

# **The UConn Undergraduate Political Review**

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## Letter From the Editor

*Kempton Campbell*

04/24/2023

Dear Readers,

It is my privilege to write to you as the Editor-in-Chief of the University of Connecticut's Undergraduate Political Review. This semester we are proud to publish our sixteenth edition of the journal. With each publication, we strive to challenge UConn undergraduate students to explore complex and topical political issues that affect the world around us.

All articles included in this edition were written by undergraduate students and have undergone a rigorous peer-reviewed drafting process overseen by our student-run editorial board. Some of our past publications have confined our staff writers to a specific theme. This edition is unbound by specific themes and instead features articles that consider topics that captured the attention of this University's young scholars. We are proud to feature articles on topics ranging from a progressive approach to drug policies in the U.S. to the effects social media has on molding public opinion.

This publication would not have been possible without the support of several individuals. I would like to thank all our editors and writers for their hard work and dedication this semester. We could not have published such a high-quality, though-provoking, edition without a dedicated group of undergraduate students. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Oksan Bayulgen, Dr. Evan Perkoski, and the University of Connecticut's Political Science Department for their continued support of this publication.

I would also like to thank you, the reader, for taking the time to read and support this publication. We are grateful to have a supportive community and department that share in our passion of writing in the field of political science. Lastly, it is my pleasure to share that our current editors Devin O'Brien and Kieler Langemo will step into the roles of Editor-in-Chief and Assistant Editor-in-Chief for the 2023-2024 year. It has been an honor and a privilege to lead this publication for the past two years. I would like to wish both Devin and Kieler the best of luck in carrying on the professionalism of this publication for our department, our university, and most importantly, for our future Huskies.

Sincerely,

Kempton B. Campbell | Editor-in-Chief

# The Politics of Conspiracy: How Polarization and Social Media Shape Public Opinion

*Lauren Baskin*

Conspiracy theories, the collective belief that a secret influential organization is responsible for an event or phenomenon, have been present in the political arena and in popular culture since the early origins of the United States.<sup>1</sup> The threat of conspiracy has existed in a multitude of forms. While a leading contributor to conspiracy is political polarization, there are many factors that may influence one's confidence or belief in the government.<sup>2</sup> Leaders and political figures have been both the victims and perpetrators of conspiratorial language throughout history. The context of conspiracies can be unique. However, their effect on a society can introduce similar modes of fear, misinformation, and uncertainty.<sup>3</sup>

In recent years, conspiracies have circulated around the U.S. as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, economic recessions and even presidential elections. From a psychological and sociological standpoint, conspiracies are not only influenced by political polarization, but rather a mixture of characteristics that make up the human experience including identity, education, economics, and geography.<sup>4</sup>

Political uncertainty is one of the most influential causes of conspiracy in the U.S. The troubles of the past few years have become recognizable amongst all groups of people. However, there is a clear divide between those who feel protected by the government and those who do not.<sup>5</sup> For instance, conspiracy theories ran rampant after the 2020 election; the manifestations of fear, anger and confusion amongst a group of people even resulted in the attempted insurrection of the nation's Capital.<sup>6</sup> At what point does a person's beliefs or perceptions of the world inhibit their conscious understanding of reality? How do conspiracies influence events like the insurrection in Washington D.C.?

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Languages, "Oxford Languages and Google - English," Oxford Languages (Oxford University Press, 2023), <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>.

<sup>2</sup> John Fea, "What We Can Learn from Early American Conspiracy Theories," Time, September 24, 2020, <https://time.com/5892376/early-american-conspiracy-theory/>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Karen Douglas, "Speaking of Psychology: Why People Believe in Conspiracy Theories, with Karen Douglas, PhD," American Psychological Association, 2022, <https://www.apa.org/news/podcasts/speaking-of-psychology/conspiracy-theories>.

<sup>5</sup> Julie Jiang et al., "Political Polarization Drives Online Conversations about COVID -19 in the United States," *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* 2, no. 3 (July 2020): 200–211, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.202>.

<sup>6</sup> Wayne Rash, "Disinformation Propelled by Social Media and Conspiracy Theories Led to Insurrection," Forbes, January 29, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/waynerash/2021/01/19/disinformation-propelled-by-social-media-and-conspiracy-theories-led-to-insurrection/?sh=3af4fbc134e0>.

In many ways, conspiracies can provide hope for vulnerable individuals. When people feel they have lost control, embracing conspiracies relieves any thoughts of uncertainty or fear.<sup>7</sup> After the 2020 presidential election, many people believed that it was impossible that President Donald Trump could have lost the race. Through this disbelief, confusion, and fear, grew, and in effect, led to the insurrection of the Capitol on January 6th, 2020.<sup>8</sup> Whether or not President Trump was aware of the potential that his political speeches could inspire conspiratorial language, it is evident that a very large population was heavily influenced by the news and social media.<sup>9</sup> Cynthia Wang, director of the Dispute Resolution and Research Center, provides her own comprehension of conspiracy in politics today. In regard to conspiratorial language, she states “With COVID-19, the elections, the war in Ukraine, the economy, and inflation, the world is just rife with uncertainty, and people are just looking to understand things. There’s a certain set of leaders who know that language can be used to assuage the uncertainty that’s going on in the world.”<sup>10</sup> While the choices made by the insurrectionists of the U.S. Capitol were criminal, the implications of their actions certainly can influence a conversation surrounding the psychology of conspiracies. Specifically, how the advancing presence of social media has heavily influenced the reality of our political and social environments.<sup>11</sup> In comparison to the general size of the American population, conspiracy theories are normally led by a smaller, collectively similar group of individuals. However, with the increased influence of social media, there is the possibility that conspiracies can overtake a large group of people, even potentially implicating impactful events.<sup>12</sup>

According to Adam Enders, author of *Polls, Plots, and Party Politics: Conspiracy Theories in Contemporary America*, conspiracies have become even more prevalent in society:

“...not because we have entered a ‘new age of conspiracy’ or because prominent political elites promote conspiracy theories...the recent focus on conspiracy thinking by social scientists provides us with an opportunity to explore a phenomenon that many have long ignored: political suspicion or skepticism, which drives conspiracy thinking and other non-ideological disruptive political attitudes.”<sup>13</sup>

This political skepticism inferred by Enders is not a recent phenomenon. In fact, it is clear that our nation’s history has often been viewed with skepticism and uncertainty. But, in an

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> “Why Are so Many Politicians Embracing Conspiracy Theories?,” Kellogg Insight, October 28, 2022, <https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/why-are-so-many-politicians-embracing-conspiracy-theories>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> “Why Are so Many Politicians Embracing Conspiracy Theories?,” Kellogg Insight, October 28, 2022, <https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/why-are-so-many-politicians-embracing-conspiracy-theories>.

event as impactful as the Covid-19 pandemic, many people transformed their fears and isolation into forms of skepticism.<sup>14</sup>

There are many factors of the early stages of the pandemic that influenced this skepticism, including many people refusing to stay home or not wearing masks. On top of the fears surrounding the virus, there was a collective fear of uncertainty surrounding the entire population.<sup>15</sup> Citizens could not find answers right away, which led to the mass consumption of news media and even conspiratorial media on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Reddit. A snowball effect of misinformation on the internet led to a frenzy of skepticism. In a study conducted by researcher Hunter Priniski discussing the conditions of preexisting distrust and its effects of Covid-19 skepticism, it was concluded that; “As skeptics solidified their attitude towards the virus, they more strongly endorsed additional beliefs that supported their skepticism”.<sup>16</sup> Conspiracy theories are not inspired by everyday life, and they do not represent the characteristics of a healthy political body. But, rather than demonizing conspiracy theorists, it is important to make an attempt in discovering the root of the problem. In what ways can society, particularly participants on social media, prevent conspiratorial language?

In the wake of Covid-19 and the insurrection, many online and social media platforms implemented fact-checking resources that notify a viewer of any potential misinformation. The effectiveness of these initiatives cannot be determined immediately as they have been implemented quite recently, however it is fair to say that creating these initiatives is a step in the right direction. As described by the researchers in the Harvard University study; “People who were concerned about contracting COVID-19 statistically were more likely to support fact-checks, regardless of which fact-check statement they received.”<sup>17</sup> Conspiratorial language is incredibly prevalent in our society today, and while it is impossible to completely eradicate skepticism and conspiratorial beliefs in a society as large as the U.S., it is important to recognize the many contributing factors to conspiracy theories. It is the role of many to seek the root of the problem and advocate for the truth. Skepticism is a reflection of the fears and uncertainties about the world. Therefore, it is important to advocate for individuals led by misinformation.<sup>18</sup> By becoming more inclusive and receptive to skepticism, there is potential for a society that is not led by misinformation, judgment, and fear mongering.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> J. Hunter Priniski and Keith J. Holyoak, “A Darkening Spring: How Preexisting Distrust Shaped COVID-19 Skepticism,” ed. Camelia Delcea, *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 1 (January 26, 2022): e0263191, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263191>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid,

<sup>18</sup> J. Hunter Priniski and Keith J. Holyoak, “A Darkening Spring: How Preexisting Distrust Shaped COVID-19 Skepticism,” ed. Camelia Delcea, *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 1 (January 26, 2022): e0263191, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263191>.

## Human Activity and the Cause of the Changing Climate

*Sara Bedigian*

The human expansion of the greenhouse effect is the warming that results when the atmosphere traps heat radiating from Earth toward space. Chemical compounds like carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and chlorofluorocarbons all contribute to the greenhouse effect. Human activities have been proven to increase the emissions of these gasses therefore increase the greenhouse effect leading to climate change.<sup>19</sup> Climate change is a global issue; however, every person has a carbon footprint and contributes to the greenhouse effect.<sup>20</sup>

From driving a car, to heating your home, most people use fossil fuels in their day-to-day life. Fossil fuels are non-renewable resources such as coal, natural gas, and oil. These fossils emit gasses into the atmosphere which contribute to the greenhouse gas effect. Carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere through burning fossil fuels, solid waste, trees, and other biological materials. It is then removed from the atmosphere when absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle, however when there is too much of it, it is unable to become properly absorbed.<sup>21</sup> In 2020, carbon dioxide accounted for about 79% of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from human activities.<sup>22</sup>

Methane is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) accounted for about 11% of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from human activities in 2020.<sup>23</sup> Another example is nitrous oxide, which is emitted during agricultural, land use and industrial activities. And lastly, fluorinated gasses. Although usually emitted in smaller quantities than the others, they are very potent, being emitted from a variety of household commercial and industrial applications.<sup>24</sup> According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, gasses stay in the atmosphere for different amounts of time, with some lasting a few years and others lasting for thousands.<sup>25</sup>

The gasses listed above are increasing the greenhouse effect and are directly correlated to human activity.<sup>26</sup> When fossil fuels such as coal and oil burn, they produce carbon and are

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<sup>19</sup> “The Causes of Climate Change.” NASA. NASA, March 2, 2023. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/> .

<sup>20</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>21</sup> “Basics of Climate Change.” EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/basics-climate-change> .

<sup>22</sup> “Causes of Climate Change”, EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/causes-climate-change>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> “The Causes of Climate Change.” NASA. NASA, March 2, 2023. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/> .

<sup>25</sup> “Causes of Climate Change”, EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/causes-climate-change>

<sup>26</sup> “The Causes of Climate Change.” NASA. NASA, March 2, 2023. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/> .



combined with the oxygen in the air to make carbon dioxide.<sup>27</sup> Transportation, deforestation, electricity, and agriculture are the key areas that increase greenhouse gas emissions. In 2020, 33% of total U.S CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were from transportation, making up 26% of total U.S greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>28</sup>

Road vehicles create the most emissions due to the combustion of petroleum-based products, like gasoline, in internal combustion engines.<sup>29</sup> Passenger cars account for 41% of those emissions, with the typical passenger vehicle emitting about 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year.<sup>30</sup> Trucks are the worst polluters transmitting 23% of all greenhouse gas emissions, on the road because they run constantly and mostly burn diesel fuel.<sup>32</sup> Overall, transportation accounts for approximately one quarter of global energy-related carbon-dioxide emissions.<sup>33</sup>

Manufacturing and industrial factories and processes also account for significant fossil fuel emissions. About 16% of total U.S. carbon dioxide emissions and 13% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions were from industrial buildings in 2020.<sup>34</sup> Manufacturing produces energy to make things like cement, iron, steel, electronics, plastics, clothes, and other goods. Mining and other industrial processes also release gasses, as does the construction industry.<sup>35</sup> Machines used in these processes typically run on fossil fuels. Some materials, like plastics, are made from chemicals sourced from them as well.<sup>36</sup> In addition, older facilities in need of efficiency upgrades frequently leak these gasses, along with other harmful forms of air pollution which contributed to the greenhouse effect.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> “The Causes of Climate Change.” NASA. NASA, March 2, 2023. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/> .

<sup>28</sup> “Causes of Climate Change”, EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/causes-climate-change>

<sup>29</sup> “Causes and Effects of Climate Change.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed March 20, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>

<sup>30</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>31</sup> “Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle.” EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, June 30, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>

<sup>32</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>33</sup> “Causes and Effects of Climate Change.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed March 20, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>

<sup>34</sup> “Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions.” EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, July 5, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions#industry> .

<sup>35</sup> “Causes and Effects of Climate Change.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed March 20, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

Deforestation and electricity also have an effect on the increase of carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>38</sup> Since forests absorb carbon dioxide, destroying them decreases the natural ability to keep carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Deforestation and agriculture are responsible for a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>39</sup> This is seen in large quantities in Canada's boreal forest alone, as clearcutting is responsible for releasing more than 25 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year, which is equivalent to the emissions of 5.5 million vehicles.<sup>40</sup>

Electricity makes up a good portion of carbon dioxide emissions. In 2020, 31% of total U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were from electricity, and made up 24% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>41</sup> Over half of the electricity is consumed by residential and commercial buildings over the world.<sup>42</sup>

Some argue that the sun is responsible for climate change, however various research argues against this theory.<sup>43</sup> According to NASA, it cannot be explained by solar irradiance; "Studies show that solar variability has played a role in past climate changes, however evidence shows that current global warming cannot be explained by changes in energy from the Sun."<sup>44</sup> If the sun was the cause of global warming, all layers of Earth's atmosphere would have to warm. However this is not the case, as satellites and weather balloons show warming in the lower atmosphere and cooling in the upper atmosphere.<sup>45</sup> Carbon dioxide levels have risen by nearly 50% since 1750, however the average amount of energy from the sun has remained mostly constant or increased slightly since then.<sup>46</sup> According to climate.gov, data indicated there was a small increase in the sun energy between the late 1800s, and the mid 1900s, of utmost 0.1 degrees Celsius, however, there has been no significant increase since the 1970s, which is when the majority of global warming has occurred.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. "What Are the Causes of Climate Change?" What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>39</sup> "Causes and Effects of Climate Change." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed March 20, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>

<sup>40</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. "What Are the Causes of Climate Change?" What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>41</sup> "Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions." EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, July 5, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions#industry> .

<sup>42</sup> "Causes and Effects of Climate Change." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed March 20, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>

<sup>43</sup> Herring, David. "Couldn't the Sun Be the Cause of Global Warming?" NOAA Climate.gov, October 29, 2020. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/couldnt-sun-be-cause-global-warming>

<sup>44</sup> "Causes of Climate Change", EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/causes-climate-change>

<sup>45</sup> Herring, David. "Couldn't the Sun Be the Cause of Global Warming?" NOAA Climate.gov, October 29, 2020. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/couldnt-sun-be-cause-global-warming>

<sup>46</sup> "Causes of Climate Change", EPA. Environmental Protection Agency, August 19, 2022. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/causes-climate-change>

<sup>47</sup> Herring, David. "Couldn't the Sun Be the Cause of Global Warming?" NOAA Climate.gov, October 29, 2020. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/couldnt-sun-be-cause-global-warming>

There are ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, which will in turn decrease the amounts of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, like energy efficiency, energy conservation, carbon capture and sequestration and using renewable resources.<sup>48</sup> Improving the insulation of buildings and using more efficient electrical appliances are also ways to reduce emissions.<sup>49</sup> An easy way to reduce emissions at home is to conserve energy by turning off lights and electronics when not using them and decreasing the amount of distance traveled in vehicles.<sup>50</sup> Another option is to purchase cleaner energy sources such as solar panels or electrical cars that do not burn fossil fuel.<sup>51</sup> From a governmental standpoint, policy mandates must leverage the government’s purchasing power to grow markets for safer alternatives, and ensure that governmental agencies procure more sustainably produced materials for these projects. The percentage of clean, renewable energy is increasing each year, and which in turn is helping to decrease emissions, so more people should consider switching to these safer alternatives.<sup>52</sup>

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its sixth report, concluded that it is; “Unequivocal that the increase of CO<sub>2</sub>, methane and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere over the industrial era is the result of human activities and that human influence is the principal driver of many changes observed across the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere.”<sup>53</sup> Although there are steps being taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, more people must get involved to make a national and global change. Everyone is affected by climate change, no matter where you live or what you do, therefore it should be everyone’s mission to solve the climate crisis.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>49</sup> Lindwall, Courtney. “How to Ditch the Biggest Fossil Fuel Offenders in Your Life.” Be a Force for the Future, May 18, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/how-ditch-biggest-fossil-fuel-offenders-your-life> .

<sup>50</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>51</sup> Lindwall, Courtney. “How to Ditch the Biggest Fossil Fuel Offenders in Your Life.” Be a Force for the Future, May 18, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/how-ditch-biggest-fossil-fuel-offenders-your-life> .

<sup>52</sup> Turrentine, Jeff. “What Are the Causes of Climate Change?” What Causes Climate Change? Human and Natural Causes, September 13, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change#natural>

<sup>53</sup> “The Causes of Climate Change.” NASA. NASA, March 2, 2023. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/> .

<sup>54</sup> Lindwall, Courtney. “How to Ditch the Biggest Fossil Fuel Offenders in Your Life.” Be a Force for the Future, May 18, 2022. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/how-ditch-biggest-fossil-fuel-offenders-your-life> .

## In God We Trust: The History and Future of the National Motto

*Adam Benitez*

In July of 1956, President Dwight Eisenhower signed legislation declaring “In God we trust” the official motto of the United States.<sup>55</sup> At the time, when over 95% of Americans identified themselves as Christians, and when resistance to religion was strongly associated with communism, the decision sparked little political or cultural debate.<sup>56 57</sup> However, as the United States has become increasingly secular, both in terms of its population and institutions, the motto has garnered significant controversy, particularly within the wider debate over the separation of church and state. Yet, unlike other instances of government involvement with religion, “In God we trust” has been consistently upheld as constitutional by the Supreme Court, and has maintained a high level of support among the general public.<sup>58</sup> To explain this discrepancy, this article traces the history of “In God we trust,” highlights the debate over its status as the United States national motto, and explores recent attempts to both invalidate and enshrine the phrase within American society.

### History of “In God We Trust”

Prior to becoming the national motto, “In God we trust” was known for appearing on United States currency.<sup>59</sup> The origins of this can be traced back to the colonial period when several colonies inscribed mottos such as “God preserve New England” and “Blessed be the name of the lord” on their coinage.<sup>60</sup> It was also during the colonial period that “In God we trust” first appeared in printed English. In a 1748 edition of the Pennsylvania Gazette, the phrase is noted as being the motto of a local militia.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> “History of ‘In God We Trust.’” *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 8 Mar. 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160417102334/https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx>.

<sup>56</sup> Newport, Frank. “Percentage of Christians in U.S. Drifting Down, but Still High.” *Gallup*, 24 Dec. 2015, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/187955/percentage-christians-drifting-down-high.aspx#:~:text=More%20than%2095%25%20of%20Americans%20identified%20as%20Christian,years.%20These%20data%20are%20available%20in%20Gallup%20Analytics>.

<sup>57</sup> Wade, Lisa. “‘In God We Trust’: Communism, Atheism, & the U.S. Dollar .” *The Society Pages*, 16 May 2012, <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2012/05/16/communism-atheism-and-placing-in-god-we-trust-on-the-u-s-dollar/#:~:text=The%20mid-%20to%20late-1950s%20marked%20an%20escalation%20in,drew%20on%20the%20association%20of%20communism%20with%20atheism>.

<sup>58</sup> Masci, David. “A Half Century After It First Appeared on the Dollar Bill, ‘In God We Trust’ Still Stirs Opposition.” *Pew Research Center*, 12 Sept. 2007, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2007/09/12/a-half-century-after-it-first-appeared-on-the-dollar-bill-in-god-we-trust-still-stirs-opposition/>.

<sup>59</sup> “History of ‘In God We Trust.’” *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 8 Mar. 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160417102334/https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx>.

<sup>60</sup> Fisher, Louis, and Nada Mourtada-Sabbah. “Adopting ‘In God We Trust’ As the U.S. National Motto.” *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 44, no. 4, 2002, pp. 671–692., <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/44.4.671>.

<sup>61</sup> “Colors of the Associator Companies, 12 January 1748 and 16 April 1748,” *Founders Online*, National Archives and Records Administration, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-03-02-0105>.

