

# WORDS WORTH



FILL YOUR PAPER WITH THE BREATHINGS OF YOUR HEART. - WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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## Biden Wins 2020 Election

Joe Biden elected 46th President of the United States

By Lila Smith '22, News Editor & Political Columnist



Graphic made by Sam Bitman '21. Photos of President Elect Biden and Vice-President Elect Harris by Gage Sidmore, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Flickr. Photo of American flag by Emma Watson, CC0, via Me Pixels.

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are projected winners of the 2020 election.

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As Joseph R. Biden Jr. was elected the 46th president of the United States, MFS students and staff alike shared their emotions and, for some, relief at the conclusion of the 2020 Presidential Election.

Nearly five days after Election Day, Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes pushed President-elect Biden to the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency. His victory has broken multiple records, including oldest president-elect at the age of 77. This election also had a record voter turnout with Joe Biden receiving 80 million votes and Donald Trump receiving 73 million votes at the time of writing.

Shay O'Connor '23 said, "I am delighted that President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect [Kamala] Harris have won the election. I hope that both the MFS community and the people of the United States can come together to talk about our differences and move forward in a respectful and productive manner."

Cadence Roy '21 spoke of her excitement: "I'm really overjoyed. It's like a sigh of relief for this country, and now we can begin to heal."

Upper School history teacher Jackie Scully also reacted to Biden's election. "As bipartisan as I can be right now, my reaction is that we have a restoration of democracy! I love that

we waited to see ballots counted and PA prevailed. At the end of the day, whether you wanted Biden or Trump for president, what we did see is that true democracy came through!" said Scully.

Michael Kraft '21 said that the election was "rigged" and "stolen." There is currently no clear evidence that the election was rigged or stolen, but President Trump's team has filed a variety of lawsuits challenging the results of the election.

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris makes history as the first female vice president; and, coming from both a South Asian-American and African-American background, she is also

the first vice president of color. A hundred years after women gained the right to vote, Vice President-elect Harris makes history as the highest ranking woman in government.

Nae Maddrey '22, shared her joy for Kamala Harris being elected as vice president. "Extremely ecstatic. First female African-American vice president!" said Maddrey.

Roy also commented on the historical nature of Harris' election. "I was really excited. She's making history right now and inspiring boys and girls of color globally," said Roy.

This election also had many people mailing in their ballots due to

concerns over COVID-19. The high volume of mail-in ballots resulted in it taking a longer time to count all of the ballots. It ended up taking five days for the next president to be announced, with Pennsylvania and Nevada being announced on Saturday, November 7. Because of this prolonged and highly contentious election, many are grateful it is finally over.

Clark Thomson, the head of the history department at MFS, shared similar sentiments. "Thank God, it's over! How about some governance now?" he said.

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will be sworn in on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2021.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

# "I WON THIS ELECTION BY A LOT!"

## Trump claims false victory amid legal challenges against election results

By Sam Bitman '21, Editor-in-Chief

Since the news broke that former Vice-President Joe Biden won the election, President Donald Trump has made it clear that he has no plans to deliver a concession speech and accept the results of the election.

Over the course of the past few weeks, the Trump campaign has rolled out numerous lawsuits in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Nevada, and Michigan — all important swing states — claiming that there has been massive voter fraud. These lawsuits aim to either stop the voter-counting process or disqualify massive numbers of ballots.

Within an hour of Biden's win, President Trump's lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, made allegations that Philadelphia's electoral system is fraudulent.

However, Giuliani's allegations have no evidence to support them. The Trump campaign has also filed at least five additional lawsuits in Pennsylvania, two of which have requested election officials to stop counting ballots and to allow Trump campaign officials to be closer access to the counting process. Most of these lawsuits have either been dismissed or are still ongoing.

The Trump campaign has also attacked Michigan and Wisconsin, two states that turned blue for Biden in the election after being red for Trump in the 2016 election. In Michigan, since Election Day, Trump has filed two lawsuits, both requesting the ceasing of ballot counting. The Trump campaign has demanded a recount in

Wisconsin. This request does not require a lawsuit; however, state officials believe that a recount will likely not change the results.

In Georgia, the Trump campaign filed one lawsuit to disqualify 53 ballots after a poll watcher in Chatham County claimed to see ballots that arrived late mixed in with on-time ballots. This lawsuit was dismissed after no evidence was found. Georgia is also awaiting a ballot recount.

Most of the lawsuits that the Trump campaign has filed since Election Day have been dismissed by courts based on a "lack of merit."

In addition to these numerous lawsuits and claims of voter fraud, President Trump has also declared a false victory numerous times. On Wednesday

morning, at 2:30 a.m., as several states were still counting votes, President Trump held a press conference in the White House, in which he said, "We were getting ready to win this election. Frankly, we did win this election." In the same address, President Trump also said that his campaign plans to take his case of voter fraud to the Supreme Court, though it is unclear as to how he plans to do that.

