



College of Liberal Arts and
Human Sciences

School of Public and
International Affairs

Institute for Policy & Governance
201 West Roanoke Street (0489)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
P: (540) 231-6775 F: (540) 231-6722
E: ipg@vt.edu
www.ipg.vt.edu

5 pieces worth reading

September 12, 2022

By: Billy Parvatam

Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance

<https://ipg.vt.edu/>

Opinion: Trump should fill Christians with rage. How come he doesn't?

Washington Post columnist Michael Gerson questions why Christian Evangelicals continue to support former President Donald Trump in this essay and highlights the manifest and large differences between current Trump and GOP stands and Christian teaching. Nonetheless, evangelical Christians have continued to support Trump and the GOP despite this reality and Gerson contends that understanding why that is so and its implications is pivotal to understanding American politics today.

Gerson, M. (2022, September 3). "Opinion | Trump should fill Christians with rage. How come he doesn't?" *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/09/01/michael-gerson-evangelical-christian-maga-democracy/>

How Jackson, Mississippi, ran out of water

Benji Jones describes the recent crisis that left 150,000 citizens of Jackson, Mississippi without running water, despite that community's status as the state's capital and largest city. He argues that the crisis has been years in the making and is closely tied to the fact that state legislators have continually failed to assist and support the city's majority-Black population.

Jones, B. (2022, August 31). "How Jackson, Mississippi, ran out of water." *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2022/8/31/23329604/jackson-mississippi-water-crisis>

Trump couldn't have done what he did without states leading the way

New York Times columnist Thomas Edsall argues in this article that the rise of Trumpism can be attributed to state governments under Republican control that have developed and pressed anti-democratic measures during the last decade. He points to Republican structural advantage in rural and exurban regions, extreme and effective gerrymandering in congressional districts that the Party controls, and the mass concentration of a disproportionate share of Democrats in urban areas.

Ut Prosim (That I may Serve)

Edsall, T. (2022, September 7). "Trump couldn't have done what he did without states leading the way." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/07/opinion/democracy-states-america.html>

Obama portrait ceremony shows how far from normal things have become

This story suggests that the fact that it took so long to unveil the official White House portraits of former President Barack Obama and First Lady Michele Obama highlights the fractured and bitter politics afoot in the U.S. today. In the past, such ceremonies have routinely been lighthearted and bipartisan affairs that occurred during each succeeding presidency. Donald Trump's decision not to continue that tradition was unprecedented and it is unclear what the implications of his choice may be for this national rite of passage in the future.

Collinson, S., Hu, C., & Rose, S. (2022, September 7). "Obama portrait ceremony shows how far from normal things have become." *CNN*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/07/politics/barack-obama-michelle-obama-return-white-house/index.html>

The pandemic erased two decades of progress in math and reading

Sarah Mervosh discusses national test results that show a decline in American school children's math and reading performance levels due to the pandemic in this report. National results suggest that those whose scores were already in lower achievement percentiles decreased at a higher rate than students who were previously succeeding at a higher level. These results could have major implications for affected students as they move ahead in their educational trajectories as it is unclear whether they will be able to regain the ground they have lost.

Mervosh, S. (2022, September 1). "The pandemic erased two decades of progress in math and reading." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/01/us/national-test-scores-math-reading-pandemic.html>