In March of 1861, just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, Southern delegates formally adopted a constitution for the Confederate States of America (CSA). In the document's preamble, the new government claimed to be "invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God."<sup>62</sup> In response, Northern religious leaders began calling for a "similar symbolic statement, putting God squarely on the Union side," since no mention of God is made in the U.S. Constitution.<sup>63</sup> To this end, in November of 1861, Mark Richard Watkinson, a Baptist minister from Pennsylvania, sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Samuel P. Chase, in which he wrote, "One fact touching our currency has hitherto been seriously overlooked. I mean the recognition of the Almighty God in some form of our coins."<sup>64</sup> One week after receiving this letter, Secretary Chase instructed James Pollock, the director of the U.S. Mint, to create a memorable inscription expressing America's trust in God.<sup>65</sup> Pollock suggested the motto "In God is our trust," which was already known to the public as part of the popular patriotic song, the "Star-Spangled Banner" ("In God is our trust" is featured in the full version, which is rarely played today).<sup>67</sup> In April of 1864, Congress passed legislation allowing Chase and Pollock to add the inscription, which by this point had morphed into the more familiar "In God we trust," onto the one and two-cent coins.<sup>68</sup>

Over the next several decades "In God we trust" was added onto other coins, such as the nickel in 1866, the quarter in 1892, and the dime in 1916.<sup>69</sup> By 1938, the motto was appearing on all newly minted U.S. coinage.<sup>71</sup> However, up to this point the motto had never appeared on paper money. That changed in July of 1955, when President Dwight Eisenhower signed legislation requiring "In God we trust" to be included on all United States currency.<sup>72</sup> This law, signed during the height of the second Red Scare, was one of several initiatives by Eisenhower to introduce "religious language and symbols into political life."<sup>73</sup> These efforts, such as being the first President to attend the National Prayer Breakfast, and signing legislation to add "under

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<sup>62</sup> "Constitution of the Confederate States; March 11, 1861." *The Avalon Project*, Yale Law School, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/csa\\_csa.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_csa.asp).

<sup>63</sup> Lienesch, Michael. "'In God We Trust': The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion." *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

<sup>64</sup> Sandstrom, Aleksandra. "God or the Divine Is Referenced in Every State Constitution." *Pew Research Center*, 17 Aug. 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/17/god-or-the-divine-is-referenced-in-every-state-constitution/>.

<sup>65</sup> Fisher, Louis, and Nada Mourtada-Sabbah. "Adopting 'In God We Trust' As the U.S. National Motto." *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 44, no. 4, 2002, pp. 671–692., <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/44.4.671>.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> "History of 'In God We Trust'." *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 8 Mar. 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160417102334/https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx>.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Gross, Daniel. "A Brief History of the Nickel." *Smithsonian Magazine*, 28 Apr. 2016, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/brief-history-nickel-180958941/>.

<sup>71</sup> "History of 'In God We Trust'." *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 8 Mar. 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160417102334/https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx>.

<sup>72</sup> Fisher, Louis, and Nada Mourtada-Sabbah. "Adopting 'In God We Trust' As the U.S. National Motto." *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 44, no. 4, 2002, pp. 671–692., <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/44.4.671>.

<sup>73</sup> Gunn, T. Jeremy, and Mounia Slighoua. "The Spiritual Factor: Eisenhower, Religion, and Foreign Policy." *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 4, Dec. 2011, pp. 39–49., <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2011.630200>.

God” to the Pledge of Allegiance, were meant to assert the United States’ religious foundation and “moral superiority” over the Soviet Union and its state atheism.<sup>74 75</sup>

Continuing this trend, in July of 1956, Eisenhower signed legislation declaring “In God we trust” the national motto of the United States.<sup>76</sup> In doing so, he replaced the de facto motto, E Pluribus Unum (Latin for “Out of many, one”), which had been used unofficially since 1782.<sup>77</sup> In supporting this decision, a report from the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives stated that as a national motto, “In God we trust” was “superior and more acceptable” than E Pluribus Unum, and that it would “be of great spiritual and psychological value to our country to have a clearly designated national motto of inspirational quality.”<sup>78</sup>

Since becoming the national motto, “In God we trust” has been printed on several postage stamps and displayed in numerous federal buildings, monuments, and memorials. Prominent examples include the chambers of both the House of Representatives and Senate (added in 1962 and 2011 respectively), on plaques within the Longworth and Dirksen congressional office buildings (both added in 1961), and within the entrance of the Capitol Visitor Center (added in 2009).<sup>79 80 81 82</sup> Additionally, three states have added the motto to their flags, and seventeen states either allow or require it to be displayed in public schools.<sup>83 84</sup>

## The Debate

In 1956, when considering the legislation to make “In God we trust” the national motto, neither the Senate or House of Representatives held any debate on the matter. When the bill eventually became law, this lack of discourse was mirrored by the general public, as most people

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<sup>74</sup> Gunn, T. Jeremy, and Mounia Slighoua. “The Spiritual Factor: Eisenhower, Religion, and Foreign Policy.” *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 4, Dec. 2011, pp. 39–49., <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2011.630200>.

<sup>75</sup> Wade, Lisa. “‘In God We Trust’: Communism, Atheism, & the U.S. Dollar.” *The Society Pages*, 16 May 2012, <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2012/05/16/communism-atheism-and-placing-in-god-we-trust-on-the-u-s-dollar/#:~:text=The%20mid-%20to%20late-1950s%20marked%20an%20escalation%20in,drew%20on%20the%20association%20of%20communism%20with%20atheism.>

<sup>76</sup> “History of ‘In God We Trust.’” *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 8 Mar. 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160417102334/https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx>.

<sup>77</sup> Emmer, Michele, and Marco Li Calzi. “E Pluribus Unum.” *Imagine Math: Between Culture and Mathematics*, Springer Italia, Milan, 2012, pp. 187–196.

<sup>78</sup> Lienesch, Michael. “‘In God We Trust’: The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion.” *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

<sup>79</sup> “Quotations.” *Architect of the Capitol*, <https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/quotations>.

<sup>80</sup> Moreno, Miguel. “Indiana Bill Requires National Motto ‘In God We Trust’ in Schools, Protects Religious Views.” *The Epoch Times*, 27 Jan. 2019, [https://www.theepochtimes.com/indiana-bill-requires-national-motto-in-god-we-trust-in-schools-protects-religious-views\\_2780827.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/indiana-bill-requires-national-motto-in-god-we-trust-in-schools-protects-religious-views_2780827.html).

<sup>81</sup> Stout, David, and Evelyn Nieves. “Congress Defiant Over Ban on Pledge of Allegiance.” *The New York Times*, 27 June 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/27/national/congress-defiant-over-ban-on-pledge-of-allegiance.html>.

<sup>82</sup> “Washington, DC - Lawsuit Opposes ‘In God We Trust’ in the Capitol Visitor Center.” *VIN News*, 17 Nov. 2009, <https://vinnews.com/2009/11/17/washington-dc-lawsuit-opposes-in-god-we-trust-in-the-capitol-visitor-center/>.

<sup>83</sup> Sokol, Samantha. “Mississippi Trades Confederate Emblem For ‘In God We Trust’ On State Flag.” *Americans United*, 2 July 2020, <https://www.au.org/the-latest/articles/mississippi-new-flag/#>.

<sup>84</sup> Kelley, Bryan. “‘In God We Trust’: Public School Displays of the National Motto.” *Education Commission of the States*, 25 Sept. 2019, <https://ednote.ecs.org/in-god-we-trust-public-school-displays-of-the-national-motto/>.

either embraced the change or passively accepted it.<sup>85</sup> As mentioned above, “In God we trust” became the national motto at a time when 95% of Americans identified themselves as Christian, and any resistance to religion was strongly associated with communism.<sup>86</sup><sup>87</sup> These conditions made it difficult for critics of the new motto to speak out, in fear of being ostracized or labeled a communist. One of the few vocal critics at the time was George Axtelle, chair of the American Humanist Association’s Committee on Church on State. Speaking to the Senate Judiciary Committee, he remarked that by adopting “In God we trust” as the nation’s motto, the “principle of church-state separation is being endangered by a series of tiny but significant erosions,” and “if the present drift continues, the unorthodox citizen will be made to feel like a second-class citizen.”<sup>88</sup> Another critic of the motto was Carl Emanuel Carlson, a leading figure in the Baptist Church. He questioned the need for the motto on religious grounds, asking “Do people pray because of government proclamations? Do people ‘trust’ because of a national motto? How are these things related to spiritual experience?”<sup>89</sup>

Despite these and other criticisms, the constitutionality of “In God we Trust” was not challenged until 1970, with *Aronow v. United States*. The plaintiff, a man named Steven Aronow, argued that by including the national motto on currency, the government was violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which prohibits the government from making any law “respecting an establishment of religion.”<sup>90</sup> The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth District disagreed, finding that the motto had “nothing whatsoever to do with the establishment of religion,” but was rather of “patriotic or ceremonial character.”<sup>91</sup> In supporting this claim, the court cited the aforementioned 1956 House Judiciary report, which endorsed the national motto’s “spiritual and psychological value” and “inspirational quality,” as opposed to any “theological or ritualistic impact.”<sup>92</sup>

In 1980, the city of Pawtucket, Rhode Island was sued by a group of its residents for including a Christian nativity scene within its public Christmas decorations display. The

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<sup>85</sup> Lienesch, Michael. “‘In God We Trust’: The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion.” *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

<sup>86</sup> Newport, Frank. “Percentage of Christians in U.S. Drifting Down, but Still High.” *Gallup*, 24 Dec. 2015, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/187955/percentage-christians-drifting-down-high.aspx#:~:text=More%20than%2095%25%20of%20Americans%20identified%20as%20Christian,years.%20These%20data%20are%20available%20in%20Gallup%20Analytics.>

<sup>87</sup> Wade, Lisa. “‘In God We Trust’: Communism, Atheism, & the U.S. Dollar .” *The Society Pages*, 16 May 2012, <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2012/05/16/communism-atheism-and-placing-in-god-we-trust-on-the-u-s-dollar/#:~:text=The%20mid-%20to%20late-1950s%20marked%20an%20escalation%20in,drew%20on%20the%20association%20of%20communism%20with%20atheism.>

<sup>88</sup> Lienesch, Michael. “‘In God We Trust’: The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion.” *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

<sup>89</sup> “Baptist Casts Doubt On Shift in U.S. Motto.” *The Washington Post*, 17 Sept. 1956, p. 30.

<sup>90</sup> “The Bill of Rights: A Transcription.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript>.

<sup>91</sup> United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth District. *Aronow v. United States*. 6 Oct. 1970, <https://openjurist.org/432/f2d/242/aronow-v-united-states>.

<sup>92</sup> Lienesch, Michael. “‘In God We Trust’: The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion.” *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

residents argued that by exhibiting the scene, the city was violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.<sup>93</sup> The case, *Lynch v. Donnelly*, reached the Supreme Court in 1984. While the court ruled that the display of the scene was constitutional, in his dissent, Justice William J. Brennan set a new precedent regarding “In God we trust.” Although Justice Brennan considered the display of the scene a violation of the Establishment Clause, he argued that certain public references to religion, such as “In God we trust” and “One nation under God,” were constitutional “because they have lost through rote repetition any significant religious content.” Justice Brennan termed this concept, originally conceived by legal scholar Eugene Rostow, “ceremonial deism.”<sup>94</sup> In the years following *Lynch v. Donnelly*, several cases challenging the constitutionality of “In God we trust” were defeated by legal arguments and court opinions citing “ceremonial deism.” Thus, by the turn of the twenty-first century, “American courts had declared ‘In God we trust’ to be a statement of civil rather than religious significance.”<sup>95</sup> However, while the national motto seemed to be safe from further legal challenges, other religious phrases and symbols were still open for litigation.

In 2002, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth District ruled that because of the phrase, “One nation under God,” the Pledge of Allegiance violated the doctrine of separation of church and state and was unconstitutional. Writing for the majority in the 2-to-1 decision, Judge Alfred Goodwin claimed that proclaiming the United States a nation “under God,” was tantamount to proclaiming the country “a nation ‘under Jesus,’ a nation ‘under Vishnu,’ a nation ‘under Zeus,’ or a nation ‘under no god,’ because none of these professions can be neutral with respect to religion.”<sup>96</sup> Reactions to the decision were overwhelmingly negative from both Republican and Democratic politicians. Accordingly, Congress quickly passed a bill disavowing the ruling and reaffirming the Pledge of Allegiance’s existing wordage.<sup>97</sup> While the constitutionality of “In God we Trust” was not specifically threatened by the decision, Congress used the bill as an opportunity to reaffirm the phrase as the national motto.<sup>98</sup> In 2004, however, the District Court’s ruling was reversed by the Supreme Court, thereby ending the threat to the motto’s legitimacy.<sup>99</sup> Nevertheless, only two years later in 2006, Congress passed a concurrent

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<sup>93</sup> United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island. *Donnelly v. Lynch*. 10 Nov. 1981, <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/525/1150/1691880/>.

<sup>94</sup> Lienesch, Michael. “‘In God We Trust:’ The U.S. National Motto and the Contested Concept of Civil Religion.” *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 5, 25 May 2019, p. 340., <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10050340>.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth District. *Newdow v. United States Congress*. 26 June 2002, <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F3/292/597/642433/>.

<sup>97</sup> Stout, David, and Evelyn Nieves. “Congress Defiant Over Ban on Pledge of Allegiance.” *The New York Times*, 27 June 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/27/national/congress-defiant-over-ban-on-pledge-of-allegiance.html>.

<sup>98</sup> “Text - S.2690 - 107th Congress (2001-2002): A bill to reaffirm the reference to one Nation under God in the Pledge of Allegiance.” *Congress.gov*, Library of Congress, 13 November 2002,

<sup>99</sup> Sandomir, Richard. “Alfred T. Goodwin, Judge in Pledge of Allegiance Case, Dies at 99.” *The New York Times*, 15 Jan. 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/15/us/alfred-goodwin-dead.html#:~:text=Alfred%20T.%20Goodwin%2C%20a%20federal%20judge%20who%20caused,%E2%80%94died%20on%20Dec.%202027%20in%20Bend%2C%20Ore.>



resolution reaffirming “In God we Trust” as the national motto, followed by yet another in 2011.<sup>100</sup>

## The Future

In January of 2023, the West Virginia state Senate unanimously advanced a bill requiring that posters or framed copies of “In God we Trust” be conspicuously displayed in all public schools.<sup>101</sup> The bill was modeled after laws first passed by Mississippi, Utah, and Virginia in 2001 and 2002.<sup>102 103 104</sup> Interestingly, although many bills were considered, no other such laws were passed again until 2018, when Florida became the fourth state to do so.<sup>105</sup> Since then, however, an additional five states have passed laws requiring the national motto’s display in public schools.

This sudden surge in “In God we Trust” legislation can be understood as part of the ongoing “culture war” raging through social media and legislatures across the country. Broadly defined, the culture war is the “fundamental split between orthodox [traditional] and progressive views of morality,” which “cuts across class, religious, racial, ethnic, political, and sexual lines.”<sup>106</sup> In this sense, traditionalists and progressives (conservatives and liberals) “fight” over the nation’s most polarizing issues, such as abortion, gun control, immigration, and public education.

In regards to public education specifically, many Republican lawmakers have decried recent curriculum reforms, especially those concerning American history, as unnecessarily “divisive” and “un-American.”<sup>107</sup> As well, fears over “indoctrination” and the teaching of Critical Race Theory have led them to introduce numerous bills “limiting what schools can teach in regards to race, American history, politics, and sexual orientation and gender identity.”<sup>108</sup> However, simply changing the curriculum is not enough for these lawmakers. Rather, they feel the need to reinfuse public education with aspects of traditional American life that they believe have been lost or threatened. One such aspect is of course religion, or in actuality, just

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<sup>100</sup> Steinhauer, Jennifer. “In God We Trust, With the House's Help.” *The New York Times*, 1 Nov. 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/02/us/house-of-representatives-affirms-in-god-we-trust-motto.html>.

<sup>101</sup> Willingham, Leah. “West Virginia Advances School Mandate on 'In God We Trust'.” *AP News*, Associated Press, 30 Jan. 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/west-virginia-in-god-we-trust-school-mandate-e45fd9f9c94c3536b849b5432ec84e5>.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Tanner, Courtney. “Utah Has Required Schools to Have 'In God We Trust' Posted Publicly for 17 Years.” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 July 2019, <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2019/07/27/utah-has-required-schools/>.

<sup>104</sup> Helderman, Rosalind S., and Christina A. Samuels. “Va. Schools Forge Ahead With National Motto.” *The Washington Post*, 28 June 2002, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2002/06/28/va-schools-forge-ahead-with-national-motto/c1a2521b-73d8-4b54-87b0-7bbd2b30e599/>.

<sup>105</sup> Golgowski, Nina. “Florida Schools Ordered By Law To Display 'In God We Trust' Signs.” *HuffPost*, 16 Aug. 2018, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/florida-schools-in-god-we-trust\\_n\\_5b756d57e4b0df9b093cc15b](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/florida-schools-in-god-we-trust_n_5b756d57e4b0df9b093cc15b).

<sup>106</sup> Thomson, Irene Taviss. *Culture Wars and Enduring American Dilemmas*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 2010.

<sup>107</sup> Zimmerman, Jonathon. “Why the Culture Wars in Schools Are Worse Than Ever Before.” *Politico*, 19 Sept. 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/09/19/history-culture-wars-schools-america-divided-512614>.

<sup>108</sup> Gross, Terry. “From Slavery to Socialism, New Legislation Restricts What Teachers Can Discuss.” *NPR*, 3 Feb. 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2022/02/03/1077878538/legislation-restricts-what-teachers-can-discuss>.

Christianity. Speaking on the West Virginia Senate floor, Republican Senator Mike Azinger, the lead sponsor of the aforementioned “In God we Trust” bill, stated that its purpose was to “let them [public school students] know it’s OK to ‘say God’ in school.”<sup>109</sup> This remark typifies a belief held by many of today’s most prominent conservatives, namely, that Christianity is “under attack” in America. While conservatives vary on their perception of who the “attacker” is, they are united in their belief that across the country, Christians are being demonized for their religious beliefs, and that like the schoolchildren of West Virginia, they no longer feel safe in publicly “saying God.”

To combat this perceived assault on Christianity, conservatives have turned to “In God we Trust.” While most Americans care little about those four words, many conservatives view them as a vestige of a better time, when traditional values were upheld, and the government openly championed a conjoining of religion and politics. They view the phrase as a crucial part of American cultural heritage, which itself, they believe, was founded on Christian values and ideals. Seeing that “In God we Trust” is fairly uncontroversial among the public and has been consistently upheld by the Supreme Court as constitutional, conservatives view it as an efficient way to bring that heritage back into society. While the current trend is to force the motto into public classrooms, with the culture war seemingly poised to drag on for years, it is likely that “In God we Trust” will soon be appearing in many other areas of government.

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<sup>109</sup> Willingham, Leah. “West Virginia Advances School Mandate on 'In God We Trust'.” *AP News*, Associated Press, 30 Jan. 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/west-virginia-in-god-we-trust-school-mandate-e45fbd9f9c94c3536b849b5432ec84e5>.

# The Resource Curse, Sustainability of Stability in Iran and Iraq

*Chapal Bhavsar*

## Introduction

The Middle East has been a contentious area of the world for a better part of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. From the 1970s to the present day, a phenomenon known as the “resource curse” has driven countries to the brink of devastation, started wars, led to famine, and been a consistent cause of geopolitical and economic turmoil. The “resource curse” is defined as the notion that countries with a large bounty of natural resources are prone to underperform economically, politically, and socially.<sup>110</sup> This in turn, leads to a lack of stability as seen in countries such as Iran and Iraq, among others.

Iran has faced struggles of both a monarchy and an Islamic Republic. The Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was overthrown in 1979 and forced to flee to the United States after a successful coup by the Islamic rebels led by Ruhollah Khomeini. Iran, a country rich in oil and other natural wealth, faced a toppling of a government that, until a few years prior to the revolution, was relatively stable and a strong ally of the United States.

The resource curse has struck Iraq as well. In 1991, under the rule of Saddam Hussein, a dispute over oil coupled with other geopolitical struggles led to a war with the United States over the small country of Kuwait. Further, the country has faced turmoil following the tumultuous invasion in 2003 by coalition forces.

To many, it is almost unfathomable how these countries with immense wealth have fallen into such political and economic traps where their ability to sustain their stability has failed. The rationale behind the failures of these countries to maintain stability is much more complex than just the resource curse. Rather, this region of countries made up of intricate cultures, political relations, living standards, and ideologies has led to a complex situation where aspects of the resource curse are perceived to have stained the fabric of these nations. To find solutions to this curse, there must be a functioning government where economic activity can be encouraged to flourish to allow citizens to reap the benefits of their resources. Possibilities of stifling the resource curse exist although they are hard to implement and even harder to maintain.

## Iraq

From the fertile soil bordering the Tigris river to the massive 130 tons of gold reserves that the country is in control of, Iraq has been rich with resources since humans first settled in the area. Furthermore, the U.S. Government's Energy Information Administration has stated that Iraq “holds the world's fifth-largest proven crude oil reserves, at 145 billion barrels, representing 17%

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<sup>110</sup> Fernando, J. (2023, February 11). *Resource curse: Definition, overview and examples*. Investopedia. Retrieved April 20, 2023, from <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/resource-curse.asp>

of proved reserves in the Middle East and 8% of global reserves".<sup>111</sup> Researchers at Auburn University have noted that over the next 100 years, Iraq can pull 27 trillion dollars of wealth from their ground at a \$75 dollar profit.<sup>112</sup> Rather than experiencing prosperity from this wealth, Iraq has time and time again, struggled with its stability.