Since that speech, President Trump has tweeted numerous false claims such as, "I WON THE ELECTION, BY A LOT!" and, "THE OBSERVERS WERE NOT ALLOWED INTO THE COUNTING ROOMS. I WON THE ELECTION, GOT 71,000,000 LEGAL VOTES. BAD THINGS HAPPENED WHICH OUR OBSERVERS WERE NOT

ALLOWED TO SEE. NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. MILLIONS OF MAIL-IN BALLOTS WERE SENT TO PEOPLE WHO NEVER ASKED FOR THEM!"

Some of President Trump's GOP constituents have publicly backed his claims of voter fraud.

In an interview with Fox News, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham said, "If Republicans don't challenge and change the US election system, there will never be another Republican president ever again. President Trump should not concede. We're down to less than 10,000 votes in Georgia. He's going to win North Carolina. We've gone from 93,000 votes to less than 20,000 votes in Arizona where more—more votes to be counted."

Republican Senator Ted Cruz also told Fox News, "I believe President Trump still has a path to victory, and that path is to count every single legal vote that was cast, but also not to count any votes that were fraudulently cast or illegally cast, and we have a legal process to determine what's legal and what isn't."

According to CNN, despite President Trump's refusal to accept the results of the election, Jared Kushner and others close to the President have privately approached him to advise him to concede.

Since the time of writing, the President's lawsuits have been resolved, and his administration will transition to the Biden presidency.

## How To Count A Mail-In Ballot

By Esha Patel '23, Features Editor & Opinions Editor

All fifty states spent Election Day, as well as the week leading up to it, counting mail-in ballots. Some states, including New Jersey, Michigan, and Georgia, were allowed to process their ballots upon receipt. This means that the ballots were allowed to be opened as soon as they were securely obtained.

A majority of states were allowed to start counting before November 3, but Mississippi, Alabama, and key states such as Pennsylvania and

Wisconsin, had to wait until Election Day to begin counting. To say that there were a lot of ballots to be processed is an understatement. According to [The New York Times](#), there were over 64 million ballots that were submitted via mail before Election Day.

The steps that were taken in order to ensure all ballots were processed and recorded were a crucial part of this election. In places where large amounts of ballots were projected to be

submitted, such as California, the ballots were first sorted into three categories based on how they were sent in: mailed to the voter's local election office, placed in a drop box, or brought to an election office by the voter.

The next step taken was verifying the signature on the outside of the ballot. If the signature did not match the one in the state's record, the ballot was rejected. There was a barcode on the ballot where voters could check to

see if their ballot was accepted or rejected. If the ballot was rejected, voters were then given the opportunity to take the required steps to fix their error.

According to ABC, along with submitting ballots after the deadline, missing signatures was one of the most common mistakes that lead to ballots not being accepted.

Since each mailed-in/dropped off ballot had to be opened by hand, opening the ballots was the most time consuming step

out of the entire process. Election officials took the secrecy envelope off, unfolded the ballot, and placed it in a bin to be counted.

Pennsylvania held a live stream on YouTube that showed election officials wearing masks while opening ballots. This allowed the nation to see the process of counting their ballots.

Once the ballots were all unfolded and ready to go, they were sent off to an electronic machine to be scanned. The data was

then collected and sent to election headquarters.


According to federal law, all ballots must be kept and stored in a safe place for 22 months after the election. They are usually placed in a government warehouse or a courthouse. Even though this election looked different from ones in the past, with the help of election officials around the country, officials were able to count and process each mailed-in vote.





## Election Ballots: The Impact on the Presidency


By Michael Huettl '23,  
Staff Writer

### ☆ Historical Firsts ☆

 Oregon became the first state to legalize the use of psilocybin mushrooms for mental health treatment.

 Delaware elected the nation's first transgender state senator.

 A record number of votes were cast via mail-in ballot.

 New Mexico elected the first all-female congressional delegation, and all women were of color.

