

# Post-Trump patriotism



by Sam Blanc

*Trigger warning: I am a democrat and a self-proclaimed purveyor of the radical liberal agenda.*

America was one of the first countries of the modern world to proclaim itself a democracy and I believe that's a big part of what shapes our patriotism.

Of course, people express that in different ways: some take to the streets to protest ideas and individuals they disagree with, some lay claim to their hard-earned tax dollars or unnecessarily dangerous automatic weapons, and some use freedom of press to write about their beliefs (that's me).

Whatever you do, it's difficult to deny that Americans bask in freedom of Democracy. I have, ever since kindergarden, when I learned to put my hand over my heart and belt out an off-key Star Spangled banner.

The thing is, it's been pretty easy to feel pride for democracy so far in my life. The past eight years, there's been a president in office with whom I agreed with on almost all major issues.

Not only did I respect his policies, but I respected his manners, temperament, and sense of humor. (Honestly, I would go see Obama do standup in a heartbeat).

I'll be the first to admit that at least some of my patriotism thus far in my life has come from the fact that, well, I was winning.

Now, however, as President

Trump has taken office, I've found it hard to be as fond of the system. The man who now holds Obama's place is on the opposite end of the spectrum in almost every way. And for the first time in my life (I didn't really have an interest in politics during George W. Bush's presidency) I've realized that not everybody here is on the same page.

The thing is, I still love America the same way I love anything. It's not because our country is perfect or because I expect it to be, but because I think we have the potential to be better and to give all sorts of people a place to call home.

*You have a voice, and if you scream loud enough, the government won't be able to ignore you.*

Democracy is the will of the people. Some people--almost half of the voting population--expressed that will by voting for Donald Trump.

Others expressed it through peaceful protest, appealing to their local lawmakers, and donating to organizations which they deem important.

In a world where I'm sometimes afraid to check the news in the morning, it's easy to be a sore loser. It's easy to sit around and rant about what you think the government's doing wrong, and how they're going to ruin our country.

If, like me, you find yourself doing this, then maybe that's why things don't seem to be going our way. Democracy can only be the will of the people if the people are willing to do something about it.

I'm not going to lie, my first reaction to Nov 8 was sadness and

anger. But I tried to make something out of it.

I gave money to Planned Parenthood and the Trevor Project and bought a lot of passive aggressive sweaters (the last one was more of an introspective statement).

Even though I don't have too much to give, I put something out there, which is more than I've done before.

The important thing is that everyone continues to express their opinions somehow, and that everyone is working to make positive change.

That means creating jobs and fighting terror like Trump has promised to do. But it also means keeping the rights we've granted to members of the LGBTQ+ community, and giving women easy access to reproductive health products, and giving hard working immigrants the respect they deserve, and not taking away healthcare from 30,000,000 people.

As a country, we're starting a new chapter. The contrast is so extreme, it may actually be an entirely new book, but it doesn't matter because the author is still the same--the American people.

For everyone who's scared, know that the election is not the be-all end-all. You still have a voice, and if you scream loud enough, the government won't be able to ignore you.

For everyone who's happy with our new government. Be proud--you stood up for your beliefs and you won.

But also be aware that democracy is not black and white. Even though our government has changed, the people in America are the same and they all deserve the respect the Land of the Free has always given them.

## Staff Editorial

### The future of democracy lies in demonstration

On Saturday Jan. 21st, one day after President Trump's inauguration, around five million men, women and children marched, all around the world, not only for women's rights but various other causes. These included LGBTQ rights, racial equality, immigration reform, environmental protection and others. The march gave women and other anxious individuals a platform from which to voice their concerns to the newly elected president and the government.

Though the headline march was in Washington D.C. and attracted 470,000 participants according to The New York Times, Chicago held a sister march that beckoned 250,000 individuals, according to the Chicago Tribune. This was thousands more than the 22,000 previously expected.

Among the 250,000 marchers, New Trier students exercised their first amendment rights to gather and demonstrate. These Trevians marched to express their concerns and to uplift the voices of others.

The demonstration was a harsh wake up call for President Trump: respect for the concerns, dilemmas, and lives of all American citizens regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race and religion.

Many experts believe Trump's victory was due to past administrations ignoring the concerns of typically white, working class, individuals, specifically those who feel ill-prepared for a quickly globalizing world.