In the era after Saddam Hussein took control of the country as President, Iraq has faced times of stability and fragility. Starting in 1980, one year after Saddam Hussein seized power, Iraq invaded Iran. Saddam had recognized that the country was undergoing a significant change due to the revolution that had taken place a year earlier from the Shah Dynasty to the Islamic Republic. His goals included securing a greater political influence in the region, increasing the landmass of the country and most importantly, annexing the Khuzestan region of Iran to gain access to the oil fields of the region.<sup>113</sup>

Eight years later, Iraq faced the consequences of attempting to invade Iran. According to Abu Dhabi based National News, "the second lesson is the cost of modern warfare, which far outweighs the value of capturing petroleum assets. Iraq emerged with \$86 billion (Dh315.8bn) in debt, a ratio to gross domestic product of 278 per cent".<sup>114</sup> Iraq had effectively destroyed the economic surplus that had been generated from securing oil from Iranian lands, thereby making the push for the resource one of needless death and economic failure. Iraq's transition from the primarily agricultural based economy from the 1950s to the post-revolutionary resource based economy had started taking its toll. This is the beginning of a pattern in this era which represents the resource curse.<sup>115</sup> A booming oil economy led to the nation's leaders embarking on a reckless path to gain more oil leading to pushing the country to the brink of destruction with people starving, a failing infrastructure, and high unemployment.

With a failing economy and pressure from citizens and his advisors, Saddam understood his neighbors were on a path to further destroy his economy with increasing production to drive the price of oil down. Here, the resource curse had struck again. Even though Iraq maintained some of the largest oil reserves in the world, it was still at the mercy of other oil producing countries to maintain a stable economic output. With prices of oil in a nosedive, Hussein thought it was best to invade Kuwait as he had seen them as part of the problem. He justified this war by accusing them of slant drilling which is the practice of drawing oil from Iraq's oil reserve from

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<sup>111</sup> "U.S. Energy Information Administration - EIA - Independent Statistics and Analysis," International - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), accessed December 5, 2022, <https://www.eia.gov/international/analysis/country/IRQ>.

<sup>112</sup> "Iraq Oil Wealth." n.d. Webhome.auburn.edu. <https://webhome.auburn.edu/~thomph1/iraq.htm>.

<sup>113</sup> "Inventory of Conflict and Environment (ICE), Template." n.d. Mandalaprojects.com. Accessed December 6, 2022. <http://mandalaprojects.com/ice/ice-cases/khuzestan.htm>.

<sup>114</sup> "How the Iran-Iraq War Shaped Oil Markets Regionally and Globally." 2020. The National. September 27, 2020. <https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/how-the-iran-iraq-war-shaped-oil-markets-regionally-and-globally-1.1084279>.

<sup>115</sup> "Iraq - Economy | Britannica." n.d. Wwww.britannica.com. Accessed December 6, 2022. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Economy#:~:text=Iraq>.

within the Kuwaiti borders. Once again, this was a grave mistake on the behalf of the Hussein regime. The U.S. and coalition partners mounted 540,000 troops from 35 countries to successfully drive out Hussein's forces from Kuwait within 100 hours.<sup>116</sup>

Within a period of about 12 years, Iraq's economy had been decimated twice. Iraqi forces were pushed out of invaded countries twice, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis were killed in worthless fighting, and Iraq faced international condemnation in addition to the crippling sanctions. Initially, Iraq had been restricted from selling oil on the international market but in 1995, the United Nations created the "Oil For Food Programme".<sup>117</sup> This program was created with the intent to relieve the impact of sanctions that the UN had placed so that Iraq could buy food and other basic necessities for the population to survive. Once again, oil, a resource that should have led to prosperity for the Iraqi people was ironically restricted from being able to sell the resource for aid.

## Iran

Another example of the "resource curse" comes in 1979 when the long ruling Pahlavi dynasty was overthrown. Iran had seen a large spike in oil income at the start of the 1970s due to a large spike in oil prices leading to a massive source of income for the Shah. The Brookings Institute states that "In the five years before the revolution, 1974-79, oil revenues had exceeded one trillion dollars (in 2018 dollars), about \$5,000 per person".<sup>118</sup> But eventually, the waste that the monarchy had committed on decadent luxuries for themselves and political turmoil that had embroiled the nation led to the Iranian people longing for more. The elimination of a proper political system had created the perfect opportunity for the Islamists to rise up and directly challenge the power of the Shah.<sup>119</sup> The Shah had gradually eliminated political parties within Iran and made it into a one-party state. His idea was that the people should support the monarchy to a point where it would unite the country.<sup>120</sup> However, the Shah was forced to reconsider his approach when international and internal pressure mounted against him. By this point his government was on the brink of falling apart. The Shah faced growing discontent from hardline Islamists. Ultimately, the Shah was forced into exile while hardline Islamists took over the country. To get to this position of power, Islamists challenged the Shah's regime by protesting reforms the Shah was enacting. These included: allowing women to vote, pushing Iran closer to

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<sup>116</sup> "Gulf War Coalition Forces Statistics - Countries Compared - Military Data on NationMaster." 2013. Web.archive.org. November 5, 2013.

[https://web.archive.org/web/20131105011128/http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/mil\\_gul\\_war\\_coa\\_for-military-gulf-war-coalition-forces](https://web.archive.org/web/20131105011128/http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/mil_gul_war_coa_for-military-gulf-war-coalition-forces).

<sup>117</sup> "UN Office of the Iraq Program - Oil-For-Food." n.d. Wwww.un.org. <https://www.un.org/depts/oip/sector-food.html>.

<sup>118</sup> Isfahani, Djavad Salehi. 2019. "Iran's Economy 40 Years after the Islamic Revolution." Brookings. March 14, 2019. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/03/14/irans-economy-40-years-after-the-islamic-revolution/#:~:text=In%20the%20five%20years%20before>.

<sup>119</sup> "Shah of Iran Modernized His Nation but Vacillated in Crisis." 2021. AP NEWS. April 20, 2021. <https://apnews.com/article/iran-revolution-anniversary-ap-top-news-tehran-international-news-iran-c037d5af8b3b4be6ae47f125d847d0f0>.

<sup>120</sup> The New York Times. 1975. "Shah Decrees Iran a One-Party Nation," March 3, 1975, sec. Archives. <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/03/03/archives/shah-decrees-iran-a-oneparty-nation.html>.

the West through cultural and economic times, and allowing other broad and liberal reforms to take place through Iran. Hardliners led protests through the streets, and worked to install the idea of rebellion throughout the country among those who considered these reforms to be against the good graces of Iran. While the religious movement did not have much support internationally, it began to gain a great deal of traction among students who helped to drive the revolution. The monarchy did not originally consider this movement to be a threat and thought of this more as a small and vocal faction.

The Shah was blessed with the riches of 12% of the world's oil, and rather than using the money to support his country, he indulged in it.<sup>121</sup> He threw a party for the 2500 years of monarchy in Iran using oil wealth that cost upwards of \$17 million dollars.<sup>122</sup> The fact that this event was a celebration of the pre-Islamic times of the nation in addition to throwing a lavish party for the elite while people starved on the streets gave some of the Shah's harshest critics ammunition to target his use of state funds for his personal indulgence. As challenges arose, it became clear that the Shah had wasted great deals of money on himself and his friends. The extravagance of the Shah in addition to the lack of care for the people led to a sense of discontent among the populace in Iran. This instability allowed the Islamic Cleric Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his followers to capitalize on the feelings of the population to force the Shah out of power. The popularity of the hardline Islamic Theocrats began to grow, especially among students which allowed the regime to take power quickly and effectively. The Shah was eventually forced into exile in 1979 when he fled Iran to escape the revolutionaries.

Moving forward in time, Iran has become a pariah to much of the world. Without going into the complexities of the nuclear program that it harbors, Iran has been severely sanctioned due to its enrichment nuclear program. International actors such as the United States have brought crippling sanctions to Iran mostly prohibiting it from selling oil on the international market in addition to being able to buy other goods. This massive impact on Iran's oil has hampered it in many sectors. The lack of buyers has led it to be placed into a similar position that Iraq was in during the 90s. The utter dependence on this one resource has led the sanctions to be able to cripple the economy through preventing their most important resources from entering the market.

### **Analysis and Sustainability of Stability**

There is no doubt that the resource curse has wreaked havoc in both Iran and Iraq. Repeatedly, it has been linked to political turmoil, societal upheaval, and economic destruction

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<sup>121</sup> "Country Analysis Executive Summary: Iran." n.d.

[https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries\\_long/Iran/pdf/iran\\_exe.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Iran/pdf/iran_exe.pdf).

<sup>122</sup> "THE IRANIAN: Features, 2,500-Year Celebrations, Cyrus Kadivar." 2002. Web.archive.org. November 8, 2002. <https://web.archive.org/web/20021108155019/http://iranian.com/CyrusKadivar/2002/January/2500/>.

for both countries. The question of whether or not the stability can be considered sustainable under these conditions is of major concern.

Saddam Hussein was able to maintain support among his people after he was forced to make changes that many wanted. Iraq was starting to become more Islamic and Saddam's relative ease of governing without using religion began to change. In 1991, "Allahu Akbar" ("God is great" in Arabic) was added to the flag. In addition, Saddam started to more strictly enforce laws against homosexuality which and established the "Fedayeen Saddam"(Saddam's Men of Sacrifice) to push Iraqis toward more traditional Islamic values.<sup>123</sup> Iran has been on the same footing as well as after the 1979 Revolution, the new government was able to effectively and strategically seize power to prevent an immediate collapse of their rule in addition to being able to continue to rule with the same government structure and leaders through the nuclear crises and the ongoing hijab protests.

It is important to analyze the way that these countries have been able to sustain at least some sense of stability in these storms of chaos. It is through the unrelenting force of fear that each regime has placed into its populace. Saddam Hussein was known for executing members of his government who he disliked or those who disagreed with him. He was responsible for killing over 250,000 of his own people, destroying families, and even executing random members of the government when he first took over Iraq. Arguably, the fear instilled by these killings led to him being able to maintain power longer.

One of the most important things that have come up in this research is the idea that in so many of these situations, the way sustainability of stability has occurred is by using wealth to subsidize autocratic rule. In these two situations specifically, Saddam Hussein used his resource wealth to crush rebellion and build a strong show of military power to instill fear in the populace. In the case of the Iranians, the Islamic Regime used their resources to justify their Islamic Rule and their further developments in the nuclear and chemical fields.

Fear has been a considerable way of keeping people in control. Executions, secret police, harsh consequences to rebellion, and much more were all present in Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the Ayatollahs Iran. Autocratic leaders using fear as a tool were able to keep their populations in check which allowed them to continue their harsh rules yet maintain a certain sense of security and stability. For example, during Hussein's rule of Iraq, terrorist activity was low and dealt with harshly inside of Iraq. After his rule, Iraq's power vacuum led to multiple terrorist organizations gaining a foothold within the country. Therefore, it must be pointed out that stability was sustained to a certain extent in these regimes.

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<sup>123</sup> "Wayback Machine." 2009. Web.archive.org. March 26, 2009.  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20090326061752/http://www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2006/ipp.pdf>.

## **Analysis of the Resource Curse**

The resource curse and the sustainability of stability are an extremely intricate theory and area of inquiry respectively as one can see. With an inferred resource curse, stability has shown itself to be held in complete disregard. To find ways around this “curse”, one has to analyze the past and pick apart this idea moving forward.

Another option that states prone to the resource curse should consider is handing out subsidy checks to citizens. Countries that generally would be considered susceptible to the resource curse such as Saudi Arabia have relatively been able to stay out of the cross-fire by helping to maintain stability among their population through the Citizens Account Program.<sup>124</sup> By recirculating money derived from resource wealth back into the hands of the people directly in addition to other societal upgrades, the people would be benefiting from state resources and have further tolerance for the government, which acts as a stabilizer for the populace.

The resource curse and its involvement within the sustainability of stability have been ingrained in Middle Eastern geopolitics in modern times. As history continues to develop, political scientists should continue to analyze and understand how authoritarian regimes continue to use their resource wealth to attempt to maintain stability.

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<sup>124</sup> “‘Citizen Account Program’ to Help Saudis Face Economic Changes.” 2017. Arab News. December 13, 2017. <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1208256/saudi-arabia>.



# The Ethics of Pardoning Marijuana Offenses

*Ryan Cammarano*

## Introduction

The United States has the highest incarceration rate of any country in the world.<sup>125</sup> Approximately 350 per 100,000 people in the United States are in prison, totaling to a prison population of 1,204,300 convicts at the end of 2021.<sup>126</sup> Of these 1,204,300 prisoners, approximately 32,000 are locked up for marijuana-related charges.<sup>127</sup> With the legalization of Marijuana becoming more and more common among the fifty states, legislatures have to grapple with questions such as: What do we do with people who have been convicted of Marijuana in the past? What offenses should we forgive? Do we expunge the records of those convicted in the past? To provide an ideological parallel, put yourself in the shoes of a person one hundred years ago drinking during prohibition. At the time, the punishment for violating prohibition law was up to a year in prison.<sup>128</sup> If one was caught drinking, they could be sent to prison and have that charge on their permanent record. Would it be fair to that individual not to take action regarding removing that stain on their resume even after prohibition ended? I would argue that that person must have their record cleared and that the same logic applies to marijuana offenses. I argue that forgiving marijuana-related offenses and expunging criminal records is an ethical necessity in a nation where the use of legal marijuana is becoming ever more widespread.

## Background

The history of marijuana legislation in the United States dates back more than 400 years ago at the British colony of Jamestown. In 1619, Jamestown passed a law mandating that farmers grow hemp, the plant marijuana is derived from, for use in making “rope, sails, and clothing.”<sup>129</sup> Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the growing of hemp was widespread throughout the country until after the civil war, when imports quickly replaced domestic hemp production.<sup>130</sup> However, while the use of hemp for industrial purposes declined, apothecaries and pharmacies began to adopt marijuana for medicinal purposes. In 1906, as a requirement of the Pure Food and Drug Law, the government mandated that products with marijuana be clearly labeled.<sup>131</sup> However, after almost three centuries of legal hemp and marijuana production, everything changed in 1910. Following the Mexican Revolution, thousands of Mexicans

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<sup>125</sup> Emily Widra, Tiana Herring, “States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2021,” Prison Policy Initiative, September 2021

<sup>126</sup> Carson, E. Ann, “Prisoners in 2021 - Statistical Tables,” United States Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2022

<sup>127</sup> “Exactly How Many People are Locked Up for Weed?,” Last Prisoner Project, 2023

<sup>128</sup> “7 U.S. Code § 96 - Punishment for violation of prohibition,” Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, March 3, 1923

<sup>129</sup> “Marijuana Timeline,” Frontline, PBS

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

immigrated to the United States. One practice that was brought over with this new wave of immigration was the idea that marijuana could be used recreationally and not just for the medicinal purposes that had been so common in the states. Primarily due to racist and discriminatory views, the drug became associated with immigration, and anti-drug campaigners, companies, and government officials began to attribute crime to the “marijuana menace” and immigrants.<sup>132</sup>

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, marijuana laws became stricter and stricter, with propaganda films such as *Reefer Madness* only fueling the negative language surrounding the drug.<sup>133</sup> The federal government created new drug enforcement agencies like the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the DEA that cracked down on the possession and sale of marijuana, treating it the same as other high-level narcotics like cocaine and heroin.<sup>134</sup> Legislation against marijuana peaked in the 1980s with the Reagan Administration’s war on drugs. In 1986, Congress passed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which instituted mandatory sentences for drug-related crimes, and also established the “three strikes rule” that carried with it a life sentence for repeat drug offenders on their third arrest.<sup>135</sup> The anti-marijuana sentiment continued through the Bush administration; however, in the mid-1990s, states began to take their own initiative regarding marijuana laws. In 1996, California legalized medicinal marijuana with Proposition 215.<sup>136</sup> Thus started a wave of states decriminalizing and legalizing marijuana, and as of 2023, only four states have the drug fully criminalized.<sup>137</sup>

### **Arguments Regarding the Legalization of Marijuana**

When state legislatures vote on legalizing marijuana, they must weigh the arguments presented by the opposing sides. As for the side supporting legalization, there are often three shared reasons that support legalization. The first positive claim is that marijuana can be used as a medicine and is safer than currently available medications. Marijuana has fewer adverse side effects than opioid medication, which have the potential for drug abuse and addiction.<sup>138</sup> The second positive claim for legalization is that the criminal penalties for marijuana use “have been unfairly imposed on African-American and Latino youth” and that legalization could relieve pressures on marginalized communities.<sup>139</sup> The third positive claim is that legal marijuana is better regulated and taxed.<sup>140</sup> This is one of the most substantial positives to legalization, as with

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<sup>132</sup> “Marijuana Timeline,” Frontline, PBS

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Baker, R, “The Case for Medical Marijuana: Vote Yes on Proposition 215,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 5, 1996

<sup>137</sup> “Marijuana Legality by State,” DISA Global Solutions, 2023

<sup>138</sup> Noman Khalid and Abhishek Singh, “Cannabis Versus Opioids For Pain,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, January 25, 2023

<sup>139</sup> Hall, Wayne, “The Costs and Benefits of Cannabis Control Policies,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 22, 2020

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

the tax revenue collected from marijuana sales, that new revenue stream can be funneled to other government programs and give already cash-strapped governments new ways to help their communities. However, although there are positive claims of legalization, there are concerns over legalizing the drug.

The first concern people have over marijuana legalization is that marijuana legalization could lead to an increase in DUI-related car incidents.<sup>141</sup> This is supported by data stating that, on average, in five states with legal marijuana, injury-causing vehicular accidents increased by 6 percent.<sup>142</sup> However, while efforts have to be made to reduce rates of impaired driving, alcohol is completely legal, and 30% of all vehicular accidents are caused by drunk drivers.<sup>143</sup> The potential for misuse of legal marijuana does not mandate its prohibition. A second concern is that by legalizing marijuana, it could cause users to develop a dependency on the drug.<sup>144</sup> According to Dr. Samuel T. Wilkeson of Yale University, 10 percent of marijuana users become “addicted” and dependent on the drug, and after quitting, they feel withdrawal symptoms.<sup>145</sup> The third concern regards the potential health long-term health issues of using the drug.<sup>146</sup> Regarding the long-term effects of prolonged marijuana use, data is relatively slim, as the prohibition on marijuana use has only recently been starting to lift. However, preliminary data suggests that while marijuana use is not healthy, it carries a lesser burden of disease than substances such as alcohol and tobacco, both of which are legal to purchase and consume.<sup>147</sup> To summarize, the three concerns revolve around the potential adverse health effects of marijuana consumption and irresponsible use that could lead to serious injury. While these concerns are valid, and studies show marijuana is not entirely healthy for one to consume, it is not the responsibility of the government to criminalize it and remove one’s agency to decide for themselves whether or not to use it.

When deciding whether to ban marijuana, the legislature must balance both the arguments favoring the legalization of marijuana and those in opposition to these issues to determine a course of action. This balances the benefits of marijuana legalization, including increased tax revenue, increased regulation and safety, and concerns over potential health effects.

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<sup>141</sup> Hall, Wayne, “The Costs and Benefits of Cannabis Control Policies,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 22, 2020

<sup>142</sup> Maddox, Jeremy, “Driving High: What Marijuana Car Accident Statistics Teach Us,” Law Offices of James Scott Farrin, November 22, 2022

<sup>143</sup> “Drunk Driving,” National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, United States Department of Transportation,

<sup>144</sup> Hall, Wayne, “The Costs and Benefits of Cannabis Control Policies,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 22, 2020

<sup>145</sup> Wilkinson, Samuel T, “*More Reasons States Should Not Legalize Marijuana: Medical and Recreational Marijuana: Commentary and Review of the Literature*,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 22, 2020

<sup>146</sup> Hall, Wayne, “The Costs and Benefits of Cannabis Control Policies,” National Library of Medicine, National Center of Biotechnology Information, September 22, 2020

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

## Argument Regarding the Forgiveness of Past Offenses

When it comes to the ethicality of forgiving past offenses, the leading school of thought is that it would be ethically wrong to keep people incarcerated for committing a crime that is now legal. This concept is relatively new, as in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Professor Deborah Ahrens states that commonly held doctrine is that criminal law is considered a “one-way ratchet,” with the criminalization of legal offenses only meant to increase in severity.<sup>148</sup> This sentiment was widely seen during the War on Drugs; however, over the past decade, sentiments have shifted. As the public has been exposed to the concept of legalization, there appears to be strong public support for forgiving past offenses.

Regarding the legalization of the drug itself, according to a poll conducted by Monmouth University, 76 percent of Democrats support the legalization of marijuana, along with 73 percent of independents and 52 percent of Republicans.<sup>149</sup> To further break down approval of the measure, approximately 87 percent of those under 35 approve the measure, with 53 percent of those older than 55 supporting it as well. Among Democrats, Independents, and young voters, there are supermajorities in favor of it, and among more conservative Republicans and older voters, there still exists majority support for the measures. In response to this support, President Biden issued blanket federal pardons to those in federal custody for marijuana possession. Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute, stated that “Biden’s action is in line with how the vast majority of Americans feel about this issue,” as approximately 69 percent of Americans agreed with Biden’s wave of pardons.<sup>150</sup> We currently live in an era of intense political divide, where political antipathy is the highest it’s been over the past twenty years.<sup>151</sup> Given these circumstances, it is remarkable that there is such strong support across different political demographics. Given this support, it is not morally permissible to deny the majority’s will.