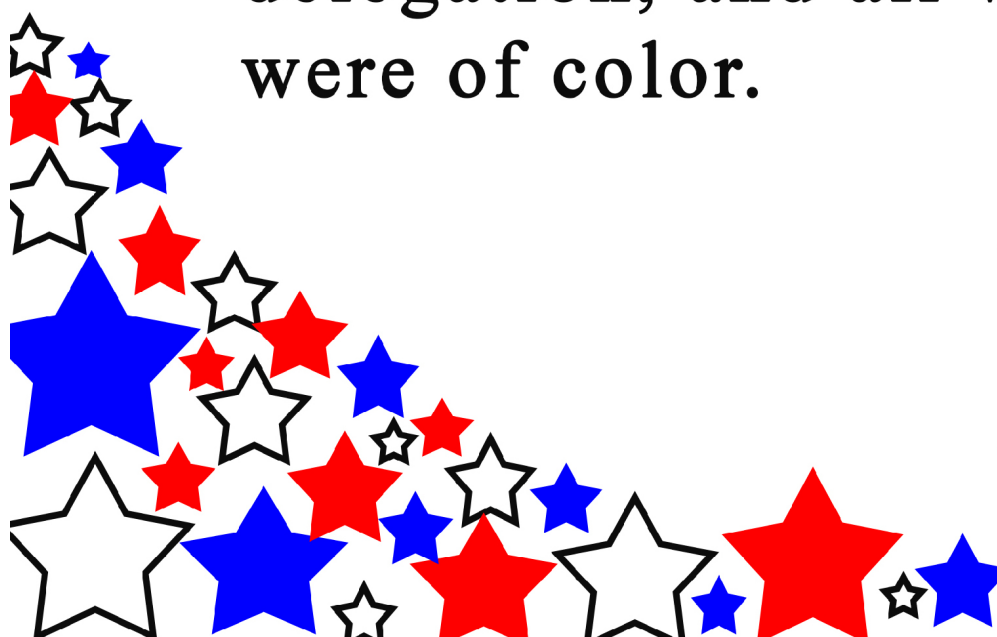
One of the most important deciding factors of the 2020 election was the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on voting and the election's results. The pandemic altered the voting process for the presidential election. In addition to in-person voting, there was an increased use of two additional voting methods: mail-in ballots and absentee ballots.

Throughout history, the standard for voting has been in-person polls, but during the 2020 election, due to COVID-19, the most prevalent forms of ballots were mail-in and absentee. An absentee ballot is a ballot submitted by a person who physically cannot attend in-person voting centers on Election Day, and are designed for military and overseas voters. In 2020, absentee ballots were also requested by registered voters who couldn't vote in person on Election Day.

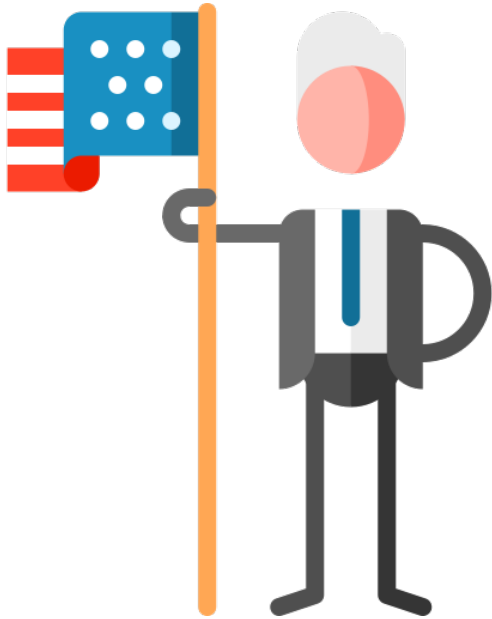
Another way to vote during the COVID-19 pandemic was through mail-in ballots. Registered voters who applied for mail-in ballots received a ballot through the mail prior to Election Day. The mail-in ballots were then filled out and either mailed back or deposited at a dropbox by Election Day. The major difference between absentee and mail-in ballots is that absentee ballots are used in every state for voters who cannot attend physically, while mail-in ballots are sent to all registered voters without special request and are then sent in to be accounted for.

MFS Sophomore Daniel Sorokin '23, when asked about the election and ballots, commented, "I do think more time could have been spent to make a better system for the 2020 election considering we knew that coronavirus was going to impact the election for months."

Through the 2020 presidential election, the processes of mail-in and absentee ballots has been proven effective, drastically increasing voter turnout to best express the national representation towards the election.



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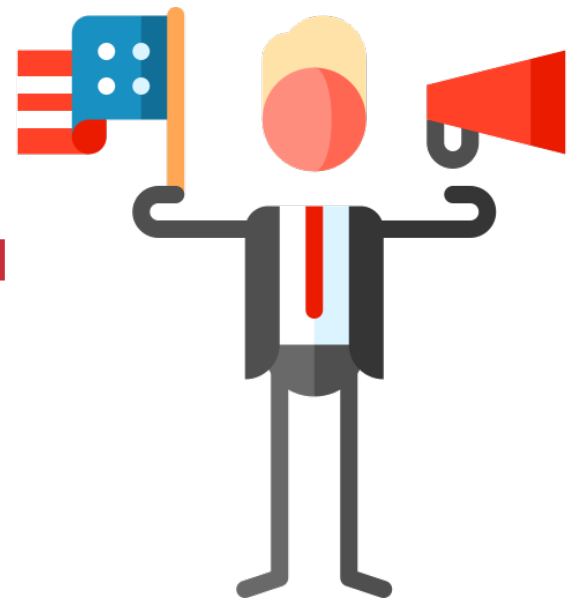
2020

By Lila Smith '22, Emma Nei '22, &amp; Ishaan '22 Shah

As this election year comes to an end, we reflect on the journey that brought us to Election Day. This timeline outlines the major events from the day former Vice President Joe Biden announced his campaign for the Democratic nomination to when he was projected as the 46th President of the United States. This timeline also focuses on President Trump's run for reelection, as well as other events that gripped the nation, such as the murder of George Floyd and the COVID-19 pandemic.



