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## *5 pieces worth reading*

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### **Republicans are putting our standard of living at risk**

Max Lofgren argues in this *New York Times* article that Republicans are holding the country hostage by refusing to increase the debt ceiling, especially since it has routinely been raised in the past and doing so represents payment for obligations Congress has already incurred, in any case. Lofgren argues that a default would threaten the dollar's status as the world's principal reserve currency and would benefit adversarial actors such as Russia and China by weakening U.S. international standing. Lofgren asserts that President Biden must use any tools necessary to protect the vital interests of the country, including invoking the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to declare the debt ceiling unconstitutional.

Lofgren, M. (2023, May 10). "Republicans are putting our standard of living at risk." *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/10/opinion/biden-mccarthy-debt-ceiling-dollar.html>

### **Trump is mainstream, whether we like it or not**

*New York Times* editorial board member Michelle Cottle contends in this *New York Times* piece that CNN's decision to feature former President Donald Trump in a town hall may appear to suggest that the media has learned nothing since 2016 and continues to provide him a public platform despite the threat to democracy he represents. She argues instead, however, that since Trump is once again a presidential candidate, the media should assist voters in taking a clear measure of him via tough-minded and skeptical questioning that calls out his lies, no matter how "nauseating" that process may be.

Cottle, M. (2023, May 10). "Trump is mainstream, whether we like it or not." *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/10/opinion/trump-campaign-cnn-townhall.html>

### **Megyn Kelly is wrong about guns**

Jill Filipovich argues in this commentary that former Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly is wrong to assert that states with stricter gun laws have more mass shootings. Filipovich contends that a far-right Supreme Court has radically reshaped gun laws, making it impossible for these states to

*Ut Prosim (That I may Serve)*

implement the necessary legislation their voters want. The US is the only developed democracy that has such a high rate of gun violence, clearly stemming from its lax gun laws and culture.

Filipovic, J. (2023, May 9). “Megyn Kelly is wrong about guns.” *CNN*.

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/09/opinions/megyn-kelly-wrong-about-gun-debate-filipovic/index.html>

### **A new Supreme Court seeks to legalize assault weapons in all 50 states**

Ian Millhiser discusses the pending Supreme Court decision in *National Association for Gun Rights v. City of Naperville* in this article. That case could legalize assault weapons and high-capacity magazines in all 50 states. Milhiser maintains that, given Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s history of rulings concerning the right to own assault rifles in his judicial career and his status as the median vote on the current Supreme Court, it is likely state-level assault weapons bans will be ruled unconstitutional eventually, whether or not such occurs in this decision.

Millhiser, I. (2023, May 9). “A new Supreme Court case seeks to legalize assault weapons in all 50 states.” *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/politics/2023/5/9/23716863/supreme-court-assault-rifles-weapons-national-association-gun-rights-naperville-brett-kavanaugh>

### **We need a Manhattan project for AI safety**

Samuel Hammond maintains in this POLITCO commentary that artificial intelligence (AI) presents a threat to humanity via its widespread misuse and abuse by humans and the nightmarish possibility that a super intelligent machine could potentially turn against its creators. To combat these possibilities, Hammond contends that the U.S. needs immediately to design and launch a ‘Manhattan Project’ style collaborative research initiative focused on assessing the character of the threats AI poses and how those might be addressed effectively.

Hammond, S. (2023, May 8). “We need a Manhattan project for AI safety.” *POLITICO*.

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/05/08/manhattan-project-for-ai-safety-00095779>