## Solutions and Answering Questions

It is an ethical imperative that both federal and state governments expunge the records of those previously incarcerated for low-level marijuana offenses and that those currently imprisoned be released. However, to analyze why it is morally right, one must break down the process of forgiveness into three different sections. The first section is about whether the actual use of marijuana is morally right. The second section is about whether the expunging of records is morally right. Lastly, the third section concerns the moral benefits of record expunging and forgiveness.

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<sup>148</sup> Ahrens, Deborah M., “Retroactive Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Rest e Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Restorative Justice in an Era of Criminal Justice Reform,” *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol 100, no. 3, Summer 2020

<sup>149</sup> “Broad Support for Marijuana Pardons,” Monmouth University Polling Institute, Monmouth University, October 24, 2022

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> “Political Polarization in the American Public: How Increasing Ideological Uniformity and Partisan Antipathy Affect Politics, Compromise and Everyday Life,” Pew Research Center, June 12, 2014

The first question that must be answered is whether the use of marijuana is morally wrong and whether it should warrant imprisonment. According to a 2018 Gallup poll, approximately 65 percent of the American population believe the usage of marijuana recreationally is morally acceptable.<sup>152</sup> The action of outlawing something a majority of Americans see as morally good is in itself morally unacceptable. In a country that values and emphasizes the populace's opinions, if most people believe in something, legislation should reflect the people's will. In this scenario, the legalization of marijuana must be moral.

The second question that must be answered is whether it is morally permissible to have marijuana laws apply ex-post facto and forgive previous offenses. In the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Professor Debra Ahrens of the Seattle University School of Law calls this kind of ex-post facto record forgiveness "retroactive legality."<sup>153</sup> According to Ahrens, retroactive legality is a "framework in which we seek to restore those convicted of marijuana crimes to the rights and civic status they would have had if their conduct had never been illegal."<sup>154</sup> In her article, she concludes that most Americans approve of legal marijuana. More recent data suggests that as much as 68 percent of Americans are in favor of legalized recreational marijuana.<sup>155</sup> As a result of widespread support, she believes that it would be wrong to "saddle persons convicted in the past with the legal and social consequences of behavior the public now broadly approves."<sup>156</sup> This belief is the backbone of most moral arguments regarding record forgiveness. Retroactive legality supports the argument that it is not morally right for someone in a state where marijuana is legal and where people can freely use the substance, that inmates are imprisoned for the same action in the same state.

Lastly, it is important to discuss the moral benefits of forgiving past offenses resulting from legalizing marijuana. Assuming an inmate has completed their sentence and they are a free citizen, when that person goes to apply for a job, a credit card, a loan, a mortgage, or anything that requires a personal history, that person has to mark something along the lines of "I have a criminal record."<sup>157</sup> When their records are sealed, and their past offenses are forgiven, that person can check "I have no record" on those aforementioned forms.<sup>158</sup> The expunging of records eliminates an obstacle in the path of living a normal life and, by doing so, reduces inmate

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<sup>152</sup> Jones, Jeffrey M., "Most in U.S. Say Consuming Alcohol, Marijuana Morally Okay," Gallup, June 4, 2018

<sup>153</sup> Ahrens, Deborah M., "Retroactive Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Rest e Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Restorative Justice in an Era of Criminal Justice Reform," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol 100, no. 3, Summer 2020

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> Van Green, Ted, "Americans Overwhelmingly Say Marijuana Should Be Legal for Medical or Recreational Use," Pew Research Center, November 22, 2022

<sup>156</sup> Ahrens, Deborah M., "Retroactive Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Rest e Legality: Marijuana Convictions and Restorative Justice in an Era of Criminal Justice Reform," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol 100, no. 3, Summer 2020

<sup>157</sup> John Greaney and Sarah Morgan, "The Benefits Of Sealing And Expunging Cannabis Records," BusinessWest.com, *The Business Journal of Western Massachusetts*, March 17, 2020

<sup>158</sup> John Greaney and Sarah Morgan, "The Benefits Of Sealing And Expunging Cannabis Records," BusinessWest.com, *The Business Journal of Western Massachusetts*, March 17, 2020

recidivism.<sup>159</sup> If bettering lives and reducing recidivism are victories and objectives to strive towards, then by extension, the action that causes those victories must be morally correct.

There are an array of ethical reasons to forgive past marijuana offenses, including following public opinion, applying concepts of retroactive legality, bettering the lives of those convicted, and reducing the rate at which people are re-incarcerated. Most states seem to be following this line of reasoning, with Connecticut specifically passing a law “clearing thousands of Low-Level Cannabis Possession Convictions.”<sup>160</sup> Given the benefits of record forgiveness, vast public support for legalization and record forgiveness, and a majority of Americans recognizing the morality of marijuana use, it is imperative that past marijuana convictions are forgiven, and records expunged.

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<sup>159</sup> Romano, Joseph L., “A Study on the Effect of Marijuana Laws on Recidivism,” CMC Senior Theses, Claremont McKenna College, 2015

<sup>160</sup> “Governor Lamont Announces Thousands of Low-Level Cannabis Possession Convictions To Be Cleared for Connecticut Residents,” The Office of Governor Ned Lamont, December 6, 2022

## Learning to Unlearn: Reflections on Anti-Intellectualism in Conservative Politics

*Gloria Dickson*

In the world of American politics, party elites diligently control the perception surrounding political parties, while simultaneously securing financial capital through grassroots and large-figure donations. These elites maintain a vested interest in retaining and expanding their constituencies.<sup>161</sup> To do this, party figures must understand and effectively emulate the motive, drive, and overall ideology of their constituencies. This leads to elites invoking popular sentiments in efforts to create a mutual understanding between constituents and party leaders.<sup>162</sup> Debates over ideology and its presentation before voters, once held that ideology is unimportant within American politics.<sup>163</sup> However, we have seen modern political parties stress entrenched values that serve as a compulsory prerequisite within a party. For instance, members of the GOP desire a small government focused on free market enterprise and fiscal responsibility.<sup>164</sup>

Within the Republican party, there has been a long-standing tradition of representing oneself as anti-establishment and ultimately anti-intellectualism.<sup>165</sup> To be an anti-intellectual is to exhibit disdain for the smugness and superiority that many believe accompanies intellectual life.<sup>166</sup> This sentiment has been welcomed by many blue-collar workers, especially those who are not college graduates. With the 2008 political realignment signifying an increasing trend in four-year college degree holders identifying as Democrats, party leaders within the GOP began to outwardly reject notions of elitism and perpetuate attitudes that coincided with the values of their voters.<sup>167 168</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> McAllister, Ian. "Party Elites, Voters and Political Attitudes: Testing Three Explanations for Mass-Elite Differences." *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 24, no. 2 (1991): 237–68. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3229528>.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Kritzer, Herbert M. "Ideology and American Political Elites." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (1978): 484–502. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2748372>.

<sup>164</sup> Nadeem, Reem. 2021. "Beyond Red vs. Blue: The Political Typology." Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. November 9, 2021. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/11/09/beyond-red-vs-blue-the-political-typology-2/>.

<sup>165</sup> Motta, M. (2018). The Dynamics and Political Implications of Anti-Intellectualism in the United States. *American Politics Research*, 46(3), 465–498. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X17719507>

<sup>166</sup> Shogan, Colleen J. "Anti-Intellectualism in the Modern Presidency: A Republican Populism." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 295–303. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20446425>.

<sup>167</sup> Jones, Bradley. 2018. "Wide Gender Gap, Growing Educational Divide in Voters' Party Identification." Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. March 20, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/03/20/wide-gender-gap-growing-educational-divide-in-voters-party-identification/>.

<sup>168</sup> E.J. Dionne Jr. 2008. "The Pitfalls of Anti-Elitist Politics." *The Seattle Times*. September 17, 2008. <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/the-pitfalls-of-anti-elitist-politics/>.

Many mark Dwight Eisenhower's 1952 presidential campaign as the first to overtly utilize anti-intellectual posturing to enhance political prospects.<sup>169</sup> Despite a tenure as President of Columbia University, Eisenhower publicly expressed his unfavorable opinion of intellectuals and academia writ large. This strategic rhetoric, particularly in contrast to his opponent Adlai Stevenson, allowed Eisenhower to appeal to voters and clinch the presidency.<sup>170</sup> Conservatives attacked Stevenson, claiming that he was soft on communism.<sup>171</sup> The media and those associated with the conservative party attempted to correlate Stevenson's intellectual attributes as lacking masculinity, a necessary component of becoming president.<sup>172</sup> In public perception, being highbrow and associated with intellectual prowess justified questioning one's masculinity. Eisenhower's political success hinged on his ability to diminish elite and intellectual attributes while recentering the values and attitudes of ordinary Americans.<sup>173</sup> Although this brought him much political success, we begin to see the modern-day implications of anti-intellectual attitudes within political life.<sup>174</sup>

Ronald Reagan vehemently challenged intellectualist ideas through his targeting of California's university educational system beginning in his 1966 gubernatorial campaign. His focus was on The University of California's Berkeley campus, which he viewed as collapsing in morality.<sup>175</sup> During this period, students and faculty were actively engaged in demonstrations and strikes related to issues such as the draft, civil rights, discrimination, and women's liberation. Reagan's emphasis on traditional values rejected this type of activism and renounced the students and faculty as self-indulgent snobs who were contemptuous of middle-class values.<sup>176</sup> His speeches, which frequently discussed morality and radical liberal activism on college campuses, played extraordinarily well with Californians, many of whom were transplants from either the Midwest or the South.<sup>177</sup> This push against California's intellectual establishment

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<sup>169</sup> Jones, Bradley. 2018. "Wide Gender Gap, Growing Educational Divide in Voters' Party Identification." Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy. March 20, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/03/20/wide-gender-gap-growing-educational-divide-in-voters-party-identification/>.

<sup>170</sup> Shogan, Colleen J. "Anti-Intellectualism in the Modern Presidency: A Republican Populism." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 295–303. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20446425>.

<sup>171</sup> Messner, Michael A. "The Masculinity of the Governor: Muscle and Compassion in American Politics." *Gender and Society* 21, no. 4 (2007): 461–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640987>.

<sup>172</sup> Messner, Michael A. "The Masculinity of the Governor: Muscle and Compassion in American Politics." *Gender and Society* 21, no. 4 (2007): 461–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640987>.

<sup>173</sup> Shogan, Colleen J. "Anti-Intellectualism in the Modern Presidency: A Republican Populism." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 295–303. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20446425>.

<sup>174</sup> Messner, Michael A. "The Masculinity of the Governor: Muscle and Compassion in American Politics." *Gender and Society* 21, no. 4 (2007): 461–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640987>.

<sup>175</sup> "Ronald Reagan on the Unrest on College Campuses, 1967 | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History." 2023. Gilderlehrman.org. 2023. <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/ronald-reagan-unrest-college-campuses-1967>.

<sup>176</sup> Dallek, Robert. 1999. *Ronald Reagan: The Politics of Symbolism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

<sup>177</sup> Shogan, Colleen J. "Anti-Intellectualism in the Modern Presidency: A Republican Populism." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 295–303. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20446425>.



cemented notions that equated intellect and activism with radical and dangerous elites who had no understanding of the needs of ordinary Americans.<sup>178</sup>

Reagan went on to win his 1966 Gubernatorial campaign. On May 15, 1969, Governor Reagan called the national guard into Berkeley's People's Park to crack down on anti-war protests and what he viewed as a haven for communist sympathizers, radical activism, and sexual deviants.<sup>179</sup> This action resulted in one student's death and 128 protesters admitted for medical attention. As President, Reagan's anti-academic and anti-elitist reputation preceded him. He used this to his advantage, as advisors claimed it allowed him to be viewed as an underdog.<sup>180</sup> Reagan's former press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater mentions visiting the president and noting several books and academic journals on his desk in the Oval office.<sup>181</sup> Fitzwater says he intended to use this fact in an upcoming press conference. In response, Reagan told Fitzwater that he did not think it was a good idea to advertise his intellectual repertoire.<sup>182</sup> To Reagan, there was political value in maintaining his identity as an anti-intellectualist. The correlation Reagan's gubernatorial administration constructed between intellect and radical activism has tainted what it means to be simply heard reading academic literature. The implications of this sentiment are long-lasting.<sup>183</sup>

Anti-intellectual sentiment places professional experts in a difficult position to effectively educate the public. The world witnessed the active pushback against Covid-19 protocols, which were facilitated by political elites such as President Trump; who admitted to downplaying the virus.<sup>184</sup> This type of disinformation, perpetuated by political elites for their own means, is incredibly harmful.<sup>185</sup> However, within a political party's heavy reliance on denouncing and dismantling institutions of intellect, experts frantically attempting to save lives are unable to reach entire blocks of individuals. We also see this in the GOP's denial of climate change.

The perpetuation of anti-intellectual sentiment in politics ensures that voters rely only on their partisans for information. It is important to note that these same politicians can be easily influenced due to a lapse in campaign contribution laws and efforts to prolong their political tenure. Therefore, anti-intellectual sentiments that criticize long-standing institutions should be

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<sup>178</sup> Stone, Rolling. 2017. "Ronald Reagan and UC Berkeley People's Park Riots 1969." Rolling Stone. Rolling Stone. May 15, 2017. <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/flashback-ronald-reagan-and-the-berkeley-peoples-park-riots-114873/>.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Shogan, Colleen J. "Anti-Intellectualism in the Modern Presidency: A Republican Populism." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 295–303. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20446425>.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Merkley, E., Loewen, P.J. Anti-intellectualism and the mass public's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Nat Hum Behav* 5, 706–715 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01112-w>

<sup>184</sup> "Trump Admits He Downplayed Virus Dangers in Early Months of Pandemic." 2020. Kaiser Health News. September 10, 2020. <https://khn.org/morning-breakout/trump-admits-he-downplayed-virus-dangers-in-early-months-of-pandemic/>.

<sup>185</sup> Farhall, Kate et al. Political Elites' Use of Fake News Discourse Across Communications Platforms. *International Journal of Communication*, [S.l.], v. 13, p. 23, sep. 2019.

examined and scrutinized.<sup>186</sup> The Covid-19 pandemic created a unique, opportunity to study how citizens react to expert advice on a novel and important issue, with the negative connotations surrounding intellect.<sup>187</sup> It is up to the perpetrators of anti-intellectualism to reconsider this element of political rhetoric in favor of respecting our established institutions.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Brewer, Mark D. and Maisel, L. Sandy, "Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process" (2016). *Faculty and Staff Monograph Publications*. 265. [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/fac\\_monographs/265](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/fac_monographs/265)

<sup>187</sup> "Trump Admits He Downplayed Virus Dangers in Early Months of Pandemic." 2020. Kaiser Health News. September 10, 2020. <https://khn.org/morning-breakout/trump-admits-he-downplayed-virus-dangers-in-early-months-of-pandemic/>.

<sup>188</sup> Brewer, Mark D. and Maisel, L. Sandy, "Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process" (2016). *Faculty and Staff Monograph Publications*. 265. [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/fac\\_monographs/265](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/fac_monographs/265)

## The Latest Policing Weapon: The Rise of Intelligence-Led Policing

*Medha Illindala*

Technology is advancing rapidly and society, writ large, is taking advantage. Police departments nationwide are using predictive software to aid law enforcement in crime prevention, especially as crime becomes more rampant. Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP) is a model of policing that uses computerized algorithms and software to collect and analyze crime data.<sup>189</sup> Most importantly, ILP software predicts where crime will happen and who is most likely to commit the crime.

In the 1980s, police departments saw a shift from a professional model of policing to one that involved itself more with the community and specific problems at hand. Criminologist Herman Goldstein influenced this concept with his books *Policing a Free Society* and *Problem-Oriented Policing*.<sup>190</sup> Police began to focus more on reducing the disorder in specific communities rather than taking a more generalized approach to crime prevention. Police departments then turned to the scientific method to test different applications. This began in New York in the early 1990s with the COMPSTAT program, which was a computerized quantification program led by Commissioner William Bratton.<sup>191</sup> This program aimed to take a scientific approach to analyzing crime problems and managing the data collected. This ultimately led to a 34% reduction in crime in the following decade and is often cited as the beginning of the ‘smart policing’ era.<sup>192</sup>

After 9/11, intelligence bureaus started forming across the United States with the goal of counterterrorism. These bureaus were based mainly on models from other countries, notably the British National Intelligence model, and relied on analytically understanding crime threats crossing multiple jurisdictional lines. The New York Police Department and the Los Angeles Police departments were some of the first police departments to start these programs.<sup>193</sup> The initial ILP systems, as well as the ones in place today, relied heavily on proactive information sharing. They aimed to combine technological advances in data collection, generate and share intelligence, and direct law enforcement to where they were needed. With these bureaus, police departments across the nation started to move away from reactive policing in favor of attempting to prevent crimes before they happened.

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<sup>189</sup> Huber, Nate. *Intelligence-Led Policing for Law Enforcement Managers*. FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 2019. <https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/intelligence-led-policing-for-law-enforcement-managers#:~:text=%5BI%5Dintelligence%2Dled%20policing,prolific%20offenders%20and%20criminal%20groups>

<sup>190</sup> *Reducing Crime Through Intelligence-Led Policing*. Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/Publications/ReducingCrimeThroughILP.pdf>

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Egge, Jeff. *Experimenting with Future-Oriented Analysis at Crime Hot Spots in Minneapolis*. Geography and Public Safety, 2011. <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0598-pub.pdf>

<sup>193</sup> Fritzvold, Erik. *What Law Enforcement Leaders Should Know About Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)*. University of San Diego. <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/what-is-intelligence-led-policing/>

One of the first major tests of ILP and preventative policing happened with Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), established in 2001. Throughout the early 2000s, this initiative focused on reducing gun violence and increasing public safety.<sup>194</sup> The scientists in this project created a model for robbery-related aggravated assaults, trying to determine what exactly caused a robbery to lead to assault. These data findings led police departments to reach out to communities with more specific information to increase public safety. Additionally, the PSN was one of the first projects that used geospatial technologies in crime prevention. The scientists created geographical models to mark where armed robberies often took place, as well as locate the areas more likely associated with robbery-related aggravated assaults.<sup>195</sup> This allowed police departments to proactively station police at the places where they may be needed the most.

The geospatial model was tested at a wide scale on New Year's Eve in 2004 when the PSN team wanted to test 'risk-based deployment' specifically for instances of random gunfire. A model was created, and police were proactively stationed where the model predicted they might be needed. The results were successful; the PSN team calculated a 47% reduction in complaints of random gunfire, as well as a 246% increase in the number of weapons seized by police. Additionally, since the police used fewer personnel, an overall \$15,000 was saved over the 8-hour initiative.<sup>196</sup>

Hot spot policing is another type of ILP used by many police departments throughout the United States. This concept involves focusing resources on smaller geographical areas, oftentimes in more urban settings where crime is typically more concentrated.<sup>197</sup> Research conducted by Lawrence Sherman from the University of Maryland in 1995 showed that in many cities, only 5% of addresses produced 100% of the calls made for police services for crimes such as robbery and rape.<sup>198</sup> Additionally, Sherman found that future crime is more predictable when looking at addresses rather than predicting by the individual, ultimately supporting the hot spot policing model. This model was successful when used by the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) in 2009. The MPD created a map of where suspects often discharged their weapons, where they were more prone to be arrested, and where their victims were shot.<sup>199</sup> These became patrol zones for the police and were ultimately successful in reducing gun violence in the area. Additionally, the violent gangs that were prominent in Minneapolis shifted to much smaller cliques that the MPD is working on decreasing even further.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> McCue, Colleen. *Proactive Policing: Using Geographic Analysis to Fight Crime*. Geography and Public Safety, 2011. <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0598-pub.pdf>

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Fritzvold, Erik. *What Law Enforcement Leaders Should Know About Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)*. University of San Diego. <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/what-is-intelligence-led-policing/>

<sup>198</sup> Egge, Jeff. *Experimenting with Future-Oriented Analysis at Crime Hot Spots in Minneapolis*. Geography and Public Safety, 2011. <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0598-pub.pdf>

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) produced a report on intelligence-led policing, citing its successes and what police departments have learned from these models. Success story examples include Austin, Texas, where the police department found a reduction in violent crime, burglaries, and repeat offenses. Specifically, they saw a 15% reduction in vehicle burglary.<sup>201</sup> In Medford, Oregon, ILP led to an overall clearance rate of 80% for all crimes.<sup>202</sup> Medford wanted to increase the cooperation between the police and the community to gather more data on their crime. San Diego was able to use ILP to find more informants for gang activity in the area, isolate the gang members responsible for the majority of the crimes, and dramatically reduce gang-related violence.<sup>203</sup> The DOJ report highlights several important points for police departments using ILP to keep in mind for maximum success and efficiency. Notably, the DOJ emphasizes the importance of information sharing across departments and crossing jurisdictional boundaries, having clearly defined goals, holding officers accountable, collaboration, and continuous assessment of the issues.<sup>204</sup>

Despite the noted success of ILP, the system is far from perfect, and many are concerned with its increased use. Many experts in the field find an issue with the fact that many ILP software and systems rely purely on arrest records, which are heavily skewed. The DOJ has reported that Black individuals are twice as likely to be arrested than White individuals. Furthermore, a Black individual is 5 times more likely to be stopped without cause than a White individual.<sup>205</sup> The algorithms used in ILP are using this data, and although race is not used as a predictor, socioeconomic background, education, and zip code are. These factors are heavily associated with race through centuries of racism and zoning laws. Arrest records also don't always mean convictions, and phone calls to the police don't always lead to arrests. Kathy Weathington, a researcher at the University of Colorado, notes "We took bad data in the first place, and then we used tools to make it worse." It was reported in Chicago that police departments were creating 'most wanted lists' based on the ILP data. Police were knocking on doors and telling people that they were being watched, as well as warning people on the lists that they were at risk of being involved in gang-related crimes. If these people were then arrested for any type of crime, prosecutors were able to seek higher charges by stating they had already been 'warned'.<sup>206</sup> The University of Pennsylvania's Dorothy Roberts states, "Racism has always been

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<sup>201</sup> Fritzvold, Erik. *What Law Enforcement Leaders Should Know About Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)*. University of San Diego. <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/what-is-intelligence-led-policing/>

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> *Reducing Crime Through Intelligence-Led Policing*. Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/Publications/ReducingCrimeThroughILP.pdf>

<sup>205</sup> Heaven, Will Douglas. *Predictive Policing Algorithms are Racist. They Need to be Dismantled*. MIT Technology Review, 2020. <https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/07/17/1005396/predictive-policing-algorithms-racist-dismantled-machine-learning-bias-criminal-justice/>

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

about predicting, about making certain racial groups seem as if they are predisposed to do bad things and therefore justify controlling them.”<sup>207</sup>

Additionally, some experts find issues with the hot spot policing methods. The United Kingdom Government Center for Data Ethics and Innovation stated that identifying certain areas as hot spots leads to police officers expecting trouble and making more unnecessary stops based on prejudice than an actual need for stops.<sup>208</sup> Furthermore, many of the ILP models identifying hot spots were based on populations outside of the United States, all of which were predominantly white. These systems are internationally based due to the difficulty of accessing criminal records across different jurisdictions in the United States. For example, Static 99, a tool used to predict recidivism among sex offenders, was based in Canada where only 3% of the population is Black.<sup>209</sup> Many other systems were based in Europe, where only 2% of the population is Black. Meanwhile, 12% of the United States Population is Black.