# Election



Sep. 18, 2020

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg dies; Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announces intention to fill the seat as soon as possible



Sep. 23, 2020

When asked at press conference, Trump refuses to commit to a peaceful transfer of power



Sep. 26, 2020

Trump nominates Amy Coney Barrett to succeed Justice Ginsburg



Sep. 27, 2020

The New York Times reports that Trump has not paid income taxes in 10 of the past 15 years



Sep. 29, 2020

The first Presidential Debate



Oct. 2, 2020

The President and the First Lady test positive for COVID-19; POTUS admitted to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center



Oct. 15, 2020

Biden and Trump hold their own town halls, on ABC and NBC, respectively



Oct. 22, 2020

The final Presidential debate is held



Oct. 27, 2020

Justice Amy Coney Barrett is sworn into the Supreme Court



Nov. 3, 2020

Election Day



Nov. 4, 2020

At 2:30 AM, Trump prematurely declares victory despite not all of the votes being counted



Nov. 7, 2020

Joe Biden is projected to be the 46th President of the United States

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# Follow the Science

By Kayla Patel '21

In today's world, the presence of multiple news sources means multiple interpretations of facts are available. On any given day, I can turn on the TV, scroll through my Instagram feed, or read a newspaper, and see a spectrum of opinions that reflects the wide variety of beliefs that America is home to. I cannot begrudge anyone their right to express their opinions, a right that is encoded in our Constitution. However, I can be distressed and vehemently opposed to a lack of belief in the only truths we know: those found in science. I come from a family of doctors, meaning I will always value scientific opinions.

Science is made up of facts, and scientists are the only people in this Coronavirus-world who can truly comprehend the magnitude of this crisis and provide insight as to what can be done.

There SHOULD be no bureaucracy, no games, no politics when it comes to the health of individual citizens and the nation as a whole. As each major candidate has campaigned and presented opposing views on every issue from immigration to health care, I have become more and more horrified at the blatant lack of respect for the doctors and scientists trying to navigate this crisis. How is it possible that the leading expert on this pandemic is being undermined and openly contradicted on national television? Dr. Fauci, at this point, is the voice of reason in the United States of America, unwavering in his desire to ensure the safety of all Americans regardless of race, religion, economic status, or political beliefs. Why is he, of all people, being questioned?

Then, there are the

now-common practices of wearing masks and social distancing. How is it possible that the concept of wearing masks is refuted, and mask mandates are disobeyed? It has been proven, time and time again, that wearing masks helps to prevent the spread of this virus, second only to self-isolation and a lack of contact with others. Of course, wearing masks is not a foolproof preventative measure—of course people will still test positive for COVID despite how careful they are. That doesn't mean we can ignore the proof that masks do work on some level.

And then there are large gatherings. How is it possible that the people at the highest level of our nation are acting as an example of what NOT to do, hosting large garden parties and packed rallies with few masks and little to no social distancing? People have been

avoiding parties, the grocery store, work or school, and even small hangouts with friends or dinners with family for fear of contracting the virus. Every time we step outside, we are held prisoner to what other people do; there is always a risk to going outside the comfortable bubble of our own homes. But, considering that some of our leaders are not discouraging larger gatherings with no precautions being taken, I have every reason to be alarmed and afraid.

That's not to say that the Commander-in-Chief is the only person attending large gatherings—I know for a fact he is definitely not. However, he is the President of the United States—the leader of over 300 million people—and he is on a very public stage. People watch what he does and what he says and act accordingly.

President Trump should conduct himself in a way that encourages others to act in the interest of their neighbors and take this virus seriously. I do understand why states' rights are necessary, but a national mask mandate would standardize the reaction to COVID-19. Instead of New Jersey's or North Dakota's responses, we need to have AMERICA'S united response. And, personally, that's what I see Joe Biden wanting to achieve. Even his words have their faults though. We don't need to "shut down the economy" or just allow COVID to run rampant. Dr. Fauci has said it best: if we follow the science, we can have an informed response that allows us to have some semblance of normalcy and safety, and not just in one state, but in all fifty.

