Second Impeachment Acquittal

By Abby Schaffer

Former President Donald Trump faced an Impeachment Trial in the US Senate for the second time and was acquitted. House Democrats used a mix of rhetoric and videos from January 6 taken at the Save America rally on the White House Ellipse and the ensuing attack on the Capitol building in an effort to prove “incitement of insurrection.”

Trump’s lawyers, David Schoen and Bruce Castor, responded to the charges, arguing that former President Trump’s statements were protected under the 1st Amendment. “The 45th President of the United States performed admirably in his role as president, at all times doing what he thought was in the best interests of the American people,” they wrote.

Many Republicans view the trial as a test of loyalty to former U.S. President Donald Trump. Ten Republicans who voted to charge Donald Trump with inciting the Capitol riot are facing a backlash from other members of the party.

Security officials stated that communication breakdowns lead to the breach at the Capitol. Investigations continue in the Senate. The FBI made numerous arrests in the complex case, including organizers from the militia group the Oath Keepers.

Erroneous NYS Nursing Home COVID Data

By Antonio Romano

COVID-19 deaths in NY state nursing homes were 50 percent higher than what was initially reported. NY Attorney General Letita James disclosed that Governor Andrew Cuomo’s administration did not reveal how many nursing home residents died in hospitals. James found that some resident facilities underreported the number of cases and deaths. In addition, some nursing homes did not follow the necessary protocols to keep vulnerable patients safe. The Cuomo Administration reported the death toll at 8,505, but the numbers are 12,743 the attorney general reported. Most of these deaths occurred after a March 25, 2020 directive from the Cuomo Administration for nursing homes to admit Coronavirus-positive patients who were “medically stable.”

“As the pandemic and our investigations continue, it is imperative that we understand why the residents of nursing homes in New York unnecessarily suffered at such an alarming rate,” James said. NYC Bill de Blasio, stated “We have to make sense of this. We have to get the full truth...And we have to be honest about the numbers.”

Cuomo, who had been praised for his leadership during the pandemic and even won an Emmy for his daily press briefings said, “Who cares [where they died]?... They died!” This statement did not sit well with many New Yorkers, including State Sen. James Tedisco (R-Clifton Park) who tweeted in response “Pathetic!” Cuomo’s remarks and unwillingness to be transparent led to nine Senior Health officials resignations.
Editorial: Living in an Ever-Changing Paradigm

In between the praises and blessings of making it out of such a tumultuous year, I can’t help but peer over my shoulder and look back at 2020 with an unwavering and somewhat gentle gaze. Last year was characterized by unveilings of masked truths and unbelievable suffering; however, looking back, I can’t help but notice the good that came as a result.

Last year, American citizens were forced to acknowledge their values. Many individuals became aware of the characters of the people around them, whether this was through the election, seeing ideologies displayed on masks or lack thereof, hearing opinions on the Black Lives Matter protests and climate change, or even individuals’ willingness to delude themselves. Now that the veil has been retracted, it is easier to see how actions and inactions victimized millions. Ineffective governmental and social institutions that garner the most trust were exposed; their intentions on display for all to see— if they care to look. We, the citizens, put our trust in the hands of these systems, however, our best interests are not being fought for. We invested in a game that is practically impossible to win.

These truths, not self-evident, caught many on their heels, forcing the reprioritization of the most closely held beliefs and values. No longer should we blind ourselves to the injustices. No longer should we offer ourselves as pawns, voluntarily slaving in a game that vastly surpasses our pay grades. No longer should we remain willingly oblivious to the decisions affecting our lives made with neither knowledge nor input.

In a similar vein, we have grown to value the things once considered commonplace. The ability to see smiles, to easily form relationships as young adults with faculty, to conveniently have someone there to encourage and prod us as pillars for support, and to spend time with our elderly relatives and friends without fear, among countless others, hold much more value in their absence. We cherish these missed opportunities.

2020 was a disaster, but out of this disaster comes many lessons, and I for one am very grateful to have learned them. We can’t change our situations entirely, no matter the feat, but we can adjust our perspective to come out better, wiser and more prosperous on the other side. Fate is a fool’s gamble: win or lose, it is up to you to decide.