Many experts are also concerned with the lack of information made public regarding these intelligence tools. The fact that New Orleans was using predictive tools developed by Palantir, a firm known for secretive data mining, only became public after The Verge conducted an investigation. The NYPD is also paying \$2.5 million to Palantir but has not stated its purpose.<sup>210</sup> Hamid Khan is an activist fighting for the LAPD to stop using PredPol, another predictive tool, and he demanded an audit of the tool. The inspector general was not able to, saying that the tool was too complicated.<sup>211</sup> Critics have also argued that police departments are not enforced to make sure the tools function as inspected, and are even qualified to know how to use them in the first place. The lack of public insight into these tools and their mechanisms causes concern for people paying attention to the connection between ILP and the racism that is coming with it.

Overall, the ‘success’ of ILP is based on who is asked, and what their definition of success is. While some police departments have found these methods useful in crime prevention and have found a decrease in crime, the underlying racism that has been seen at several levels of policing poses critiques to its use. Regardless, it’s clear that with more technological advancements, ILP is continuing to be developed and used across the nation, crowning itself a new tool for law enforcement agencies.

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<sup>207</sup> Heaven, Will Douglas. *Predictive Policing Algorithms are Racist. They Need to be Dismantled*. MIT Technology Review, 2020. <https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/07/17/1005396/predictive-policing-algorithms-racist-dismantled-machine-learning-bias-criminal-justice/>

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

## Negative and Positive Liberty in Drug Policy

*Matthew Koleszar*

### Negative and Positive Liberty

Imagine an alcoholic driving home from work. They reach a fork in the road. Left leads to a bar, right leads to their house. If the alcoholic chooses left, is it a free choice? Nobody forces them to turn left, but the alcoholic still feels as if they had no control over the decision. They feel driven by the addiction, rather than driving themselves. Their addiction, their internal desire which they have no conscious control over, forces them to turn left. They are not coerced by any external force, but by an internal force. They are not slaves to any man, but they are slaves to their addiction. They have negative liberty, but they lack positive liberty.

Negative liberty is freedom from external coercion, positive liberty is freedom from internal coercion. Negative liberty is freedom from interference on an individual, while positive liberty is the freedom to achieve one's goals. Negative liberty is the absence of barriers, positive liberty is the presence of self-mastery.<sup>212</sup> A government can protect negative liberty by staying out of people's way and ensuring people stay out of each other's ways. A government can promote positive liberty by providing resources for people to achieve self-realization. A society without negative liberty is George Orwell's 1984, where the state controls its subjects. A society without positive liberty is Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, where the people enslave themselves through drugs.

Governments struggle to provide both negative and positive liberty in drug policy. Decriminalizing drugs protects negative liberty by allowing for more freedom of choice, but it also erodes positive liberty by enabling addiction. Drug prohibition intends to promote positive liberty by limiting access to addictive substances, but it restricts negative liberty by interfering with people's freedom of choice. However, past case studies can help demonstrate what drug policies provide a balance of both negative and positive liberty.

### The War on Drugs: Neither Negative Liberty Nor Positive Liberty

Proponents of drug prohibition argue that it preserves positive liberty by limiting drug addiction. Suppliers, motivated by profit, and consumers, enslaved by addiction, should be prevented from buying and selling drugs. A drug deal is not a free economic transaction because the consumer is not acting freely. The US has used this logic to justify the "War on Drugs," a campaign intended to curb rising rates of drug abuse by attacking suppliers with prohibition and military interdiction.

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<sup>212</sup> Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," Four Essays On Liberty, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 118-172.

[https://cactus.utahtech.edu/green/B\\_Readings/I\\_Berlin%20Two%20Concpets%20of%20Liberty.pdf](https://cactus.utahtech.edu/green/B_Readings/I_Berlin%20Two%20Concpets%20of%20Liberty.pdf)

However, as the Commission on Drug Policy announced in 2011, “the global war on drugs has failed” to decrease addiction to illicit drugs.<sup>213</sup> From 1998 to 2008, worldwide opiate use increased by 34.5% and cocaine use increased by 27%. Attempts to reduce the drug supply only raised drug prices on the black market, leading to higher profits and inducing more dealers to enter the market.<sup>214</sup> Meanwhile, the campaign did not reduce the inelastic demand for drugs – the underlying cause of the illicit drug market. Because it did not liberate people from their chains of addiction, it did not protect positive liberty. On the contrary, the War on Drugs entrenches addiction. Its stressful, costly correctional system ostracizes and isolates addicts, treating them like villains rather than victims.<sup>215</sup> As a result, the War on Drugs has created a harmful stigma around addiction, making it more difficult to seek treatment.

Prohibition campaigns like the War on Drugs – also fail in theory. They intend (although they usually fail) to protect positive liberty by preventing drug abuse, but they sacrifice negative liberty by allowing the government to interfere with individual action. Prohibition is paternalism: the state acts like a parent who knows the child’s best interests better than the child himself. Paternalism may be justified in cases of involuntary action. For example, a government may be justified in preventing a man from unknowingly walking across a damaged bridge or preventing a company from selling contaminated food to unknowing consumers. But preventing someone from knowingly and voluntarily using a drug erodes freedom of choice and can even be a first step toward more tyrannical policies in the name of the greater good. Drug prohibition campaigns erode negative liberty without protecting positive liberty. They fail in theory and in practice.

### **The Netherlands: Both Negative Liberty and Positive Liberty**

The Netherlands protects negative liberty through its policy of drug tolerance. Soft drugs, like marijuana, can be bought, sold, possessed, and used without risk of criminal prosecution. Hard drugs, like heroin, can be used, but their sale, purchase, and possession are more strictly regulated.<sup>216</sup> Adults can freely use whatever substances they choose, as long as they do not create a public nuisance.

Meanwhile, the Netherlands promotes positive liberty through public health policies that administer care to substance dependents. For example, heroin-dependent people who have struggled with more conventional treatment can participate in heroin-assisted treatment (HAT), wherein they can visit government-run supervised injection sites (SISs) to receive heroin in a safe, controlled environment without any stigma. Because medical professionals administer the

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<sup>213</sup> “War on Drugs: Report of the Global Commission on Drug Policy.” *Global Commission on Drug Policy*, Open Society Foundations, June 2011, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/publications/war-drugs-report-global-commission-drug-policy>

<sup>214</sup> Reuter, Peter et al., *Sealing the Borders: The Effects of Increased Military Participation in Drug Interdiction*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1988. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R3594.html>

<sup>215</sup> “‘In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts’: Dr. Gabor Maté.” *Democracy Now!*, 13 Mar. 2012, <https://www.democracynow.org/2010/2/3/addiction>.

<sup>216</sup> “Am I Committing a Criminal Offence If I Possess, Produce or Deal in Drugs?” *Government of the Netherlands*, <https://www.government.nl/topics/drugs/am-i-committing-a-criminal-offence-if-i-possess-produce-or-deal-in-drugs>.



drug, overdose risk is low and the dangerous black market can be avoided. Compared with conventional treatment, HAT participants have reduced rates of depression, suicidal ideation, homelessness, crime, and illicit drug use.<sup>217 218</sup> Because of public health policies like HAT, the Netherlands has one of the lowest rates of drug-induced death in Europe and lower drug use rates than the US.<sup>219 220 221</sup> Therefore, Dutch drug policy encourages positive liberty by providing resources for people to free themselves from addiction. Most HAT participants transition to drug-free programs and win back control over their own lives, encouraging self-mastery. The War on Drugs only targets the supply of drugs and stigmatizes people suffering from addiction, while Dutch drug policies address the demand that drives the illegal drug market and encourages people to flourish.

United States drug policy should balance negative and positive liberty by allowing people to use the substances they choose, while also providing resources to protect people from those substances. The seemingly radical policies of European countries like the Netherlands and Switzerland can work in North America too; Vancouver has successfully operated an SIS for over a decade. Last year, New York City opened the first official SIS in the United States. Critics argue that these sites normalize illicit drug use and invite unwanted behavior in their communities. In truth, they only normalize the issue of drug addiction, not drug use. Like those in the Netherlands and Switzerland, Vancouver's SIS programs have also led to decreases in drug use and drug-related crimes.<sup>222</sup> The U.S. should follow these countries and support SIS construction. Doing so would reduce public nuisance crimes by providing a designated injection location and lower healthcare costs by preventing overdoses and reducing diseases like HIV. Harm reduction policies work – the challenge is convincing voters to implement them. While the benefits of these programs are clear, the biggest obstacle to their implementation is also the answer to solving the opioid epidemic: we need to end the stigma surrounding addiction.

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<sup>217</sup> Van den Brink, Wim et al. "Medical prescription of heroin to treatment resistant heroin addicts: two randomised controlled trials." *BMJ (Clinical research ed.)* vol. 327,7410 (2003): 310. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.327.7410.310>

<sup>218</sup> Canada, Senate of. "Heroin Assisted Treatment for Opiate Addicts – The Swiss Experience." *Senate of Canada*, 16 Sept. 2002, <https://sencanada.ca/en/content/sen/committee/371/ille/presentation/ucht-e>.

<sup>219</sup> Smart, Rosanna, Evidence on the Effectiveness of Heroin-Assisted Treatment. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/WR1263.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/WR1263.html).

<sup>220</sup> Bullington, B. "War and Peace: Drug Policy in the United States and the Netherlands." *Office of Justice Programs*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1995, <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/war-and-peace-drug-policy-united-states-and-netherlands>.

<sup>221</sup> Reinerman, Craig. "Why Dutch Drug Policy Is a Threat to U.S. Drug Warriors." *Centre for Drug Research*, 1998, <https://sociology.ucsc.edu/research/emeriti-publications/reinerman-going-dutch.pdf>.

<sup>222</sup> Finke J, Chan J. The Case for Supervised Injection Sites in the United States. *Am Fam Physician*. 2022 May 1;105(5):454-455. PMID: 35559640

# Quantitative Easing and its Capacity in U.S. Monetary Policy

*Hideto Cole Kurokawa*

## Introduction

Since the Great Recession of 2007, the central bank of the United States, the Federal Reserve, has progressively implemented the unconventional monetary policy tool of quantitative easing (QE). The efficacy of QE is widely debated amongst economists, policy makers, financial analysts, and speculators alike. This tool has multiple facets from stimulating a slowing economy to mitigating the possibility, or effects, of an impending recession in the United States. QE is an effective tool for approaching the aforementioned functions and is a valuable component of the Fed's current monetary policy. The aim of this paper is to briefly survey instances of QE and to take an empirical approach to evaluate the effectiveness of QE and discuss its implications in modern U.S. monetary policy.

## Background

The Great Recession was a severe economic downturn that lasted from 2007 to 2009, which was triggered by the collapse of the U.S. housing market. In the years leading up to the crisis, there was a boom in housing prices and a surge in subprime lending. Subprime loans are mortgages given to borrowers with lower credit scores or limited credit histories, and they typically carry higher interest rates and more risky terms than prime loans. Many subprime borrowers were able to buy homes they could not afford due to adjustable-rate mortgages. These loans were bundled together into mortgage-backed securities (MBS), sold to investors, and generally seen as safe investments with high returns, if housing prices kept rising—but then they started to decline. This led to a wave of foreclosures and a decline in the value of mortgage-backed securities held by banks and financial institutions.<sup>223</sup>

As the crisis deepened, many of these institutions, such as Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns, realized that they had taken on too much risk and did not have enough capital to cover their losses. Unable to financially recover from the significant imbalance on their balance sheets, some banks were forced to declare bankruptcy, including the aforementioned institutions. This, among other chain reactions in the consumer-producer cycle, ultimately led to a crisis of confidence and a run on the banks, further worsening the economic situation.

As a result of the collapse of the housing market, the Federal Reserve took several steps to try to stabilize the economy and prevent a further decline in output and employment. Some of the key steps taken by monetary policymakers during this time include the decrease in interest rates, implementation of “forward guidance,” and QE.<sup>224</sup> These actions established the foundation of much of the Federal Reserve's current monetary policy playbook.

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<sup>223</sup> Duca, John V. “Subprime Mortgage Crisis.” *Federal Reserve History*, 22 Nov. 2013, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/subprime-mortgage-crisis>.

<sup>224</sup> Kuttner, Kenneth N. “Outside the Box: Unconventional Monetary Policy in the Great Recession and Beyond.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2018, pp. 121–146., <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.32.4.121>.

## QE as a Monetary Policy Tool

The Federal Reserve's most important policy instrument is the interest rate.<sup>225</sup> The Fed can raise or lower interest rates through the federal funds rate (FFR): the interest rate that financial institutions charge each other for overnight loans.<sup>226</sup> An increase in the FFR effectively makes it more costly to withdraw money, thus encouraging saving and a decrease in the money supply, whereas a decrease in the FFR encourages spending and an increase in the money supply. This generally corresponds to a decrease and increase in aggregate demand, and thus the gross domestic product (GDP), respectively.

In times of economic downturn, when interest rates are already set near or at zero, the Fed resorts to implementing unconventional monetary policy in the form of QE to stimulate growth. QE is generally characterized by long-term, large-scale asset purchases (LSAPs) such as Treasury securities and MBS by the Fed, in hopes of it further reducing long-term interest rates to spur economic activity.<sup>227</sup> Figure 1 and Figure 2 below illustrate the change in FFR, and total assets held by the Federal Reserve, respectively, with respect to time, with the stages of QE shaded. In the case of the financial crisis in 2007-09, the Fed initiated QE in 3 separate stages (QE1, QE2, and QE3);<sup>228</sup> stage 4 (QE4) took place during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

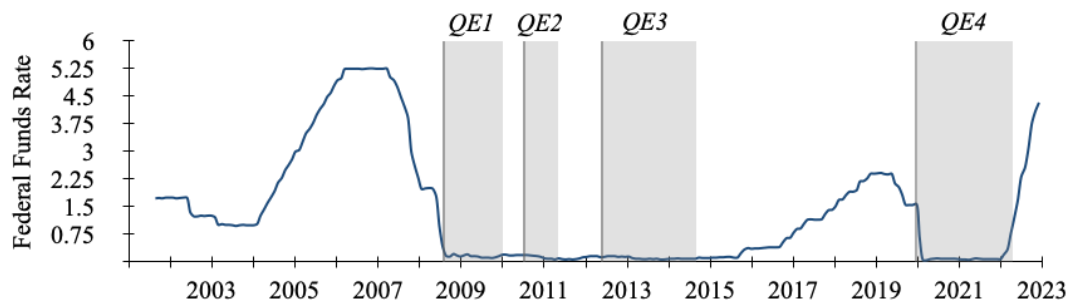


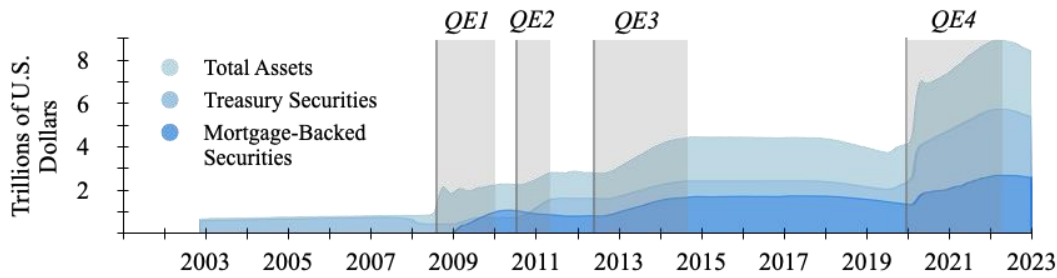
Figure 1. Time-series of federal funds rate with shaded quantitative easing stages.

<sup>225</sup> Belke, Ansgar. "The Effectiveness of the Fed's Quantitative Easing Policy - a Survey of the Econometrics." *Estudios De Economía Aplicada*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2019, p. 291., <https://doi.org/10.25115/eea.v36i1.2530>.

<sup>226</sup> "How the Federal Reserve's Quantitative Easing Affects the Federal Budget." *Congressional Budget Office*, Sept. 2022, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58457>.

<sup>227</sup> Kuttner, Kenneth N. "Outside the Box: Unconventional Monetary Policy in the Great Recession and Beyond." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2018, pp. 121-146., <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.32.4.121>.

<sup>228</sup> "History of Quantitative Easing in the U.S." *The American Deposit Management Co.*, <https://americandeposits.com/history-quantitative-easing-united-states/>.



**Figure 2.** Time-series of assets held by all Federal Reserve banks with shaded quantitative easing stages.

## Methods

In this empirical study on the effectiveness of QE in U.S. monetary policy, several statistical and econometric techniques were utilized. As such, two vector autoregression (VAR) models—a multivariate forecasting algorithm—along with their corresponding orthogonalized impulse reaction functions (OIRF), were implemented to test the relationship and interdependencies between FFR, total Federal Reserve assets (Treasury bills/bonds, MBSs, agency debt, etc.), inflation rate, personal consumption expenditures (PCE), retail sales, and unemployment rate on the annual GDP rate. The results are interpreted within 95% confidence (or a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Data from January 2003 to January 2023, acquired from the Federal Reserve, was used as a basis for this econometric study.

Before performing the forecasts, several assumptions and conditions were required to be checked. First, for the VAR models to be valid, the stationarity of each variable was tested and adjusted accordingly. Using several statistical measures, the exogeneity and endogeneity of the variables were tested, essentially measuring the cause and effect of the variables on one another. Through these tests, in addition to the review of existing literature, the OIRFs were structured as follows:<sup>229</sup>

FFR  $\Rightarrow$  Fed Assets  $\Rightarrow$  Inflation  $\Rightarrow$  PCE  $\Rightarrow$  Retail Sales  $\Rightarrow$  Unemployment  $\Rightarrow$  GDP Rate

In the case of QE, when the FFR is decreased to the zero lower bound and the amount of Federal assets is increased, there is an increase in capital in the money supply, which would consequently affect inflation. In this study, the annual change in Consumer Price Index (CPI)—the average price of a basket of consumer goods and services—is used to measure inflation. A change in inflation in the economy corresponds with a higher or lower price level in personal consumer expenditures; this affects nominal retail sales, therefore a difference in unemployment level, due to higher demand for goods and services. All these factors generate an increase or decrease in the gross domestic product of the United States.

<sup>229</sup> Joyce, Michael et al. “Quantitative Easing and Unconventional Monetary Policy – An Introduction.” *The Economic Journal*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2012, pp. 271–288., <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.32.4.121>.