The New England Journal of Medicine has condemned the

current administration's response to COVID. They are scientists and doctors who understand this pandemic better than most people ever could. Their words mean something at this point and have influenced what I think, because people like them are on the front lines, working to help save patients, come up with vaccines, and create better policies. The political responses to this pandemic in general have only solidified my personal beliefs about this election—they simply weren't enough. Who do I think will better protect the safety of my friends, my family, and me? Joe Biden. Of course COVID-19 was not the only factor in my choice, but it was a major one. As an all-candidate, Biden may not be the best choice, but he is the better one in this situation.

# The Aftermath

By Dinah Megibow-Taylor '24

Every losing candidate offers a gracious and noble concession speech. "We've fought the good fight," is what the message usually is. This year, though, is no usual fight. The claims of fraud, the tweets, and the lawsuits are not normal. But, if you think about it, what more would you expect from a race of this caliber?

Out of the exuberant amount of false claims President Trump has

made throughout his presidency, the ones that have been made in recent days are particularly outstanding. The accounts of mail-in "fraud" that he is fixated on, especially with our neighboring state of Pennsylvania, is getting increasingly frightening.

Flipping between MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, and BBC, the news of emerging lawsuits from the

Trump Campaign takes up the screen. Trump's recent speeches, claiming false victories and hypothetical scenarios where he would win, which are completely unfounded, continue to grow more desperate by the minute.

There have been many important figures, including law professors, Pennsylvania's Secretary of State, and other political analysts,

who have all come to the conclusion that these impending lawsuits have no merit, and that Trump and his posse have virtually no chance of winning them. From cases based on poll watchers in Nevada and Pennsylvania, to mail-in ballots counted in Wisconsin and Michigan, all are far-fetched and a last-ditch effort to manipulate the voice of the people.

So, one may pose the question: "Why is he setting up a legal scenario that he cannot win? What does he wish to accomplish?" It could be a multitude of things: he could want to cause trouble; he could want more attention, although he already has more than enough; or, he could want to arouse his supporters and make them angry. It could be that he wants to make

a statement, or stick with previous statements of refusing election results if he is defeated.

Now, though, there is not much the people can do but wait and see what the President declares next on his Twitter account. Whether he will whine and cry about the results, or if his efforts will take an unexpected turn, is a source of the nation's anxiety.

# The Biden-Harris Cabinet

By Shay O'Connor '23

Now that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have won the election, they will need to start thinking about who will serve in their Cabinet for the next four years. Many supporters of this ticket, myself included, feel that President Trump has mismanaged the executive branch through actions such as the roll back of numerous environmental and labor protections, the politicization of the Justice Department, and the unilateral withdrawals from international agreements. The Biden-Harris administration will need a stellar team to hit the ground running and reverse many of

these policies. I have some recommendations for a few positions.

#### Secretary of State:

Ambassador Samantha Power. She has experience on both the National Security Council and as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. She was confirmed to the latter role by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 87-10 in the Senate. Ambassador Power is experienced, but does not come with some of the baggage of events such as the Benghazi Attack that would make it difficult for her to win the necessary support from a couple of Republican senators. Plus, she is

Irish, and who doesn't like the Irish? (Okay, I'm a little biased here.)

#### Secretary of the Interior:

Representative Deb Haaland. She is currently a U.S. Representative from New Mexico's 1st congressional district. She is one of the first two Native American women serving in Congress, and she would add some diversity to Biden's Cabinet. Representative Haaland currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, and as Chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public

Lands. Her district is safe Democratic, so Democrats do not need to fear for their House majority.

#### Ambassador to the United Nations:

Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Mayor Buttigieg served two terms as mayor of South Bend, Indiana. He also ran for the Democratic nomination in 2020, but dropped out and endorsed Joe Biden before Super Tuesday. He has shown through his appearances on Fox News that he is a skilled orator. He speaks eight languages (including English). He would also bring diversity to Biden's Cabinet as a gay man. Some are critical of his lack of experience with

foreign policy. I would disagree with this argument and point out that he has shown he can adapt to whatever environment he is in. Additionally, not every U.N. ambassador comes with foreign policy experience (see: Nikki Haley).

Overall, I believe that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have a plethora of well-qualified candidates for all of the Cabinet positions. I am confident that there will be a range of intelligent, capable, and diverse nominees that will serve the American people and rebuild trust in these historic institutions.

## Your Vote Is My Future

By Ali Benjamin '24

The 2020 presidential election has been such a looming presence over all of our lives since January that it is easy to (almost) forget that anything else has or will happen this year. This year's election is arguably the most important of our time, with candidates possessing vastly differing views on some of the most pressing issues our country has seen. From raging wildfires which reignite the conversation about climate change, to social justice movements that have people questioning, yet again, what "We the People" really means, neither one of the presidential candidates has convinced me of their abilities to handle these difficult topics.