-kev:)
Valentine’s Day 2021
By Emma Elizondo

Valentine’s Day is coming sooner than we think. Valentine’s Day is celebrated on February 14th and is about spending time with loved ones and significant others. Due to COVID many people do not know how to celebrate Valentine’s Day this year. One way is to get creative with DIY decorations for your home. You can put paper hearts in the windows, make hearts out of candy, create Valentine’s Day wreaths and bake Valentine’s Day cookies. You might even video chat with a loved one while you bake your delicious treats. Watching romantic movies like The Notebook, or many other romantic movies that showcase the power of love is another way to celebrate. Hosting a virtual Valentine Party on Zoom or Facetime would be fun too. You can play a Valentine trivia game, have a baking contest where treats are judged on their creativity, and play Guess that Tune with love songs. This Valentine’s Day everyone should still be able to celebrate and have fun, it is just going to take a little more creativity than usual.

Light Pollution Impacts Sleep
By Lindsay Stelling

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many of us have been forced to entertain ourselves in the safety of our own homes. Thankfully, when video games and electronics begin to bore, we have the opportunity to explore the intriguing world around us. Although much of this exploration is limited, the one thing that you can always count on to be right outside your window is the night sky.

But, when was the last time you saw the Milky Way? According to the International Dark Sky Association, “less than 100 years ago, everyone could look up and see a spectacular starry night sky.” Unfortunately, due to the immense amount of light pollution that has increased over the years, this experience is rather rare. The increase in artificial light being used at night is the biggest culprit. With an increase in the amount of light being used at night, it cancels out the light from the stars.

This drastic increase in light pollution is harmful to the safety of our own health. As humans, we have a sleep-wake cycle that allows us to regain the energy needed in order for us to function properly throughout the day. We produce a hormone called melatonin which induces sleep, but artificial light disrupts this process. Fortunately, there are measures that can be taken to reduce light pollution and help ourselves! You can start by closing your blinds at nighttime, keeping the light in, only using lighting when it is needed, and properly shielding your outdoor lights. For more information, check out www.darksky.org.
Imagine a world with no thermostats, traffic lights, or even a clothes dryer. Did you know that these innovations were all created by African Americans? In today’s society, we tend to overlook the small creations that have contributed and impacted our lives significantly, and instead focus on the “bigger and better things” that we call valuable. Black History Month allows us to commemorate and acknowledge the African Americans whose contributions have had a lasting impact on all of us.

Black History Month also known as BHM is an annual celebration of achievements for black Americans and a time for recognizing African Americans in US History: it is a time to understand and appreciate the impact of black heritage and culture on our lives.

The Pan-African flag, created in 1920, is an emblem of pride that consists of four colors black, yellow, green, and red. The black is symbolic of melanated skin and our shared identity, the yellow represents the riches of Africa and prosperity, the green represents the fertility of our land, and red symbolizes the blood that unites all people of Black African ancestry. In 1976, President Gerald Ford announced BHM as a calling to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout history.” Today, Black History Month has been celebrated not only in America but in Canada, the United Kingdom, and many more places.

Originally Black History Month started as Black History Week, the idea of Doctor Carter G. Woodson, the son of emancipated slaves who attended the University of Chicago and Harvard University, then went on to found the quarterly publication the Journal of Negro History. Doctor Woodson believed black youth were not being taught their full history of the African diaspora in elementary and secondary schools, and chose the second week of February for this celebration, because Federick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, who greatly impacted black lives, were born in February.

With the support of President Gerald Ford Black History Week officially became Black History Month in 1976. It’s a time to talk about and normalize conversations that are uncomfortable and often avoided. Though BHM is considered controversial and argued upon, Americans must remember the significance of studying and learning inclusive history. Morgan Freeman once said, “Black History is American History.”
Sonnet

Shall I say that I am so privileged?  
To be blessed with such a marvelous thing?  
Proud of my ancestry, my lineage.  

There are some who attempt to kill my spring.  
“You are the dirt that I spit on,” they say,  
Yet from that dirt, my flower blossomed high.  
Standing tall, getting stronger day by day.  

Afore my wither came close, it was nigh  
When discouraged, I hear their moans, their hums.  
Just to be owned in the land of the free,”  
Crying “Hold on! soon deliverance comes,”  
Something even I cannot grasp fully.  
Yes, I shall say I am so privileged.  
My roots will forever be acknowledged.  

By Tamar-Lynn Jean

Utopia

I found a place in my dreams.  
A utopia of some sort  
The grass juniper green  
Beautiful rainbows flew within  
The sun beams  
Different shades of skin were present.  
Peacefully gathered among themselves.  
It was strange, no sign of conflict.  
Excitement rushed and yelled as if i got a  
Present.  
Discussions structured  
Opinions shared  
Logic used  
unity wasn’t refused

Did social justice in America improve?  
Did injustice finally vanish?  
Was 400 years-  
Oppression and damage erased?  