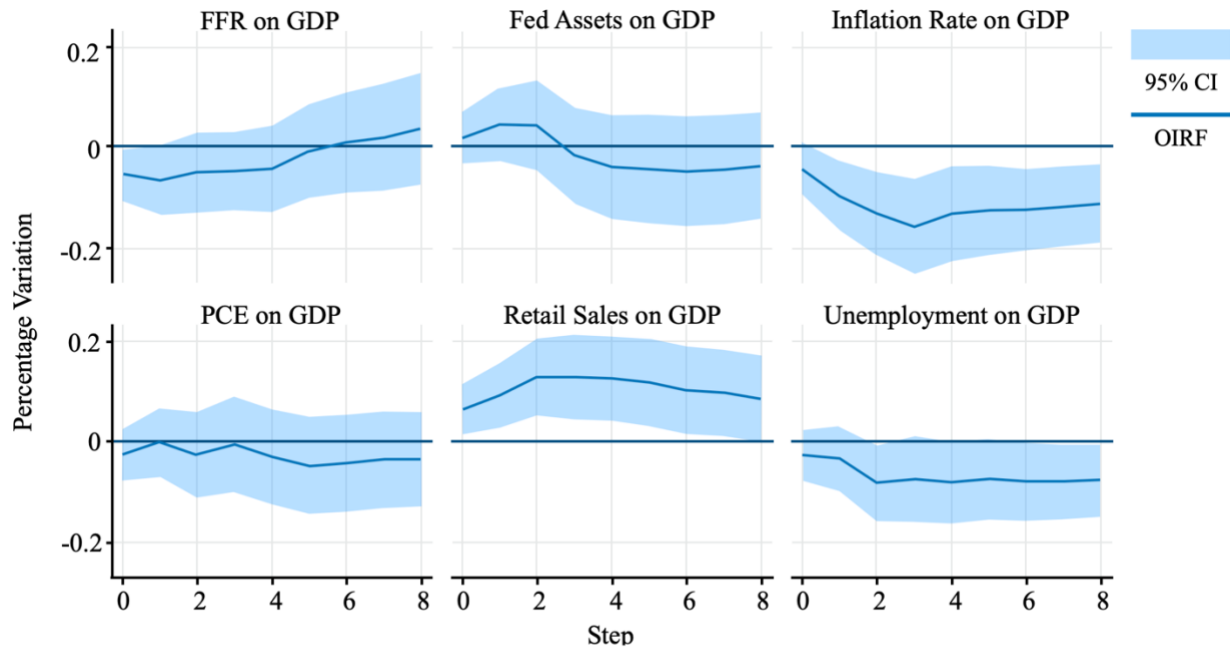
## Results

As a result of the econometric analyses, two panel charts consisting of six OIRFs were generated. Where GDP Rate is the response variable, the interpretation of the OIRFs is as follows: a positive shock in the independent variable (FFR, Fed Assets, Inflation rate, PCE, Retail Sales, or Unemployment) corresponds with a positive, or negative, effect on the GDP Rate—the direction and magnitude of which is illustrated by the graphs for the respective independent variable. When the shaded region overlaps with the horizontal line at zero, this signifies a non-significant effect, since a zero-percent change on GDP rate is in the range of possible outcomes.

For periods when large-scale asset purchases and zero interest rates are implemented to the U.S. economy, there is an overall positive effect on the GDP rate. Specifically, there is a statistically significant, direct relationship between GDP rate and FFR, PCE, retail sales, inflation rate, and unemployment rate, during approximately the first two to four steps/periods when QE is in effect. An increase in these variables correlates with an increase in the GDP rate. Federal Reserve assets, on the other hand, have no significant effect on the GDP rate, although the general magnitude of the OIRF is positive.



**Figure 3.** OIRF for response in GDP rate, given a positive shock in the independent variable during QE.



**Figure 4.** OIRF for response in GDP rate, given a positive shock in the independent variable during no QE.

For periods when QE is not implemented, or simply during “normal” times, there are mixed outcomes on the GDP rate, as illustrated in Figure 4. FFR and unemployment rate have slightly significant effects on GDP rate, whereas retail sales and inflation rate have a much more significant effect, where the former is in the short-run and the latter in the long-run. Furthermore, it is shown that PCE and total Federal Reserve assets have no statistically significant relationship with GDP rate.

With the results briefly interpreted, the following section will explore the implications of the results and extensively discuss the significance and nature of each variable. Additionally, the robustness and validity of the results will be compared to economic theory, and existing literature on QE’s role in U.S. monetary policy.

## Discussion

Throughout economics and monetary policy literature, the efficacy of QE is widely debated. Most, if not all, of studies exploring this topic predominantly focuses on QE’s effect on further lowering interest rates, when the FFR is at zero, through credit easing—the altering of the balance sheet to improve the functioning of segments of the credit markets.<sup>230</sup> However, the purpose of this study was to investigate the general effect of QE on factors of economic activity, with an emphasis on the GDP rate. In the results section of this study, through the

<sup>230</sup>Mishkin, Frederic S. “Central Banking and the Conduct of Monetary Policy.” Essay. In *The Economics of Money, Banking, and Financial Markets*, 10th ed., 372–74. Pearson, 2015.

implementation of VAR and other econometric models, it is generally shown that there are mixed signals in the directions of the economic variables.

During times when QE is implemented, a theoretical increase in the FFR leads to a significant effect on the GDP rate, as it is shown in Figure 3. It is important to note that this is a “theoretical increase” since the Fed would not increase rates while imposing QE or LSAPs. During “normal” times, consistent with macroeconomic theory, an increase in the FFR leads to a decrease in GDP rate, although the significance can be challenged and, in this case, it is only seen in the short-term. It is also noteworthy that even with a “theoretical” increase of the FFR during periods of QE, there is a positive influence on GDP. In Figures 3 and 4, when there is a positive shock in total assets held by the Federal Reserve, there is no significant effect on the GDP. However, focusing on the magnitude and directionality of the graph, an increase in Fed assets during QE equates to a negative-then-positive effect, whereas the same increase in Fed assets during “normal” times leads to a positive-then-negative effect on GDP rate.

The mechanism of QE revolves almost entirely on LSAPs—the expansion of the Federal Reserve’s balance sheet—however, there seems to be no significant, direct relationship with the Fed’s actions with GDP rate, especially during QE. An increase in Federal Reserve assets—ultimately the introduction of more capital into the money supply (monetary base)—leads to an increase in the inflation rate. As such, when referencing the IFR in Figure 3, there is a significant increase in GDP rate in the short-term, and it eventually converges to zero in the long-term.

When there is a positive shock in unemployment during “normal” times, as shown in Figure 4, it has a negative effect on the GDP rate, since unemployment is a sign of reduced economic activity. However, when QE is implemented on the U.S. economy through LSAPs, a positive increase in unemployment relates to a significant increase in the GDP rate, over the short run. This finding directly contradicts Okun’s Law, which states that an increase in the unemployment rate is correlated with a decrease in output growth, or GDP rate, in the short run.<sup>231</sup>

While previous studies primarily focused on the effect of QE on lowering interest rates through credit easing, this study aimed to investigate the general effect of QE on economic activity, which is expressed through GDP rate. The results showed mixed signals in the directionality of economic variables. There was no significant direct relationship between the Fed's expansion of its balance sheet—the main component of QE—with the GDP rate, particularly during QE. Instead, an increase in Federal Reserve assets leads to an increase in inflation rate, which eventually converges to zero in the long-term. It is important to note the magnitude of the effect of the economic variables used on the GDP rate. As displayed on the y-axes of the panel charts in Figures 3 and 4, the percentage variation is 2.0 and 0.2, respectively. This effectively indicates that during QE, a shock in the economic variables has a much greater effect on there is a much greater effect on GDP rate than when QE is not implemented. Overall, the VAR models

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<sup>231</sup> Ball, Laurence, Daniel Leigh, and Prakash Loungani. “Okun's Law: Fit at 50?” *Journal of Money, Credit and Banking* 49, no. 7 (2017): 1413–41. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmcb.12420>.

provide insights into the impact of QE on various economic factors, challenging some established economic theories, such as Okun's Law.

### **Conclusion**

This study provides an overview of QE as an unconventional monetary policy tool used by the Federal Reserve since the Great Recession, triggered by the collapse of the U.S. housing market in 2007-09. The aim of this study was to investigate the general effect of QE on economic activity, with a focus on GDP rate, using economic data and econometric models. The results indicated mixed signals in the directionality of economic variables, challenging some established economic theories. While previous studies mainly focused on the effect of QE on lowering interest rates through credit easing, this study highlights that the main component of QE, the expansion of the Federal Reserve's balance sheet, has no significant direct relationship with the GDP rate, particularly during QE. This study shows that during QE, a shock in the economic variables has a much greater effect on the GDP rate than when QE is not implemented. Additionally, when the Federal Reserve applies QE on the economy, regardless of the overall relationship between GDP rate and the economic variables used in this study, there is a generally positive relationship, especially in the short run. It should be emphasized that there is the possibility of omitted-variable bias, given that GDP relies on countless factors and variables, in addition to the six incorporated in this study. Overall, the findings provide valuable insights into the impact of QE on stimulating the economy and various economic factors and suggest the need for further research in this area.



## Uniting in the Face of Aggression: The EU Army, Reconsidered

*Daniel Leaf*

Over one year has passed since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Since then, Russian aggression has been met with international condemnation, Western countries have flooded Ukraine with military and humanitarian aid, and the world has been forced to reevaluate the global security order. European states, as neighbors of Russia, have reacted understandably. Finland and Sweden firmly committed to joining NATO;<sup>232</sup> Germany, traditionally reluctant to increase defense spending, introduced a plan to spend a further €100 billion on its armed forces;<sup>233</sup> and other European nations also ramped up their military budgets.<sup>234</sup> Collective European security has also been affected. Understanding the need for a more capable security provider in the context of a hostile new security climate, the European Union adopted the Strategic Compass in March 2022, a new plan to strengthen the EU's security and defense policy.<sup>235</sup> This reappraisal of European security, considering recent events, raises a question that has followed the EU from its antecedents until today: should the EU build a common army?

The notion of forming a European Union army is not new; since the 1950s, such far-reaching defense integration in Europe has been a serious proposal for European leaders. Indeed, the concept of a common European army goes back at least to post-war Europe, as countries called for unity following the devastation of the Second World War. The French Prime Minister, René Pleven, introduced in 1950 a proposal to establish a common army of 100,000 men where all countries (except West Germany) would contribute their national forces, subject to the control of institutions similar to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).<sup>236</sup> Following the US rejection of the plan, signatory countries Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands ratified the European Defense Community (EDC), a modified version of the Pleven plan (allowing West German divisions), before its failure in the French National Assembly.<sup>237</sup> The

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<sup>232</sup> Lehto, Essi. "Finland, Sweden Committed to Joint NATO Accession, Prime Ministers Say." Edited by Terje Solsvik. Reuters. Thomson Reuters, February 2, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/finland-sweden-committed-joint-nato-accession-prime-ministers-say-2023-02-02/>.

<sup>233</sup> "Germany Commits €100 Billion to Defense Spending." dw.com. Deutsche Welle, February 27, 2022. <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-commits-100-billion-to-defense-spending/a-60933724>.

<sup>234</sup> Cavendish, Georgiana, David Chinn, Nadine Griebmann, Hugues Lavandier, and Tobias Otto. "Invasion of Ukraine: Implications for European Defense Spending." McKinsey & Company, December 19, 2022. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/aerospace-and-defense/our-insights/invasion-of-ukraine-implications-for-european-defense-spending>.

<sup>235</sup> "A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence." A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. European Union External Action, October 28, 2021. [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-1\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-1_en).

<sup>236</sup> "The Plan for an EDC." CVCE, July 7, 2016. <https://www.cvce.eu/en/education/unit-content/-/unit/803b2430-7d1c-4e7b-9101-47415702fc8e/29a4e81c-c7b6-4622-915e-3b09649747b8>.

<sup>237</sup> Salmon, Trevor C., and Alistair J. K. Shepherd. *Toward a European Army: A Military Power in the Making?* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003, 21. The French decision rendered Italy's debate irrelevant.

plan would have resulted in the introduction of forty divisions, each with 13,000 soldiers, all wearing a common uniform—a veritable European army.<sup>238</sup>

Seventy years later, the EU army exists as a relatively vague concept. There is no discrete proposal on EU leaders' tables that outlines exactly what the formation of a European army would entail; the EDC was only one such proposal. However, scholars have come to a broad consensus that an EU army would mean the formation of a defense union marked by the construction of a multinational military, a unified organizational structure, and the pooling of resources under a common budget. Member States would cede their national rights to self-determine security and defense over to a centralized, supranational apparatus, much like the EU has already done with so many political and economic capacities. However, it is not clear to what extent Member States would be required to relinquish sovereignty and what rights they would yet retain. Even today, Member States' perspectives on forming a joint European army differ greatly. Some even argue that the creation of a new structure would be ineffective and that it would be sufficient to simply deepen cooperation under the existing framework of security and defense.<sup>239</sup>

Despite the lack of uniformity on what a European army would look like in practice, EU leaders have been intent on pursuing its establishment as a long-term goal. Jean-Claude Juncker, in a speech delivered in Berlin at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation on the twenty-seventh anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, invoked the idea of creating a European common army to counter Russian aggression on the eastern border, the migrant crisis, and the changing global balance of power.<sup>240</sup> Similarly, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron have been vocal supporters of the EU army. In her 2018 address to the European Parliament, citing security developments in Europe, Merkel explained, “we have to work on a vision of one day creating a real true European army.”<sup>241</sup> Macron, adopting the long-standing French tradition of suspicion of US participation on the Continent, established himself as a sincere advocate for a joint military force shortly after his election in 2017. Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, Macron has reaffirmed his long-held belief that Europe cannot expect to rely on others to defend it and that European defense must take a new step forward.<sup>242</sup>

EU citizens are also increasingly expecting that the EU will guarantee peace and security. According to a 2017 special Eurobarometer on security and defense, a poll designed to explore

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<sup>238</sup> CVCE.

<sup>239</sup> Zieliński, Tadeusz. *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on European Integration 2018*, 2018, 1629–36, 1635.

<sup>240</sup> “The ‘Europe Speech’ given by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.” European Commission, November 9, 2016. [https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-3042\\_en.htm](https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3042_en.htm).

<sup>241</sup> “Debate on the Future of Europe: Opening Statement by Angela Merkel, German Federal Chancellor.” European Parliament Multimedia Centre. European Union, 2018. [https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/video/debate-on-the-future-of-europe-opening-statement-by-angela-merkel-german-federal-chancellor-\\_I162933](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/video/debate-on-the-future-of-europe-opening-statement-by-angela-merkel-german-federal-chancellor-_I162933).

<sup>242</sup> Willsher, Kim. “Europe Must Be More Independent and Shore up Its Defence, Says Macron.” *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, March 3, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/03/europe-must-become-more-independent-shore-up-defence-emmanuel-macron>.

Europeans' opinions on security, three-quarters supported a common European defense and security policy, while 55 percent were in favor of forming an EU army. A similar survey conducted in 2018 showed that 68 percent of EU citizens said the EU should do more for defense.<sup>243</sup> All told, the favorable outlook on a unified security policy and common army among top EU leaders and a significant share of citizens indicates that forming an EU army is a sufficiently sanctioned proposal, even if there is no uniform understanding of it.

However, this evidence at least suggests that the EU's current security framework, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), is inadequate. Spelled out by the Lisbon Treaty, the CSDP covers a large scope and potentially could serve as the "embryo of a future common European defence." However, in practice, the CSDP mostly corresponds to a series of past and ongoing peacebuilding missions since 2003.<sup>244</sup> Importantly, most of these missions have been civilian in nature.<sup>245</sup> To its credit, the EU has demonstrated considerable competence in implementing "soft-power" approaches to humanitarian and rescue tasks and crisis management. Any military operations by the EU have been modest, consisting of small-scale training, advisory, anti-piracy, and small-scale territorial defense missions.<sup>246</sup>

Yet even the EU acknowledges that its role as a security actor is changing. Released in 2016 and representing one of the latest evolutions of the CSDP, the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) presented the EU's new security and defense doctrine.<sup>247</sup> The document denounces Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in February 2014 and its continued destabilization of eastern Ukraine and maintains that "Managing the relationship with Russia represents a key strategic challenge."<sup>248</sup> It adds that "to the east, the European security order has been violated," and as a consequence of this and other threats to European security, the EUGS identifies several priorities.<sup>249</sup> The concept of strategic autonomy—the capacity of the EU to act autonomously without being dependent on outside countries (namely, the US)—is a key policy objective within these priorities.<sup>250</sup> Indeed, the EUGS states that "An appropriate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe's ability to promote peace and security

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<sup>243</sup> "Defence: Is the EU Creating a European Army? - Main Contents." EU Monitor. European Parliament, May 4, 2021. <https://www.eumonitor.eu/9353000/1/j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vkzmovwegcyp?ctx=vhsjhdftknpb>.

<sup>244</sup> Tardy, Thierry. "CSDP in Action: What Contribution to International Security?" *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, 2015. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-59051-3\\_131](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-59051-3_131), 5.

<sup>245</sup> Arcudi, Giovanni, and Michael E. Smith. "The European Gendarmerie Force: A Solution in Search of Problems?" *European Security* 22, no. 1 (January 3, 2013): 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2012.747511>, 1.

<sup>246</sup> Tardy, 21.

<sup>247</sup> Legrand, Jérôme. "Common Security and Defense Policy." Fact Sheets on the European Union. European Parliament, September 2022. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/159/common-security-and-defence-policy>.

<sup>248</sup> "A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy." European Union External Action, December 15, 2019, 33. [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/global-strategy-european-unions-foreign-and-security-policy\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/global-strategy-european-unions-foreign-and-security-policy_en).

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

<sup>250</sup> "EU Strategic Autonomy 2013-2023: From Concept to Capacity." Think Tank. European Parliament, July 8, 2022. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS\\_BRI\(2022\)733589](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2022)733589).

within and beyond its borders.”<sup>251</sup> Further, the EUGS makes clear that both EU citizens and its partners expect the European Union to play a role as a global security provider and that “the idea that Europe is an exclusively ‘civilian power’ does not do justice to an evolving reality.”<sup>252</sup> Ultimately, the EU seeks to develop an autonomous defense framework—moving away from a predominantly soft-power posture and towards greater hard-power capabilities.

Proponents of the EU army suggest that key advantages of the initiative are that it will better allow the EU to achieve its security aims and reduce defense costs. By pooling military resources and sovereignty into a single, unified structure, the EU would command a massive military force better equipped and more capable than any individual Member State. The EU would increase its credibility on the world stage—after all, the ultimate means of defending and advancing a state’s core interests are by armed force, and on occasion, a state’s only option for achieving its goals is with force or the threat of using force.<sup>253</sup> The EU is not a state in the traditional sense, but if it is keen on exercising military power like a state would (i.e., as a security actor), it follows that it should have a consolidated defense structure. Currently, each Member State utilizes its own unique weapons systems—about a total of 180 different platforms.<sup>254</sup> Joint procurement could provide up to 30 percent savings on annual European equipment investment.<sup>255</sup>

While the EU army may appear to be a promising policy proposal, there are several core obstacles that stand in its way. The fundamental issue precluding the establishment of a common army is Member States’ reluctance to relinquish sovereignty—especially in the field of security and defense—and risk compromising their national interests. Under the CSDP, defense is ultimately up to individual Member States, and they prefer to keep it that way. The history of European defense integration and its frustratingly slow progress demonstrates that “policymakers clearly believe that the ability to make foreign policy and defense decisions is crucial to what makes a state a state.”<sup>256</sup> No state would want to engage in operations that run counter to its strategic culture and unique defense policy. This is why it is unlikely that Member States would be willing to create an all-encompassing EU military, even as novel threats emerge and Member States hasten integration in other areas.

In addition to the sovereignty issue, EU and NATO interconnectedness has served as a longstanding barrier to greater EU defense integration; twenty-one of the twenty-seven EU Member States are NATO allies. The possible establishment of an EU army, or more specifically, the ambition of strategic autonomy, is a particularly sensitive issue for the US, the

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<sup>251</sup> European Union External Action, EUGS, 9.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>253</sup> Salmon & Shepherd, 205.

<sup>254</sup> <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/03/20/is-an-eu-army-coming/>

<sup>255</sup> Bachmann, D., T. Bunde, Q. Maderspacher, A. Oroz, G. Scherf, and K. Wittek. "More European, More Connected and More Capable: Building the European Armed Forces of the Future." In *Munich Security Conference*, pp. 1-46. 2017, 7.

[https://securityconference.org/assets/02\\_Dokumente/01\\_Publikationen/MSCEuropeanDefenceReport2017.pdf](https://securityconference.org/assets/02_Dokumente/01_Publikationen/MSCEuropeanDefenceReport2017.pdf).

<sup>256</sup> Salmon & Shepherd, 40.

dominant NATO ally. Increased EU autonomy would not undermine NATO (because NATO is fully intergovernmental and cannot be an actor in its own right), but it could threaten the US' ability to maintain its predominant position in alliance decision making.<sup>257</sup> At the same time, US policymakers often advocate for Europe to be able to handle its own security issues and increase defense spending.<sup>258</sup> Increased EU autonomy would mean the US could focus its attention elsewhere, freeing up valuable assets and decreasing security costs.<sup>259</sup>

The EU itself is divided on the issue. Figures like Macron and Merkel are committed to seeing the EU “take its destiny in its own hands.”<sup>260</sup> However, those in eastern Europe are more concerned with alienating the US without a solid substitute in place.<sup>261</sup> Even proponents of increased European defense integration are hesitant to work outside of a NATO framework, frustrating any hopes of attaining real strategic autonomy. Except in a few cases, calls for deeper integration between Member States are always qualified by increased EU cooperation with NATO. And, of course, the EU is still heavily reliant on NATO and the US for the use of their assets, especially headquarters, intelligence, and planning capabilities in addition to equipment.

Admittedly, the EU faces significant obstacles if it wants to establish a common European army. Some would even say that Europe's response to the Russo-Ukrainian War shows that any hope of obtaining strategic sovereignty is dead for the time being.<sup>262</sup> However, the past few years' record demonstrates that the EU can successfully introduce initiatives that promote integration and cooperation that were previously only dreamt of.<sup>263</sup> Europe is moving toward an EU army, even if it never becomes a reality. If recent European history has taught us anything, it is that Europe's responses to war and crises result in monumentally formative experiences. As the EU deals with its security threats, particularly the war in the east, it will have to make a choice: continue to live in the shadow of its ambitions or assume its role as a global security actor.