It has never been more important for US citizens to exercise their right to vote, but the COVID-19 pandemic has added yet another challenge to this year's political stage. Only 55% of eligible voters cast their ballots in the 2016 election, and that was without worrying about masks, social distancing, and increased sanitation measures. While these added precautions and increased stress levels make voting that much more difficult, it is not any less important to do it. In order to have an outcome that satisfies the needs of the greater good of our country, it is imperative that everybody who is eligible to vote, does so, to speak for those of us who can't yet speak for ourselves.

# November 7th

By Lila Smith '22, News Editor & Political Columnist

What I'll remember most from November 7th is the joy that was present nearly everywhere. The only way I can describe that day was a collective exhale, which we all so desperately needed. Let's be honest, 2020 sucks. I'm writing this article during online school because a global pandemic shut down in-person learning. Watching politics for me has never been more stressful than ever due to the pandemic and the election. Black Lives Matter had protests all over the world. It felt like things might start getting better, but it seems that every other week another person is

killed or justice is not given. Our lives have changed so drastically, and it's unclear when things will ever go back to normal.

This brings me to November 7th, the end of probably the most stressful election that many have ever experienced; though for me, that's not saying much since the only presidential election I have clear memories from is the 2016 election. Results for the 2020 election took nearly five days, and by then I was done with politics. I will be perfectly content if I never hear the words "absentee-ballots" and "Allegheny County" ever again. By day five,

becoming a hermit was starting to look pretty appealing. Then, it happened, Joe Biden was projected to be the 46th president, and the nation finally let out that breath of air it had been holding in. While I didn't participate in the major celebrations, the joy of those I saw on TV and relatives I heard from was infectious.

I'm not saying if you voted for Donald Trump you don't get to be sad, I understand that. You are allowed to criticize Joe Biden. However, these last four years have been genuinely scary for many people. The president's refusal to denounce white

supremacy, the possibility of millions losing their healthcare during a pandemic, the US leaving the Paris Climate Agreement, and the President announcing plans to withdraw from the World Health Organization, all of these things have affected real people. Yes, I know, Joe Biden being president will not fix these problems; America's problems are rooted so deeply that I doubt any election will be able to fix them. However, for one day, November 7th, it felt like a step forward had finally been taken. A new president-elect, Joe Biden, along with his vice-president elect

addressed the nation. Kamala Harris, a woman, person of color, and daughter of immigrants, introduced the next president. To hear the next president and vice-president praise minorities such as black women and transgender people on national television, that is a step forward. This year has been filled with too many steps backwards, but on November 7th, as people across the country celebrated and the next president encouraged unity and compassion, it felt like Americans had earned this moment: a moment to celebrate, to let loose, and to just be joyful.

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# How Celebrities and Social Media Encouraged Voting

By Jordan Grabelle '22, Associate Editor-in-Chief of WordsWorth.com/Copy Editor, Vani Hanamirian '22, Associate Editor-in-Chief of Print

The influence of social media has greatly impacted this election season. Alongside the efforts made by both of the 2020 presidential candidates' campaign teams, celebrities have made their own contributions to campaigns. Public figures have posted on social media and encouraged their followers to vote. Other celebrities have chosen to endorse candidates.

Actress Julia Roberts took to Instagram to encourage people to vote. One post has her in a full tracksuit with the word "vote" scattered across the outfit. Other celebrities posted photos of themselves placing their ballot in the

drop-off box. There was also a series of posts where celebrities and public figures displayed their "I voted" stickers in the hopes that it would spread a message to young voters to do the same. Some celebrities, such as singer Taylor Swift, have gone a step further and have endorsed candidates. Swift took to social media to declare her support for the Biden-Harris ticket and to suggest that her followers do the same. Harris has even replied to Swift and complimented her mission to "show young people what's at stake in this election."

Other celebrities who have endorsed the

Biden-Harris ticket include John Legend, Lizzo, Michael Keaton, and Ariana Grande. Biden has also worked with the cast and crew of the Broadway show Hamilton to host a live question and answer session October 16, 2020 that was free for all Americans. During this event, members of Hamilton's original cast, including Lin Manuel Miranda and Leslie Odom Jr, demonstrated their support for Joe Biden. The program concluded with a message from then-Vice Presidential Candidate Kamala Harris asking Americans to vote for her and Biden.

Also utilizing social media were the

candidates themselves, interacting with their supporters and collaborating with different public figures. Donald J Trump, during his reelection campaign, has been photographed with several celebrities. Some of the celebrities publicly supporting President Trump include Lil Pump, Lil Wayne, Isaiah Washington, and Kirstie Alley. President Trump has organized several rallies with guest appearances, such as an event on November 2, 2020, in which Lil Pump joined President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence on stage.