I don't know where i am.  
Am i even in my own mind.  
Or am awake in different times?.  
Maybe I am in MLK’s vision.  
Maybe we share a dream

by trinitypagan
One Man, Shared Experience

Sweatdrop trickled down to the floor
Midnight, but no liberator at the door.
Anxious slave, unable to wait anymore
Much in the world for a Man to explore.
Two a.m. excited to his core,
Who knows what’s in store?

Three a.m. and he was free,
Ecstatic Man filled with glee.
Bright smile shining sea to sea
Slave entering society

I ask that everyone fill with jubilee
This month is for those who fought hard to see
The fair treatment of those who look like me

- by Amya White

Members of Students Empowering Equality, MHS’s newest club, from left to right, Sarah-Lynn Gilles, Amya White, Tamar-Lynn Jean and Glavanah Dumas planned activities to celebrate Black History Month, including a panel discussion titled, “Let’s Get Real,” Jeopardy Night, decorated the building with displays of Hidden Figures, African Americans who contributed to American History, and will host a celebration at 3:00 pm Jan 25.

https://petapixel.com/2019/10/19/this-photographer-uses-clever-tricks-for-extraordinary-photos/
Book Review: We Were Liars
Sometimes the Truth Is Hard To Handle

By Ola Abozid

We Were Liars by E. Lockhart is a New York Times bestselling young-adult novel published in 2014 with a captivating plot. It narrates the journey of a privileged seventeen-year-old Cadence Sinclair Eastman who lost her memory in a horrible accident that she cannot remember. Every summer Cadence’s extended family, the Sinclair’s, spend their entire holiday on the private island Beechwood, owned by her grandfather. From the outside, life seems idyllic, but like any family, there are problems.

The story begins with Cadence experiencing PTSD from the accident. From altered hair color to extreme personality changes, E. Lockhart describes the intense struggles Cadence experiences due to her inability to recall the sequence of events that led to the accident. Two years later, frustrated by her family’s refusal to reveal the truth about what occurred that summer, Cadence returns to Beechwood Island determined to uncover it herself. With the help of flashbacks and ghosts from her past, she solves the mystery. With the horrifying truth uncovered, and the guilt of her actions consuming her, Cadence realizes that beauty and money aren’t everything. Not only is her family imperfect, in fact, they were all liars.

The beauty of this novel is highlighted within the complexity of the protagonist’s emotions. Lockhart brings the character of a traumatized and naive teenager to life, allowing the reader to step out of their own reality into the Sinclair’s fictional world. In addition, the mystery of Cadence’s accident compels the reader to use their wits, trying to pick up on the clues and hints that unveil the truth behind the mystery.

Author Emily Jenkins, who writes books using the pen name E. Lockhart, is a 53-year-old American writer. She has written and published ten novels including another bestseller Genuine Fraud. Lockhart centers her work within children’s books and young-adult fiction. In addition, she is also a winner of the Goodreads Choice Awards Best Young Adult Fiction. Her debut novel, the Boyfriend List, was published in 2005, while her latest novel Again Again was published in June of 2020. E. Lockhart is a very talented writer with rightfully deserved praise. It is available at the MHS library, and the ebook and audio versions are available on the Sora app.

Read We Were Liars, you will never forget it!
Tom Brady won his 7th Superbowl on Sunday, February 7, 2021, making him the best quarterback of all time. Here are jumbles with current event terms from each year that Brady earned the coveted Superbowl ring.

2001
rwei tnowt
Hint: It will be 20 years this September when this major event occured in NYC.
nop ihtopeesshslor
Hint: it's leviosA not leviosAR. Also the international title of Sorcerer's Stone.

2003
pmehtaojc eromgnn ue
Hint: 99% of our "genetic code" was finished this year.
dnlaorao
Hint: Who played in Man United, Real, and Juva?

2004
sitpri
Hint: One of two Mars rovers that landed in 2004
toil lsev
Hint: Song by Maroon 5

2014
Oogg hnkn
Hint: Pro Democracy protests happened during this year in this Asian country
nlne
Hint: Was the most liked post on twitter until Arby's happened

2016
satnrgre tigsnh
Hint: Netflix series featuring the 80s.

2018
epsiceel
Hint: Next solar phamonoma to happen on Friday the 13th in 2080.
regenvas
Hint: Movie quote, "You should have gone for the head."

2021
Triclaopoilt
Hint: This event left five dead.

If you think you have all the correct answers, email ryan.crosby@students.marlboroschools.org for recognition in our next issue!