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<sup>257</sup> Biscop, Sven. “The Future of the Transatlantic Alliance: Not Without the European Union.” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (2020): 81–94. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26937412>, 84.

<sup>258</sup> Bergmann, Max, James Lamond, and Siena Cicarelli. “The Case for EU Defense: A New Way Forward for Trans-Atlantic Security Relations.” Center for American Progress, June 1, 2021. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/case-eu-defense/>.

<sup>259</sup> Salmon & Shepherd, 151.

<sup>260</sup> “Speech by Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel at the Ceremony Awarding the International Charlemagne Prize to French President Emmanuel Macron in Aachen on 10 May 2018.” Bundesregierung, May 10, 2018. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/chancellor/speech-by-federal-chancellor-dr-angela-merkel-at-the-ceremony-awarding-the-international-charlemagne-prize-to-french-president-emmanuel-macron-in-aachen-on-10-may-2018-1008554>. ; “Discours Du Président Emmanuel Macron Sur La Stratégie De Défense Et De Dissuasion Devant Les Stagiaires De La 27ème Promotion De L'école De Guerre.” Élysée, February 7, 2020. <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/02/07/discours-du-president-emmanuel-macron-sur-la-strategie-de-defense-et-de-dissuasion-devant-les-stagiaires-de-la-27eme-promotion-de-lecole-de-guerre>.

<sup>261</sup> Biscop, 83.

<sup>262</sup> Erlanger, Steven. “When It Comes to Building Its Own Defense, Europe Has Blinkered.” *The New York Times*. *The New York Times*, February 4, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/04/world/europe/europe-defense-ukraine-war.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>.

<sup>263</sup> See the European Defense Fund, Permanent Structured Cooperation, and Coordinated Annual Defense Review

## Bullets to Beats: The Protest Music of the Vietnam War

*Emma Mattingly*

It was late January 1968 when the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) launched a surprise attack on American and South Vietnamese troops, setting off the infamous Tet Offensive. By the end of February, the main episode of the Offensive was over and American troops successfully prevented the NVA from fulfilling their goals. It was considered a military victory, but at home, Walter Cronkite referred to it as a continued “stalemate”, implying that the end was indefinite and unknown.<sup>264</sup> The public heard that ugly truth and remembered it. In March, the My Lai massacre occurred, but reports of it did not reach the nation until November 1969 with the publication of Seymour Hersh’s story. The public read about those horrors and remembered them. Amid deaths, drafts, and unnecessary brutality, Americans at home were outraged and distraught over these new realities of war.

The spark of the antiwar movement saw its peak in the late 1960s and early 1970s, though protest occurred as early as the very start of major American involvement in the mid 1960s. From the beginning of the United States’ entrance in 1965, 24 percent of the public perceived the deployment of troops to Vietnam as a mistake. By 1969, that number had jumped to 54 percent.<sup>265</sup> The dominance of the antiwar movement grew and soon became part of the many protest movements of the 1960s. People took to the streets, burned draft cards, and also engaged musically to fight for peace and advocate for an end to the war. Music became a vehicle for true peaceful protest, serving as a beautiful representation for the voice of Americans and a catalyst to display what the nation wanted.

The beginning of the protest and anti-war songs of the Vietnam era were released well before public approval of the war began to sour, starting as early as six years before the dramatic deployment of troops in 1965. However, its height was reached in the late 1960s and early 1970s, matching the public’s distaste for war. Artists began writing songs depicting the realities of war and wishes for peace and ending bloodshed, with 18 of those songs hitting a place in Billboard’s Top 100 list of 1969, a year after the Tet Offensive.<sup>266</sup> Creedence Clearwater Revival’s hit, “Fortunate Son”, often remembered as an anthem during this time, was listed at No. 14. The song struck a chord with millions of young men as a result of their shared experience: possible death by draft. By the end of 1969, the cumulative American casualty numbers were totaled at 35,028.<sup>267</sup> The number of casualties suffered that year was 16,899, the

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<sup>264</sup> Muehlbauer, Matthew, and David Ulbrich. *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 2013.

<sup>265</sup> Gallup, Inc. “Iraq Versus Vietnam: A Comparison of Public Opinion.” Gallup.com, March 19, 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/18097/iraq-versus-vietnam-comparison-public-opinion.aspx>.

<sup>266</sup> “Vietnam on the Charts | Modern Songs of War and Conflict,” n.d. <https://exhibitions.lib.umd.edu/songsofwar/vietnam/charting/home>.

<sup>267</sup> National Archives. “Vietnam War U.S. Military Fatal Casualty Statistics,” August 23, 2022. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-statistics>.

highest for any single year of the war.<sup>268</sup> Draft meant death, and “Fortunate Son” depicted the fated unluckiness of the average American male, emphasized through the lyrics of “I ain’t no Senator’s son” and “I ain’t no millionaire’s son”. Displayed was an aspect of the anti-war sentiment shared by the population that it was a war for the government and military, not the common man’s fight. Those suffering were the ones who did not have a powerful voice. They were not protected, unlike the sons of powerful men who could evade the draft. Similar themes were found in other rock songs like that of Barry McGuire, which, like “Fortunate Son”, had a more literal, if not more explicit, anti-war, and anti-Cold War sentiment.

Powerlessness of the many men fighting was a common theme in McGuire’s and P.F. Sloan’s one-hit wonder, “Eve of Destruction”. The very first verse speaks to the young American who had no suffrage rights but could be shipped off to war by officials he did not vote for. McGuire sings “The Eastern world, it is explodin’/Violence flarin’, bullet loadin’/You’re old enough to kill, but not for votin’”.<sup>269</sup> Though it is one small part of the song, it posited the idea in Americans’ minds that those going to war did not have the same freedoms as those who sent them. Even though this song was written in the year prior to the increased American involvement, its message became synonymous with the exhaustion over unnecessary involvement overseas during the Cold War. The lyrics speak of overlooked struggles at home, alluding to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassination of President Kennedy, and racial discrimination, with “Think of all the hate there is in Red China/Then take a look around to Selma, Alabama”.<sup>270</sup> The message of a futile effort to spread American democracy during the Cold War while also struggling with domestic issues like the Civil Rights Movement speaks to a plea for change at home.

While rock music and its counter-culture nature went hand-in-hand with the movement, folk is often regarded as the main highlight of this era’s protest music. Artists such as Bob Dylan and John Lennon created timeless hits that symbolize the peaceful call for war to end, emphasizing the nature of nonviolent protest that is music. It was in 1963 when Bob Dylan released “Blowin’ In The Wind”, a time when the United States was slowly beginning to expand involvement in Vietnam.<sup>271</sup> The song reached the number two spot on Billboard’s Top 100 that same year with its message vocalizing an emphasis on the human costs of war. The song consists of Dylan posing hypotheticals with each verse. Following each verse is a chorus repeat of “The answer my friend/Is blowin’ in the wind/Is blowin’ in the wind”.<sup>272</sup> Lyrically, it alludes to the idea that an end to struggle is out there, but not without the determination to reach it. The song became an anthem for Black Americans during the Civil Rights Movement, but its inclusion of wording like “white doves” and “cannonballs” brought it back into the realm of the anti-war

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<sup>268</sup> National Archives. “Vietnam War U.S. Military Fatal Casualty Statistics,” August 23, 2022. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-statistics>.

<sup>269</sup> Genius. “Barry McGuire – Eve of Destruction,” n.d. <https://genius.com/Barry-mcguire-eve-of-destruction-lyrics>.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Dobson, Julie. “10 Top Anti-War/Protest Songs About the Vietnam War.” Vietnam Full Disclosure, March 22, 2021. <https://www.vietnamfulldisclosure.org/10-top-anti-warprotest-songs-about-the-vietnam-war/>.

<sup>272</sup> Genius. “Bob Dylan – Blowin’ in the Wind,” n.d. <https://genius.com/Bob-dylan-blowin-in-the-wind-lyrics>.

movement.<sup>273</sup> During this time, songs like Dylan's coincided with the early stages of protesting, where the focus was on peaceful protests that were organized to slowly normalize opposition to the war.<sup>274</sup> A mixture of marches and music began to greatly mobilize the nation, leading into the main episode of the fight to withdraw.

Anti-war sentiment in the United States was at its highest in the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s. This was the period in which more troops were sent overseas under President Johnson. And shortly after President Nixon's entrance into office, there were protests over "Vietnamization", his plan to withdraw out of the war and leave the fighting to the South Vietnamese.<sup>275</sup> Despite the introduction of this plan in 1969, protests endured in a number of forms. It was in 1971 that John Lennon released "Imagine", a piece that, like "Blowin' In the Wind", never explicitly mentioned Vietnam, but nevertheless became a peaceful anthem for the movement. It encouraged unity at a time of division among war doves and hawks, while also posing the possibility of a peaceful utopia where wars did not have to rage on. Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono, also utilized other art mediums to protest the war, publishing their "War is Over! If you want it" posters on billboards in 1969 with the hopes of encouraging young adults to join the anti-war cause.

Even though music was, as it is today, a present force in American life, some question its true impact on the anti-war sentiment. The possibility exists that people liked the trends, and more importantly, that the market was profit-based rather than truly preaching a message. While music may not have been seen as prevalent as draft card burning and SDS protests, it fought the war under the backdrop of all the physical chaos. Its popularity expressed the wish to end the violence as it endured many restrictions, such as blocking air access for certain anti-war songs by the Federal Communications Commission.<sup>276</sup> More importantly, even if the music industry was profit-focused, it still conveyed a message Americans understood and resonated with, which legitimized the true feeling of the people.

There are of course more clear-cut examples of how this business did not solely prioritize money. Industries such as Motown utilized their fame and prevalence to bring about greater political discussions and disseminate the words of activists. Such an example is in 1971, when Marvin Gaye released his hit "What's Goin On". While the song was influenced by the Berkeley People's Park riots, conveying a sorrowful message on police brutality, it also became a song

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<sup>273</sup> Naylor, Brian. "Blowin' In The Wind' Still Asks The Hard Questions" October 21, 2000. <https://www.npr.org/2000/10/21/1112840/blowin-in-the-wind>.

<sup>274</sup> Zimmerman, Bill. "Opinion | The Four Stages of the Antiwar Movement." *The New York Times*, October 24, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/24/opinion/vietnam-antiwar-movement.html>.

<sup>275</sup> Muehlbauer, Matthew, and David Ulbrich. *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 2013.

<sup>276</sup> Bindas, Kenneth J., and Craig Houston. "'Takin' Care of Business": Rock Music, Vietnam and the Protest Myth." *The Historian*, October 31, 1989. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6563.1989.tb00771.x>.



peacefully fighting against the war efforts.<sup>277</sup> Its lyrics “We don’t need to escalate/You see, war is not the answer” created this direct yet alternative theme that allowed Motown to join in on the cause for ending the war. Motown as an industry also went beyond producing music, creating the Black Forum Label, where speeches like Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Why I Oppose the War in Vietnam” found a platform to be put in the spotlight.<sup>278</sup> Encouragement like this for the often-forgotten voices to speak became a force, and not only within the music industry.

Not only were musicians conveying their support for the protest scene through released songs and from the industry platform, but there was also the employment of concerts as a weapon to fight for peace. The first major concert to protest the Vietnam War came out of the Kent State shootings on May 4, 1970, where four students died after the Ohio National Guard opened fire on a student protest at Kent State University. The reactions were powerful and great in number, with hundreds of universities closing due to student protests. Music students shared the feelings of their fellow classmates and began to utilize their music creativity to memorialize the lost lives and peacefully protest the war. Students at multiple universities came together at the School of Music at the University of Rochester and performed a set of three concerts for peace in late May 1970. The last two concerts donated funds to a petition calling for the withdrawal of US troops out of Indochina along with promoting its message of peace to the attendees.<sup>279</sup>

The music events went beyond school grounds. Students at Oberlin College performed Mozart’s Requiem at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C. to an audience of more than two thousand attendees. This performance by Oberlin students represented the feelings of loss at Kent State and the shared desire to end the war. The choice to perform Requiem was an especially symbolic one that harnessed the somber tone which clouded the anti-war movement among young students. The piece is in d minor and brings a beautiful yet eerie air to the message. In addition, the name Requiem refers to the Roman Catholic mass that honors the souls of the dead, which can be seen as a nod to those who have lost their lives both overseas and on the homefront as a byproduct of the war.

Music performances also occurred in Boston, with the New England Conservatory of Music hosting a music marathon several days after the shooting occurred. The marathon went on for 24 hours a day, lasting from May 10 to May 25. Hundreds of musicians both from the school and Boston community came together to perform a myriad of different genres, creating a relaxing atmosphere amid a time of fear and unease.<sup>280</sup> The concerts may not have had the most

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<sup>277</sup> Magazine, Smithsonian. “Marvin Gaye’s ‘What’s Going On’ Is as Relevant Today as It Was in 1971.” Smithsonian Magazine, May 18, 2021. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/marvin-gayes-whats-going-relevant-today-it-was-1971-180977750/>.

<sup>278</sup> Magazine, Smithsonian. “Marvin Gaye’s ‘What’s Going On’ Is as Relevant Today as It Was in 1971.” Smithsonian Magazine, May 18, 2021. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/marvin-gayes-whats-going-relevant-today-it-was-1971-180977750/>.

<sup>279</sup> “Students Protest: Make Music, Not War.” *Music Educators Journal* 57, no. 1 (1970). <https://doi.org/10.2307/3392857>.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

memorable impact, but it served for students as an alternative to burning draft cards and ROTC buildings.

It was in 1975 that the United States finally saw its time in Vietnam come to an end. The last of the Americans were brought home, and Saigon had fallen to the Northern Vietnamese communists. Over 58,000 Americans died, with 61 percent of them being under the age of 21.<sup>281</sup> Those that survived came back disabled, with mutilations and amputations, and most experiencing a costly psychological toll.<sup>282</sup> Vietnam became a dark mark on American history, but the voice of the population, specifically through the utilization of music, served as a sign of light amid that darkness. The vast array of Vietnam-era music that exists still represents the voices of millions, both at home and fighting abroad, and the movement it sparked has influenced anti-war protesting that has come since Vietnam.

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<sup>281</sup> Muehlbauer, Matthew, and David Ulbrich. *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 2013.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

## Effects of War, Conflict, and Forced Displacement In Mental Health Status among Refugee Children in the United States

*Yelena Muralles*

In the United States and around the world, the profound and long-lasting effects of war on children remain a pressing concern. War, violence, and forced migration have affected millions of people, including nearly 13 million children.<sup>283</sup> Many of these individuals come from low-income, impoverished communities and endure chronic violence and trauma while facing the uncertainties of displacement. Unfortunately, refugees and asylum seekers, particularly unaccompanied adolescents and other survivors of forced displacement may not receive the mental health care they require due to a lack of services and associated stigma. These factors contribute to the ongoing violence faced by displaced refugees, highlighting the urgent need for effective interventions and support to mitigate the long-term mental health consequences of war, conflict, and displacement.<sup>284</sup> These consequences can include immediate stress responses, increased vulnerability to mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety, as well as long-term effects such as forced separation from parents and loss of safety. It is therefore crucial to provide efficient support and interventions to alleviate the catastrophic effects of war, conflict, and forced displacement on children's mental health, both in the short and long term.

The process for a potential refugee to gain entry to the United States is extensive and rigorous, involving several steps such as registering with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, performing security checks, and verifying personal information.<sup>285</sup> According to a report by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, this process can take up to two years and includes biometric screening procedures to ensure that the individual does not pose a security threat or have any contagious diseases. These procedures include medical examinations and cross-checking of international fingerprint databases. Although the process may seem lengthy, it is essential to ensure the safety and security of both the host country and the refugees themselves. By conducting thorough security checks, the host country can mitigate potential security risks and provide a safe and stable environment for refugees to rebuild their lives.

The traumatic circumstances that force refugees and asylum seekers to flee their homes and undertake dangerous journeys often result in severe emotional distress. While some refugees and asylum seekers may have access to more resources and support, many face numerous challenges along the way, including violence and abuse, lack of access to necessities, and

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<sup>283</sup> What Is a Refugee? Important Facts and Figures About ...Save the Children <https://www.savethechildren.org/refugee-children-crisis>

<sup>284</sup> American Psychiatric Association. "Mental Health Facts for Refugees." Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Cultural-Competency/Mental-Health-Disparities/Mental-Health-Facts-for-Refugees.pdf>.

<sup>285</sup> *Refugee Admissions*. (n.d.). U.S. Department of State. Retrieved April 19, 2023, from <https://www.state.gov/refugee-admissions/>

physical and emotional exhaustion.<sup>286</sup> Furthermore, policies and institutions such as restrictive immigration policies and inadequate funding for refugee support programs can exacerbate these challenges. For example, limited access to mental health services and the associated stigma can prevent refugees from receiving the care they need. Additionally, sexual assault is unfortunately a prevalent issue for refugees and asylum seekers during their migration experience. The long-lasting impact of this traumatic experience on refugee children highlights the urgent need for comprehensive support systems that address the mental health and well-being of these vulnerable populations.

Historically, the United States has a comprehensive approach to refugee resettlement, providing financial assistance, language cultural training, and other support services. However, the program has faced criticism regarding security screenings and processing times. Although resettled refugees generally experience an improvement in mental health, one in three still faces high rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD.<sup>287</sup> Access to resources like Community-Based Protection, healthcare, Education, and Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response can improve living conditions and mitigate these issues, highlighting the importance of continued support for vulnerable populations. Even after resettling, refugees may encounter poverty, insecure housing, unemployment, isolation, legal issues, and limited access to services, negatively affecting their well-being. Legal issues can be particularly challenging due to language barriers and a lack of affordable legal representation. Mental health professionals must recognize the ongoing stressors refugees face, such as catastrophic loss, separation from their community and culture, and grief over their home country. Refugees' mental health and well-being can be improved through social support from family and friends. Additionally, connecting with people who share similar experiences and interests, as well as participating in community activities, can also be beneficial. Mental health professionals can support refugees by providing them with information about community resources that offer social connections and opportunities to participate in meaningful activities. They must also be aware that refugees may be hesitant to seek treatment due to fears of jeopardizing their employment or housing, compounded by high housing costs and a lack of affordable options. Therefore, mental health professionals should strive to provide accessible and affordable treatment options to address these barriers.<sup>288</sup>

Ensuring the well-being of refugee children is crucial and providing them with the necessary support and resources can aid in their healing and rebuilding. This includes assisting refugees and asylum-seekers in developing their social networks, connecting with their families, and fostering a sense of belonging in their new communities. By considering the many factors that impact refugees' mental health, such as their social environment, family background, culture, and language, mental health providers can help reduce risk factors for poor mental health and

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<sup>286</sup> Marquez, Carolina, Gaurav Sharma, Nicole Grigorian, and Janice L. Cooper. "Mental Health Among Refugees and Asylum Seekers: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* 23, no. 4 (2021): 842-854. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-020-01103-1>.

<sup>287</sup> Council on Foreign Relations. "How Does the U.S. Refugee System Work?" Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/how-does-us-refugee-system-work-trump-biden-afghanistan>.

<sup>288</sup> International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. "Trauma and Mental Health in Forcibly Displaced Populations: The State of the Science." Accessed March 19, 2023. [https://istss.org/getattachment/Education-Research/Briefing-Papers/Trauma-and-Mental-Health-in-Forcibly-Displaced-Pop/Displaced-Populations-Briefing-Paper\\_Final.pdf.aspx](https://istss.org/getattachment/Education-Research/Briefing-Papers/Trauma-and-Mental-Health-in-Forcibly-Displaced-Pop/Displaced-Populations-Briefing-Paper_Final.pdf.aspx).

promote greater resilience. Ultimately, promoting the well-being of refugees requires an emphasis on the social and economic support aspects that aid in the reconstruction of their new "normal."<sup>289</sup>

However, there are numerous barriers to mental health care, such as health insurance issues, transportation, language barriers, and even healthcare providers who refuse to see refugees. It is imperative to address these challenges and ensure that refugees and asylum seekers have access to the resources and support they need to manage their mental health and well-being effectively. By doing so, we can help mitigate the long-lasting effects of war, conflict, and forced displacement on the mental health of children, as well as that of their families and communities.

Despite the high likelihood of traumatic event exposure among migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, many do not have long-term impairments. There is evidence to suggest that refugees are often resilient and able to recover with time from mental health challenges upon resettlement.<sup>290</sup> Factors such as social support, cultural orientation, access to mental health services, and community integration can play a significant role in facilitating mental health recovery among refugees. Additionally, strong cultural and religious traditions can provide a source of strength and resilience for many refugees. It is important to acknowledge, however, that every individual's experience is unique, and some refugees may continue to struggle with mental health challenges even after resettlement.

Ultimately, forced displacement is a significant global issue that has resulted in trauma that endures for refugees and asylum seekers, especially children.<sup>291</sup> The process of seeking asylum is complex and can take up to two years, involving security checks, biometric screenings, and verification of personal information. Once admitted to the United States, refugees and asylum seekers face a range of post-migration stressors, such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can compound existing mental health challenges. Many refugees who experience PTSD and depression can recover over time, but some may continue to struggle with their mental health. Therefore, refugees and asylum seekers require a range of resources, including financial assistance, education and work opportunities, and support services, to help them integrate into their new communities. While the outcomes of resettlement efforts can depend on many factors, it is essential to continue providing refugees with the assistance and support they need to rebuild their lives in safety and security.

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<sup>289</sup> World Health Organization. "Mental Health and Forced Displacement." Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-and-forced-displacement>.