In addition to potential voters, the impact of

celebrities and candidates on social media has reached audiences that are unable to vote in the 2020 election. Although celebrities' activism on social media is intended to be inspiring, there are some negative consequences.

Sumin Kim '23 explained, "Social media helps with awareness about issues, but with the election it is definitely toxic." In reference to social media posts, Kim said, "If someone sees someone else post something that is opposite of their views, then they begin to bully them. That's not okay."

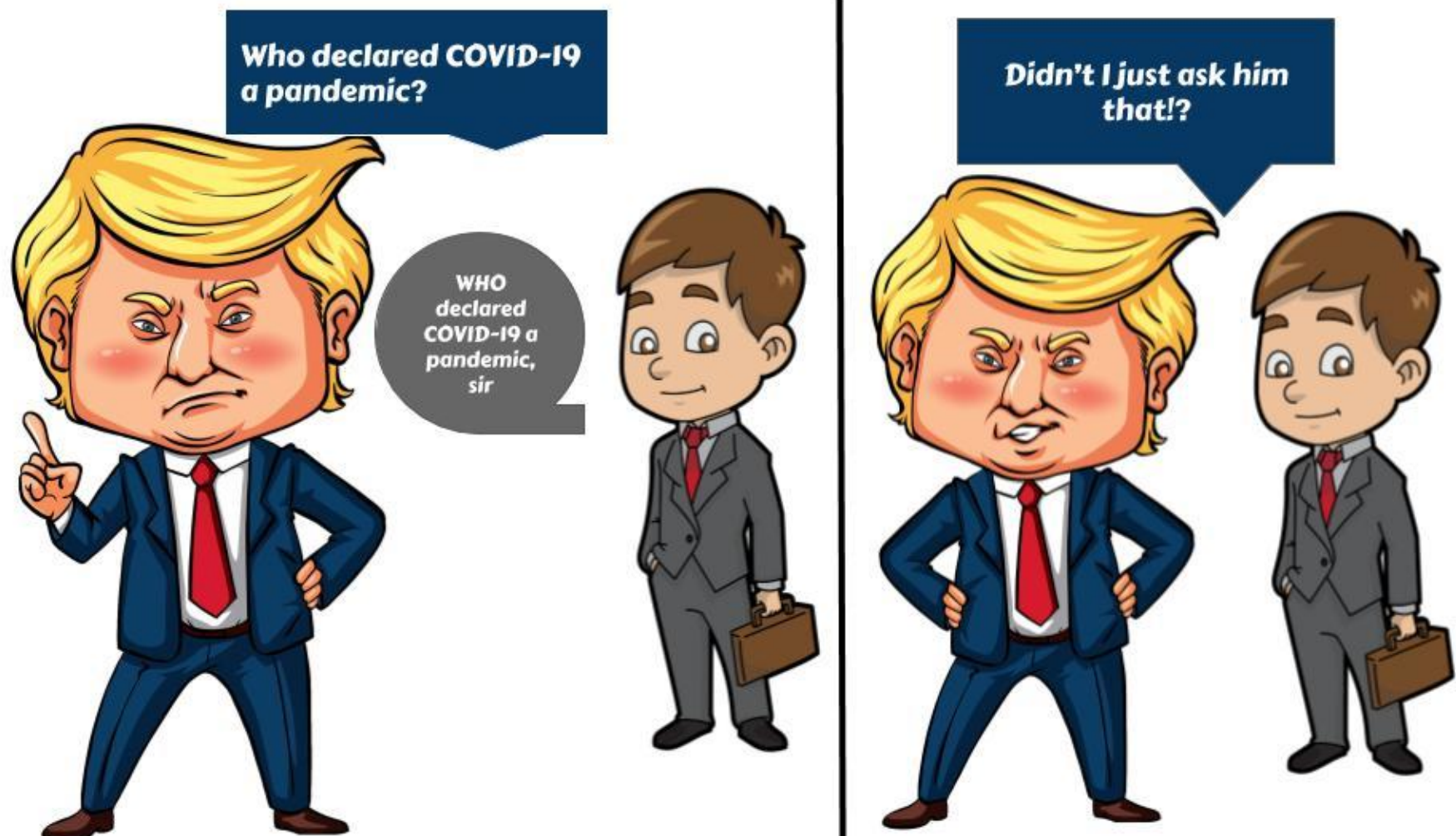
Other MFS students also had mixed

emotions on social media's influence on the 2020 presidential election. Kendall Borbi '22 said, "Celebrities attempting to persuade citizens to vote a certain way is not appropriate. People should form their own opinions off of facts and their values, rather than persuasion."

Another, and more neutral way that social media has influenced this election is by social media platforms making an effort to ease the process of voter registration. Platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram have featured automatic messages which remind users to register to vote.