Michael Lerner, a New York Times opinion writer, even implied that the deep frustrations these individuals feel led to their large numbers at the polls in November. He wrote, "If the left could abandon all this shaming, it could rebuild its political base by helping Americans see that much of people's suffering is rooted in the hidden injuries of class and in the spiritual crisis that the global competitive marketplace generates. Democrats need to become as conscious and articulate about the suffering caused by classism as we are about other forms of suffering."

The message from this is clear: yes, we must continue to fight for our rights and to stop injustice, but we must also be tolerant of the opinions of others.

To be clear, though, racist or sexist beliefs are not constructive opinions, since they go against the foundations of our democracy. Beliefs of racism and sexism, thoughts that divide us into groups of "us vs them," do not deserve a platform, nor our respect, for they are incongruent with our constitution. These beliefs go against the ideas of our country and contradict our beloved themes of equality, justice and freedom. They are an anomaly. And they have no place. For if we allow something incongruent with our constitution to survive, it will destroy our democracy with hypocrisy and falsehood.

So get out your signs. Protest, march, demand respect for your opinions and recognize the differing opinions of others. No matter your political affiliation, voice your concerns. If you are concerned about women's rights--go march. If you think Obamacare should be repealed--call your representative. If you are concerned about the environment--join the Environmental Club.

At New Trier, our education is richer than mere subject matter. We learn more than Chemistry, Geometry, or World History. We are being taught to think. Each day at school, we learn how to form our own opinions. How to differentiate facts and falsehoods. And through this education we will expand our understanding and view of the world.

As we form of our own opinions we can no longer be content with passivity. Inaction is a plague to progress; if you want to see change in the next four years it starts with saying something.

## "A Dog's Purpose" neither barks nor bites



by Max Minogue

This past week I saw an abomination of a movie, unjustly titled "A Dog's Purpose."

I went into it expecting a nice break from reality featuring dogs and a crappy storyline. That's it. Dogs being dogs, mediocre human acting, and some thread of a cohesive story, and I would have come out of that movie happy.

I would quickly learn that expecting a happy, dog-induced escape from the chaos of reality was far too much for me to ask for.

I came out upset and in tears after watching a disgusting attempt at emotional manipulation put forth by greedy movie producers.

Shedding a couple of tears during the film was no homage to any greatness within the film, it was only me being a human with emotions.

In "A Dog's Purpose," a whole slew of dog's die. If I went into the film having no previous concept of what a dog is, I'd believe that a dog's purpose is to die.

For anybody worried, this isn't even remotely a spoiler alert. In a grotesque opening sequence lasting an excruciating five minutes, a puppy is born, lives a couple of months,

then is killed by humans.

This, along with the rest of the tragedies that affect the dogs of the film, is accompanied by the dog narrator speaking like a naive and innocent child struggling to understand the concept of death or why he's so hungry.

The worst example of this is seen when a dog has a gunshot wound and bleeding out to death on the ground, and the omnipresent narrator states that this shot hurts a whole lot more than the other shots she's gotten at the doctor. Yeah.

By that point in my viewing, I became a cold shell of my previous self and refused to get attached to any more dogs that would come on screen. After all, they'd all be dead in the next couple of minutes anyways.

During their brief years while actually living, the dogs continue to find and help owners with their own human struggles, like loneliness or heartbreak.

All of these story lines managed to remain hollow and generic, all the while being shoved down the viewer's gullet in an inane attempt to provide meaning to the half-dozen dog deaths.

There's a shallow attempt to provide some sort of overarching plot line. If anybody has seen the trailer, however, then they can already predict the entirety of the plot.

If there were any redeemable qualities in this abhorrent film, they were lost due to the valid animal abuse allegations surrounding the

film due to a video of one of the dogs being forced into a rushing stream of water against its will.

Unfortunately, I heard about this after the fact. However, judging from the apparent moral of the film, it made sense; dogs are sacks of flesh that exist to serve humans while getting little in return.

I know that dogs are far, far better than any human. Still, regardless of the validity of that, I went into a movie in search of a happy escape with happy dogs and found nothing of the kind.

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In hindsight, the movie was such a blatant attempt at emotional manipulation that I should have seen this coming.

If I wanted to watch dogs enjoy life, I should have stuck to YouTube. I can only hope that this sort of trash filmmaking doesn't catch on. I can only recommend this film to somebody if they're incredibly desperate for a good cry.

And if you still desire to see this movie, please, at the very least buy a different ticket at the theater.



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