all.

To someone who lives by results, a council meeting can look like the least efficient room in America. So, they often opt out of a reasonable-seeming judgment that their time is better spent under the hood than in the third row of a chamber.

The problem is that the judgment is wrong, and it's wrong in a way that costs them in the long term. Because government doesn't return the favor. It doesn't leave you alone.

The rules keep getting written whether you're in the room or not, and the owners who checked out have no relationship to draw on when one of those rules finally lands on them. They didn't know their council member. They never spoke at a meeting. They have no track record of showing up, so when they suddenly need to be heard, they walk in cold, in crisis, after the decision's already been shaped.

Apathy feels safe right up until the moment it leaves you with no standing and no allies. That's the trap I tried to talk the auto shop owner out of. I sat with him and walked through it step by step: how the process actually works, where his voice could go, how to guide it so it lands instead of just venting into the air. Not to turn him into an activist. Just to show him that the relationship he assumed was closed to him was actually open, and that the cost of the door was mostly in his head.

I don't say any of this from a place of natural boldness. It was challenging for me, too. Stepping out of my own comfort zone to stand up in a public hearing and share my stories was one of the more challenging things I've made myself do. Yet, I feel more empowered to speak on important matters that would impact my own community. I understand the pull to stay out of it, because I've felt it. So, this isn't a lecture from someone it comes easy to. It's the opposite.

Here's what finally changed things for the owners I've watched cross over. It wasn't a sudden surge of civic duty. It was learning they weren't alone and that like-minded owners on the same block had lived the same thing and were willing to say so too. The moment apathy has to compete with company, it starts to lose.

It's easy to write off a meeting when you'd be walking in by yourself. It's a lot harder when you know three other people will be sitting in the row with you, telling a version of the same story.

And the stakes are real, which is why the apathy matters. I have watched bad policy wreck small businesses slowly and then all at once. Take something as ordinary as a zoning case. A council reclassifies a corridor, tightens a parking requirement, or changes what a property is allowed to be used for.

Rules get made without anyone weighing what they'll do to the people who have to live under them, and by the time the damage is visible, it's too late to undo. That's not usually because someone in power set out to cause harm. It's because the people who could have seen it coming weren't in the room; they'd already decided the room had nothing to do with them. Now they would have to face the regrets of not speaking out about it.

That's what apathy buys. Not peace. A blind spot that somebody pays for later, and usually it's the business owner who checked out.

I don't think the answer is to demand that every business owner become a firebrand. Most of them have a business to run. But I'd like to see the relationship change from avoidance to something closer to ownership. From "politics is just fake" to "this is my town, and I get a say in it."

That shift doesn't take courage so much as company and a little know-how: transparent rules you can actually follow, officials who treat feedback as useful rather than hostile, and enough owners showing up together that no one has to be the only voice.

I think about the man at the auto shop. I'd like to live in a city where he shows up because he finally decided the room was his too and knew he wouldn't be sitting in it alone.

Arizona is growing fast, and the decisions shaping our towns are being made right now, in ordinary meetings most business owners never attend. The people on our main streets know things about how those decisions land that no one on a dais can see from up there. When they stay out of it, we all get worse government for it.

So, to any owner who has decided politics isn't worth the bother, I understand why, but the door is more open than you think, and you don't have to walk through it alone.





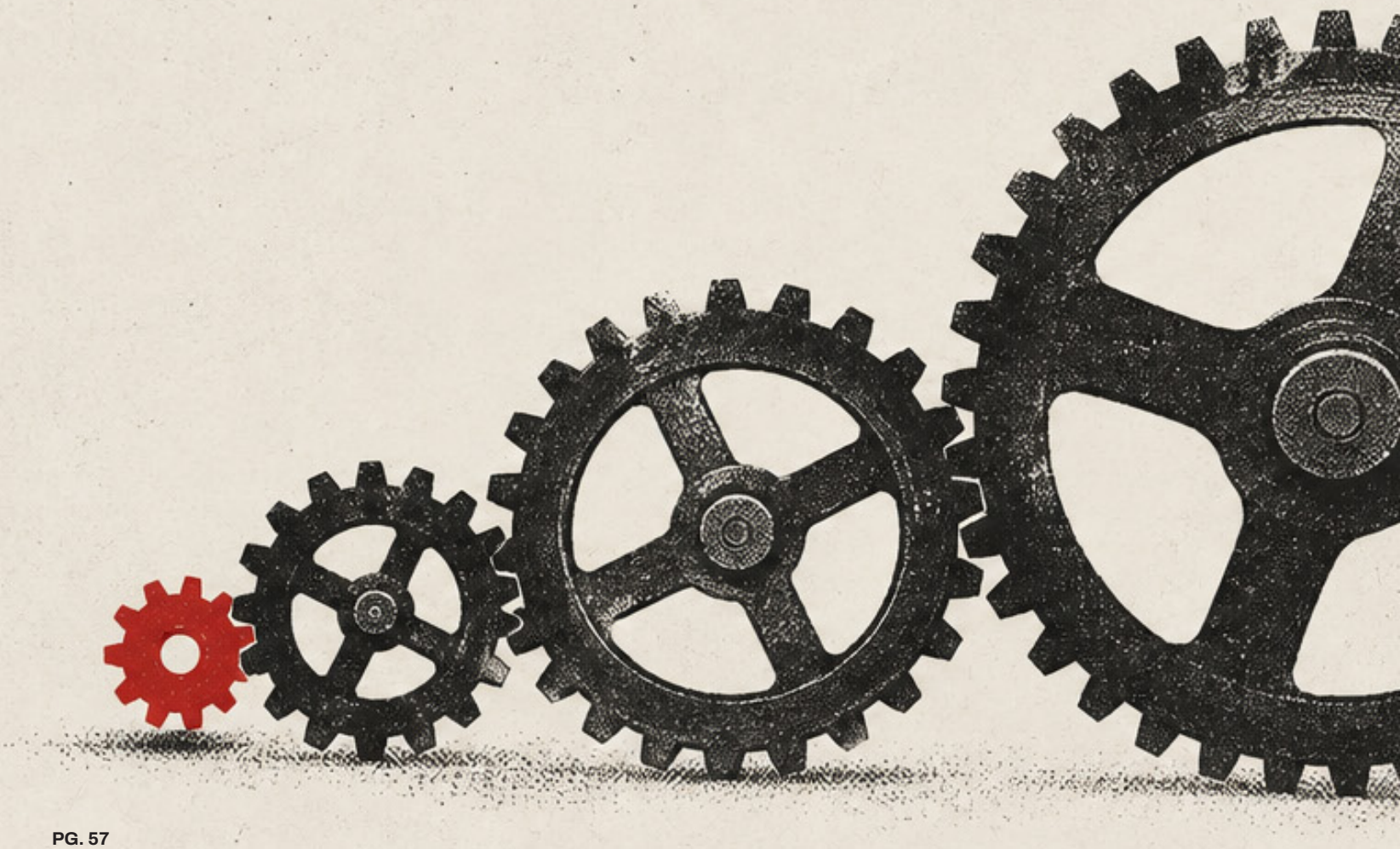




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