

5 pieces worth reading

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The unsettling truth about Trump's first great victory

Thomas Edsall argues in this *New York Times* article that former President Donald Trump's popularity among a significant share of Republican voters can be traced to the appeal of racial animosity within that population. Edsall contends that the conception of white identity that underpins that allure has been a consistent factor in ensuring support for Trump as he again leads in polls for his party's 2024 presidential nomination. More deeply, Edsall suggests, Trump's standing with many GOP faithful demonstrates that a significant swath of voters have drifted far from the American mainstream. That fact, the columnist argues, will make it tougher to restore U.S. politics to something resembling an even keel from its present extreme level of polarization.

Edsall, T. (2023, March 22). "The unsettling truth about Trump's first great victory." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/22/opinion/trump-racial-resentment-2016-2020.html>

The politics of a Trump indictment

New York Times columnist Ross Douthat discusses the politics surrounding the case prosecutors are considering bringing against former President Donald Trump for his hush-money payments to adult film actress Stormy Daniels in this piece. He considers how difficult it appears to be to indict a former president, a turn that has never previously occurred. Douthat warns that even if Trump is charged and is harmed at the polls by that fact, taking such a step could still be a bad idea as it could unleash a politics of revenge by GOP officials.

Douthat, R. (2023, March 22). "The politics of a Trump indictment." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/22/opinion/republican-nomination-trump-indictment.html>

Biden should listen to Zelenskyy on China

Mark Hannah argues in this *Politico* commentary that the Biden Administration should view China's proposed peace strategy for Ukraine as an opportunity to work with that nation and to co-host negotiations with Russia that could ultimately affirm Ukraine's sovereignty and ensure

Ut Prosim (That I may Serve)

its long-term security. While not outright endorsing China's plan, Hannah claims that Ukraine will need to maintain good relations with China when the war concludes, as it may need that nation's help to assist in rebuilding its infrastructure, a project that the West may be unwilling to undertake alone.

Hannah, M. (2023, March 15). "Opinion: Biden should listen to Zelenskyy on China." *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/03/15/china-russia-ukraine-biden-00086961>

Why the news is so negative- and what we can do about it

Dylan Matthews suggests in this *Vox* story that the news is often negative because the public, in fact, has a negativity bias; a tendency to allow downbeat information and experience to supersede positive reportage in journalistic accounts. According to Matthews, since news consumers are drawn to negative stories journalists face significant, and persistent, pressure to offer such content.

Matthews, D. (2023, March 13). "Why the news is so negative - and what we can do about it." *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/23596969/bad-news-negativity-bias-media>

Our democracy is broken. Here's how we can fix it.

Congressman Sean Casten (D-IL) argues in this commentary that American democracy is now broken because our Founding Fathers did not trust the will of the majority. He highlights the fact that our institutions are baked in counter-majoritarian biases, including the role and character of the Electoral College, equal state representation in the U.S. Senate, and a Supreme Court that is not directly accountable to the public. Casten offers three steps to address these concerns. First, he contends that the nation should elect 12 national at-large senators via ranked choice voting while also adding 12 national electors to the Electoral College. He asserts that the new senators would help to address the existing small state bias in Congress while the additional electors would be required to cast their votes in accord with the national popular vote outcome in presidential elections, making it less likely that a candidate who had not received majority popular support could gain the presidency. Second, he suggests that the size of the House of Representatives be increased to accommodate increases in population. Such action last occurred in 1911. Finally, he argues that the role of the Supreme Court should be circumscribed by limiting the reach of its appellate jurisdiction.

Casten, S. (2023, March 20). "Our democracy is broken. Here's how we can fix it." *Chicago Sun-Times*. Retrieved from <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2023/3/20/23641558/democracy-broken-senate-house-representatives-supreme-court-sean-casten-op-ed>