## OPINION: Who's WHO?

By Rebecca Benjamin '21, Associate Editor-in-Chief of Broadcast and Podcast





## What Political Satire Are Students Watching?

By Emma Nei '22, Multimedia Producer & Pop Culture Editor

In past elections, political satire has become a source of comedy about the candidates and political parties. In this particular election, political satire has been a necessary form of comedic relief from the stress of the election and 2020, which includes COVID-19, social unrest, economic uncertainty, and environmental catastrophe. At MFS, students have mixed

emotions about the comedic relief provided by political satire.

A few students enjoy watching Saturday Night Live on NBC. Aani Desai '22 commented, "I do watch some political satire. I watch SNL frequently. I enjoy watching because I find it funny, and it's a good reminder that even during challenging times, there are things to laugh at."

Nia Hipps '22 had a similar perspective to

Desai: "I think SNL is really funny and helps release all of the seriousness of politics." Another junior, Roma Jha '22 also watches SNL for political satire: "SNL is fun to watch because I am always interested in what is going on politically in our country, and especially in the past few years, things have been pretty crazy. It's a great outlet that can always make me laugh, even about some of the most

stressful topics facing our country. The actors really do an excellent job."

Although some students have enjoyed SNL as a source of comedic relief, others have different opinions. Ava Parker '22 commented, "I think a lot of people tend to watch things like SNL, myself included, but recently I haven't been watching it as much. I think they can be funny but also show how insane the US politics

are today."

Some students don't watch political satire at all. Nick Mandrackie '24 commented, "I don't really watch [political satire]. I don't have a problem with [political satire] because politics should be able to be laughed at. I don't watch it because I don't really care about politics that much." Emmet Kimberly '22 explained, "I don't have extremely strong opinions [about political satire], but I

mostly don't watch it because I just don't find it funny."

Besides SNL, students have found humor in other forms of political satire. Elise Trani '24 states, "Sometimes on Tik Tok, I'll come across political videos. I find these to be funny and entertaining." Jalyn Lawrence '21 agreed: "I usually use Tik Tok for political satire, and some of the Tik Toks I see about the election are hilarious."

## 1, 2, 3, Vote!

### The Influence of Athletes and Professional Sports Leagues Across the Nation

By Ishaan Shah '22, Sports Columnist

In preparation for the 2020 Election, athletes and professional sports leagues across the nation took it upon themselves to motivate people to express their voice through voting. The NFL launched an initiative, NFL Votes, through which over 900 players registered to vote. The league also featured slogans on the back of end zones, such as "It Takes All of Us" and "Vote," in order to stress the importance of voting to the millions of Americans watching on television.

At the collegiate level, the NCAA canceled all games and practices on Election Day in

order to motivate and allow student-athletes to vote at nearby polling stations.

NBA superstar LeBron James launched "More Than a Vote," a voting rights organization aimed at increasing voter turnout in the Black community. Other players, like Trae Young, Draymond Green, and Eric Bledsoe, as well as coaches like Doc Rivers and Greg Poppovich, have helped with James's initiative.

In a phone interview with [The New York Times](#), James explained, "I'm in a position where I can

educate people and, through More Than a Vote, educate people on how important this movement is, and how important their civic duty is. Not only to empower themselves, but to give back to their community as well."

James, just a couple of days before the election, also led efforts to pay court fines and fees for 13,000 felons in Florida so that they could cast a ballot on Election Day. James is believed to have aided a total of \$27 million to this initiative.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers organization provided dinner to Allegheny County

volunteer poll workers.

A volunteer who helped deliver some of the meals stated, "We figured it was a good opportunity to help them give back."

The meals were much appreciated, according to a country spokesperson: "We've been working very long hours, so for them to have thought of us is very kind."

This is not the first time the Steelers have helped election officials. In September and October, the team provided Allegheny County election officials with 5,000 masks, and launched public service announcements urging

people to vote by mail. In a press conference on Election Day, Steelers' head coach Mike Tomlin explained, "We're professionally focused, but we've been talking continually about being active participants in the political process and exercising our right to vote. It requires no special meeting or no point of emphasis today. We all know what today is."

Right across the state, in Philadelphia, Eagles' safety Rodney McLeod, with other teammates, rode a bus throughout the city on Election Day, motivating people to go out and vote. McLeod did this as

part of his "My Voice My Vote" campaign, which aims at improving voter turnout and eliminating voter suppression. McLeod's campaign also funded free shuttle services to polling locations in North Philadelphia and provided poll workers with free meals.

The Eagles' safety said he saw a positive influence from his campaign: "It has been amazing to see how excited and proud everyone is about voting. When they see the bus and give us a thumbs-up that they voted, we are confident that change is going to come."

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