<sup>290</sup> Porter, M., Haslam, N., & President, S. (2005). Catastrophic forgetting and displacement: Evidence from refugees and beyond. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25, 589-604

<sup>291</sup> United Nations Children's Fund. "Displacement." Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/displacement/>.

# Is the Liberal Peace Worth Saving?

*Sydney Przekop*

## Introduction

After the Second World War, world leaders wanted to ensure that a global conflict of the same caliber would not happen again, and that in the wake of the Holocaust, human rights would be protected globally. Following the war, the United States was the major democratic power still standing; therefore, the international system was shaped based on American values. It was in this political landscape that the liberal peace as it exists today was formed. However, this is not to say that the concept of a liberal peace was new by any means. This concept has been debated and discussed by scholars for centuries. As such, the establishment of an international system based on liberalism has been attempted before and failed. The international system based on the idea of a liberal peace established after World War II, however, has continued expanding since its inception. It is important to analyze this system and the effectiveness of its goals, including the prevention of conflict and protection of human rights. An analysis of the liberal peace in 2023 is even more significant because there are signs that it is breaking down. Organizations like the United Nations have been criticized for being unequal and having fundamental organizational failures. Furthermore, the continuing rise of China as a global power threatens U.S. unipolarity. “The liberal peace” is an honorable goal, and it is not necessarily successful in its aims. It does not have the longevity to survive forever, but it is worth trying to preserve. This paper explores the foundations of “the liberal peace” and the factors that threaten its stability to determine if it can and should continue.

## What is “The Liberal Peace,” and How Did it Form?

Immanuel Kant claimed “that ‘republican constitutions,’ a ‘commercial spirit’ of international trade, and a federation of interdependent republics would provide the basis for perpetual peace”.<sup>292</sup> Kant’s description can be used as a base definition for what “the liberal peace” is. Another important aspect is the idea that war should only be waged as a last resort by a legitimate authority. Much importance is placed on the 19th century, explaining that it was the period when ideas that constitute the building blocks of the liberal peace became popular. Richmond agrees that Emmanuel Kant is an important figure when studying the origins of the liberal peace. “In Kant’s view, war is seen to be the direct consequence of the absence of an international rule of law.”<sup>293</sup> Therefore, attempts to establish liberal peace often coincide with the end of a brutal conflict. As we move into the 20th century, Kant’s suggestions on how to prevent war seemed very attractive. For example, after World War I, United States’ President Woodrow Wilson presented his Fourteen Points at Versailles. Scholars note the importance of the Fourteen Points as a building block of the liberal peace and “crucial to the emergence of a contemporary

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<sup>292</sup> Oneal & Russett, *The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (World Politics, 1999)

<sup>293</sup> Richmond, *The transformation of peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

notion of peace.”<sup>294</sup> In particular, it was assumed that “international law and the system of collective security anchored in the League of Nations would provide a socializing role, bringing states into a community of power.”<sup>295</sup> The League included elements of the liberal peace but was not focused on promoting human rights or peacekeeping operations, it focused more on collective security and free trade. This attempt at establishing lasting peace through an international organization was not effective, as evidenced by the dissolving of the League and the outbreak of World War II.

Scholars agree that the Second World War is important to the creation of the liberal peace. World War II is seen as the origins of the “American System”, and the period after the war as the second model of the “international liberal order.”<sup>296</sup> Therefore, the end of World War II and the rise of U.S. global power are other defining factors of the formation of the liberal peace. Following World War II, the passing of leadership from the British Empire to America occurred. “The United States stepped forward to fill the vacuum left by a waning British empire and a collapsing European order to provide a counterweight to Soviet power.”<sup>297</sup> During the war, Britain formed two international organizations: the Inter-Allied Information Committee and the United Nations Information Office. However, when the war ended, Britain was not in a position to develop these international organizations further, this explains why the international community became focused on the American goals of “global development and human rights” and not the British Empire’s “benevolent imperialism” model.<sup>298</sup> The United States became the “hegemonic organizer and manager of the Western liberal order” and “the American liberal system [...] became fused to the wider liberal order.”<sup>299</sup> Thus, American ideals became the centerpiece of the United Nations when it was formed in 1945.

### “The Liberal Peace” in Practice

Oliver Richmond describes the United Nations as the beginning of “peace as governance” because peace is at the center of the U.N. Charter and is the organization’s primary goal.<sup>300</sup> The main peacekeeping body of the U.N. is the Security Council that includes five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), and ten non-permanent members elected by two-thirds majority of the General Assembly for two year terms. The U.N. does peacekeeping operations in the usual sense, but it has also adopted the policy of armed intervention and “war making” in the post-Cold War years. This may seem

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<sup>294</sup> Richmond, *The transformation of peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

<sup>295</sup> Ikenberry, *Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order* (Perspectives on Politics, 2009)

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Scott-Smith, *A Transition of Internationalisms: Britain, the United States, and the Formation of the United Nations Information Organization during World War II* (International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity, 2019).

<sup>299</sup> Ikenberry, *Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order* (Perspectives on Politics, 2009)

<sup>300</sup> Richmond, *The transformation of peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

counterintuitive when war is seen as the “fundamental problem” that international organizations and the liberal peace are created to solve.<sup>301</sup> Scholars have evaluated the U.N. operations in Somalia as an example of a failed armed intervention. In 1991 and 1992, warring clans seized control of different parts of Somalia and the citizens were at the mercy of warlords which led to mass starvation and violence. On December 3, 1992, the U.S. sent humanitarian groups and deployed 26,000 troops.<sup>302</sup> The efforts appeared successful until American soldiers were brutally killed by General Mohamed Farah Aidid’s militia, leading to a public outcry and plans for the U.S. to withdraw.

However, there are U.N. peacekeeping efforts that did have positive impacts. In 1991, the Paris Peace Agreements (the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict) were signed, ending the twenty-year conflict that was the Cambodian-Vietnamese War and the Third Indochina War. A U.N. peacekeeping operation was tasked with destabilizing armies, repatriating refugees, and organizing elections.<sup>303</sup> The subsequent operation was considered a success because the U.N. was able to restructure Cambodia’s politics and economy, providing the nation with “legitimate power through the vote of the electors.”<sup>304</sup> However, when the U.N. peacekeeping operation was over, instances of instability and violence have since continued in Cambodia.

Additionally, the United Nations was successful in the case of Libya. The U.N. had been working with Libya to mediate various conflicts for many years before they passed Resolution 1973 in 2011. Prior to this resolution, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had failed to comply with other resolutions by the U.N. and continued acts of violence against civilians among other crimes. Consequently, the U.N. passed Resolution 1973 as a strong condemnation of Libya’s actions. The resolution demanded a cease fire, established a no-fly zone over Libya, and authorized that member nations take all necessary measures (except foreign invasion) to protect civilians.<sup>305</sup> The military intervention ended with the overthrowing of Gaddafi, which for many was enough to label it a success for the U.N. However, since the end of military intervention, Libyan instability has continued, and many blame the military intervention for the rise of Islamic extremist groups in the region. The cases of Cambodia and Libya demonstrate that, while liberal peace can provide stability and protection, eventually another country will need U.N. resources, leaving the region they just “helped” to fall back into chaos. No matter how successful these peace operations were, the U.N.’s failures led many to question the organization, U.S. global leadership, and the viability of the liberal peace in general.

### **Can and Should “The Liberal Peace” Last?**

Karns argues that the biggest problem threatening the longevity of the U.N. and the liberal peace is underrepresentation. The author expresses that Europe is over-represented in the

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<sup>301</sup> Karns, *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010)

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> United Nations Security Council, *Security Council* (United Nations, 2023)



Big 5 of the Security Council, taking space away from more representation for Africa, Latin America, and Asia. It is true that the world is different than it was in 1945, and many countries in the permanent seats like Russia and China do not share Western values. This issue has led to some countries and regions feeling bitter about their lack of power regarding who gets the attention of U.N. peacekeeping efforts. If the U.N. is unwilling to change, it may result in the favored collapse of the liberal peace and American leadership.

More than fifty of 193 member nations have never been on the Security Council. Out of the current members of the security council that are non-permanent, two represent Latin America (Mexico and Brazil), Asia is represented by India and the United Arab Emirates, and Africa is represented by Gabon, Ghana, and Kenya.<sup>306</sup> This data may seem to disprove claims of underrepresentation; however, it is important to think about how skewed the power is in favor of permanent members. For example, permanent members have the power to veto any proposition. Furthermore, the current non-permanent members will lose their seats in 2022 or 2023 without knowing when they will be reelected. For instance, this is Kenya's third time on the Security Council, and they joined the U.N. in 1966; the last time was 1997-1998. Italy, on the other hand, joined the U.N. in 1955 and has served on the Security Council seven times.<sup>307</sup> Therefore, the idea of adding an African, Asian, or Latin American country as a permanent member and updating the permanent members to reflect those who have risen in power since 1945 has merit. However, this goes against the idea that the Big 5 being the winners of World War II, which could cause more conflict than it's worth.

An increase in the United States' global military presence has caused a crack in the structure of the liberal peace. Post 9/11, the U.S. war on terrorism sparked a negative connotation of U.S. global leadership. Many countries felt that they had less sovereignty because of the scrutiny of the U.S. government and military's ability to invade if their actions did not align with American values. Therefore, while U.S. military dominance provides the country with great power, Ikenberry argues that it has also caused a "legitimacy problem" where other countries have begun to doubt if the U.S. should be in control of global governance.<sup>308</sup> The rise of China as a global power casts even more doubt on U.S. leadership.

Many scholars have concluded that, despite the problems with the United Nations and the liberal peace, it serves as the best option to preserve peace. Richmond argues in *The Transformation of Peace* that the liberal peace is the most ambitious peace project in history because it is trying to reach the status of a Platonic "ideal form."<sup>309</sup> However, many philosophers have argued that if peace is the ideal form, then it is inherently unattainable. In Richmond's view, the unattainable nature of peace has led to the slip between war and peace that we are seeing today and can explain why the U.N. peacekeeping tactics have recently changed to war making. Some scholars do not harbor resentment for the failures of the liberal peace because of

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<sup>306</sup> United Nations Security Council, *Security Council* (United Nations, 2023)

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Ikenberry, *Power and liberal order: America's postwar world order in transition* (International Relations of the Asia-Pacific, 2005)

<sup>309</sup> Richmond, *The transformation of peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

the unattainable goal of an “ideal form” and the impossible problem it is trying to solve. For example, Doyle and Sambanis are critical of U.N. war making but conclude that the U.N. is not to blame because there is no solution to the questions of war and peace. The authors claim the blame lies with “the individual nations that had the capacity to act but chose not to.”<sup>310</sup> Karns is also critical of the U.N. and the liberal peace’s methods in “The Search for Peace and Security”, a chapter out of a larger book titled *International Organizations: The Politics and Process*. However, in the end, the author concludes that security governance structures like international organizations, NGOs, and international laws are not equipped to effectively deal with new problems, like nuclear disarmament, and therefore innovative new approaches must be developed.

### **Conclusion**

Ideas about a liberal peace have been popular since the 19th century, and there have been previous attempts to create a long-lasting peace with the use of liberal theories. However, World War II was the catalyst for a lasting liberal peace because the winning Allied Nations had a vested interest in preserving their positions at the top and preventing another global conflict that could threaten their power and threaten human rights like the Holocaust. The Second World War also solidified U.S. global leadership and unipolarity in the West which allowed international law to be fused with American values. However, an international global order that is almost eighty years old is bound to be feeling the weight of changing times and trying to solve an impossible problem. United States global leadership is not looked upon as favorably as it once was, since the war on terrorism, and with China on the rise the United States unipolarity is threatened. Because of failures in Rwanda and Somalia, many have lost faith in the U.N.’s peacekeeping ability. Furthermore, some regions of the world feel frustrated with their perceived underrepresentation in the U.N. However, when evaluating the liberal peace, it is important to remember that many scholars consider peace impossible to achieve. Therefore, when evaluating the U.N. and the liberal peace, remember its successes and the many lives saved through humanitarian efforts just as much as its failures. Although the system is not perfect, a world without the liberal peace seems bleak, and although the liberal peace seems poised to collapse, it is worth repairing and improving rather than allowing for it to crumble.

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<sup>310</sup> Doyle & Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations* (Princeton University Press, 2006)

## The Implications of Multiple House Speaker Ballots

*Jacob Sondik*

The constantly fluid nature of contemporary politics has made routine procedures a brutal, partisan struggle. One of these processes is the vote for the Speaker of the House of Representatives. After being in the minority of both Congressional chambers, the Republicans regained control of the House, with a current margin of 222-212. With this newly minted power, it was supposed to be a foregone conclusion that Kevin McCarthy, who has held positions of power for House Republicans for over a decade, would be the new Speaker. However, the volatile intraparty fighting between the farther right faction, led by figures such as Matt Gaetz and Marjorie Taylor Greene, delayed this process as McCarthy continued to come up short in his quest to garner most of the votes that would have made him Speaker of the House. This petty nature of House Republicans had drastic consequences. The House of Representatives cannot conduct any business without electing a speaker, including the swearing-in of new members that had recently been elected in the November elections. After fifteen rounds of voting that concluded in the middle of the night, McCarthy finally became the Speaker of the House. However, this intraparty gridlock and fighting are not going anywhere any time soon. This paper will discuss the history of voting for the Speaker of the House, as well as examine the drastic political implications that will soon follow the 118th Congress throughout the next two years and beyond.<sup>311</sup>

There are intricacies to consider when discussing the procedure for Speaker voting. Instead of voting ‘yea’ or ‘nay’ like Congress does when a proposed bill comes to the floor, there are three options when voting for the Speaker of the House. The evolution from secret to open voting that officially changed in 1839 led to the procedures that are still used today. Representatives either (1) vote for a candidate, (2) vote ‘present,’ confirming their attendance and lowering the threshold needed for a candidate to win, or they can (3) abstain from voting altogether.<sup>312</sup> The vote that took place in 2023 was unlike any other, at least in the last century. The last time there was a Speaker Election decided by multiple ballots was in the 68th Congress (1923-1925). It took nine rounds of voting to elect Representative Frederick Gillett from Massachusetts to be the Speaker of the House.<sup>313</sup> Ironically, this was due to the GOP’s intra-party fighting. Unlike House conflict today, the Republican Party of the 1920s was divided by the Progressive revolution. It is important to note that the core ideologies and platforms of the two parties have changed since this election, but the intra-party fighting has continued to persist over

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<sup>311</sup> Luke Broadwater, “Lacking a Speaker, One Part of Government Ceases to Function,” *The New York Times* (The New York Times, January 4, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/04/us/politics/house-speaker-representatives.html>.

<sup>312</sup> “Speaker Elections Decided by Multiple Ballots.” US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives. Accessed February 26, 2023. <https://history.house.gov/People/Office/Speakers-Multiple-Ballots/>.

<sup>313</sup> Sy Becker, “House Speaker Frederick Gillett of Westfield Was Not Elected on First Ballot,” ABC27 (ABC27, January 7, 2023), <https://www.abc27.com/news/house-speaker-frederick-gillett-of-westfield-was-not-elected-on-first-ballot/>.

time. This rare occurrence of a Speaker of the House election decided by multiple ballots has more significance than one may think. The implications of this drawn-out process are overwhelmingly negative in the near and foreseeable future.

Despite holding the title of Speaker of the House, McCarthy was forced to cede a significant amount of power to far-right House Republicans in order to finally secure the nomination. Some of his actions included a promise to Freedom Caucus members on seats that decide committee assignments, giving these members seats on the House Rules Committee, and playing a role in setting the floor agenda. This sets a precedent of McCarthy as a weak Speaker of the House. The division within his party forces him to make concessions, moves further away from the intended GOP agenda, and pushes the Republicans closer to the ideology of the Freedom Caucus.<sup>314</sup> Surprisingly, McCarthy did not demand anything in return for making these concessions, a lack of action that chips away at his waning power. This division will also make it difficult for a Republican House and a Democratic President to agree on passing legislation, widening the partisan gap between the two parties that already struggle with bipartisan action. Ultimately, the concessions Speaker McCarthy has made will ignite more polarization and decrease the effectiveness of both Congress and President Biden.

It is evident that the multiple rounds of speaker voting has procedural consequences. While those are important in their own regard, it is the weakening unity of both political parties that will have the most permanently negative implications. Analysts warn that in order to distract voters, politicians may support more drastic measures in the foreign policy sphere, specifically targeting relations with China. Diao Daming, an expert on US studies at Renmin University in Beijing, China, states that "...Republican lawmakers will be engaged in fierce intra-party struggles and doing battle with the Democrats, therefore paying very little attention to the real problems of the US."<sup>315</sup> The lack of consensus when voting for the Speaker of the House of Representatives is a troubling sign of what is to come for this already divided federal government, paving the way for the American people to distrust their government and increase the likelihood of not wanting to vote for legislators who do not listen to them.

The real-world consequences following this partisan struggle will divide elected officials further and make it impossible for Congress to pass legislation that can help the American people. In the short term, the House was already delayed in discussing or passing any legislation that could potentially help their constituents, with new members of Congress prevented from being sworn in until a Speaker was elected. However, it is the future implications of governance that should be cause for concern. According to Jonathan Hanson, a political scientist at the University of Michigan, the next two years will be divided on every issue. Compromise, according to Hanson, will be volatile because of the intra-party fighting. If, for example, House

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<sup>314</sup> Sarah A. Binder, "McCarthy Paid a Steep Price for His Speakership-Now What?," Brookings (Brookings, January 10, 2023), <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2023/01/10/mccarthy-paid-a-steep-price-for-his-speakership-now-what/>.

<sup>315</sup> Global Times, "House's Failure to Elect Speaker Highlights Us Political Polarization, Could Push Politicians toward Adventurism," Global Times, accessed April 9, 2023, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283196.shtml>.

Republicans wanted to compromise with House Democrats on an issue, this would cause blowback from farther right Republicans, particularly members of the Freedom Caucus.<sup>316</sup> Another Michigan professor, Jenna Bednar, agrees with the danger that multiple ballots of voting sets the stage for McCarthy to be seen as a weak Speaker. “To appease the rebellious members of his party, McCarthy has already agreed to rules changes that would weaken the speaker. In effect, these rules weaken the party’s ability to articulate an agenda and to check presidential power throughout negotiation.”<sup>317</sup> The lack of agreement on who should be the Speaker of the House already sets the table for division and lack of motivation to compromise on important issues. This has already been seen in the lack of legislation passed by both the House and Senate. This lack of unity between the members of Congress is clear in the Republican Party, but it is the inter-party division between Democrats and Republicans that may result in violent consequences.

Over President’s Day Weekend, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, known for her controversial conspiracy theories, once again made national headlines with her latest tweet, stating, “We need a national divorce. We need to separate by red and blue states and shrink the federal government.”<sup>318</sup> Although people may not take Greene seriously because of her outlandish views and rhetoric, she has significant influence in the GOP and in Congress as a whole. The foundation of this influence is built on her relationship with McCarthy. As previously mentioned, Greene and her farther right faction of the GOP made it historically difficult for McCarthy to be Speaker of the House. Due to this division, McCarthy was pressed to make more concessions to Greene, Congresswoman Lauren Boebert, and other members of the “Freedom Caucus.” McCarthy may have finally secured the speakership he desired, but the consequences of giving in to the other faction of the Republican Party has emboldened ideas of secession.<sup>319</sup> According to a June 2021 poll conducted by Bright Line Watch, about two-thirds of Southern Republicans supported secession. This is not strictly a GOP issue, with secession being viewed as a reasonable solution, with the Bright Line Watch group indicating that both Republicans and Democrats had support for the idea of succession, rising in popularity in the last five years.<sup>320</sup>

It is important to recognize that, in 2023, there is nothing routine about the American political system. Procedures that used to occur without much debate, like voting for a Speaker for the House of Representatives, and bare minimum compromises to maintain continuity of the government, have become grueling partisan struggles. With a country so divided not just

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<sup>316</sup> Jeff Karoub, “U-M Political Experts on Chaotic US House Speaker Election and Its Implications for Power, Governing,” University of Michigan News, January 6, 2023, <https://news.umich.edu/u-m-political-experts-on-chaotic-us-house-speaker-election-and-its-implications-for-power-governing/>.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> Elaine Godfrey, “Never Mind Marjorie Taylor Greene's 'National Divorce',” The Atlantic (Atlantic Media Company, February 23, 2023), <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/02/states-disunion-secession-movements-richard-kreitner/673191/>.

<sup>319</sup> Sarah A. Binder, “McCarthy Paid a Steep Price for His Speakership-Now What?,” Brookings (Brookings, January 10, 2023), <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2023/01/10/mccarthy-paid-a-steep-price-for-his-speakership-now-what/>.

<sup>320</sup> Adam Barnes, “Still Miles Apart: Americans and the State of U.S. Democracy Half a Year into the Biden Presidency,” Bright line watch, 2021, <http://brightlinewatch.org/still-miles-apart-americans-and-the-state-of-u-s-democracy-half-a-year-into-the-biden-presidency/>.

ideologically, but based on the 2020 presidential election results, it is unsurprising to see the elected representatives divided as well. Calls of secession from representatives ignites a fire in voters who have similar thoughts who feel emboldened to publicly announce their support. It is the duty of the next generation of voters to not just become involved, but to find common ground and ensure that procedures, like voting, operate as routinely as possible. Otherwise, the foundations of American democracy will continue to be under attack, creating a disheartening and uncertain future for generations to come.