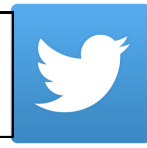




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RITON VOICE

EDITORIAL EDITION

Triton High School

Triton's Student-Produced Newspaper

December 10, 2021

We've Got Opinions...

The American Problem

Guns, Culture, & How to Understand How We Got Here

By Harry Golbitz
Staff Writer

To say America's Constitution is a bit vague in certain spots is accurate. Nothing highlights this better than the Second Amendment. The Second Amendment's granting citizens "the right to bear arms" certainly needs more clarification; what does "to bear arms" mean in effect? It is left to modern America to figure out what proper gun control is. In order to change for the better, American gun control needs to break barriers to be effective yet without impinging on rights; America needs to destroy the cultural rifts of the nation, and understand itself.

An extremely important factor in American gun laws is the divide between the North and the South. The South tends to regulate firearms less and also seems to take firearms with a more reckless attitude. The North seems to be anti-gun compared to the South and those that do own them tend to be more restrained in regards to usage. Not to say this is always the case, however. America's lack of centralized gun laws means states vary wildly between each other. For example, just across the border in New Hampshire I could easily buy a firearm I couldn't in Massachusetts and there's nothing to stop me from bringing it into MA. This can (and does) create a major political rift, while also heavily destabilizing federal gun control due to state variation.

Mass shootings are very rare, and account for few of America's gun crime fatalities. Mass shootings are increasing at an ever-worrying rate though, according to this *PBS* article. The two most important reasons mass shootings are occurring more is: sensationalizing of these events in the news (regardless of political agenda the news outlet might have) and the rise of extreme right wing ide-

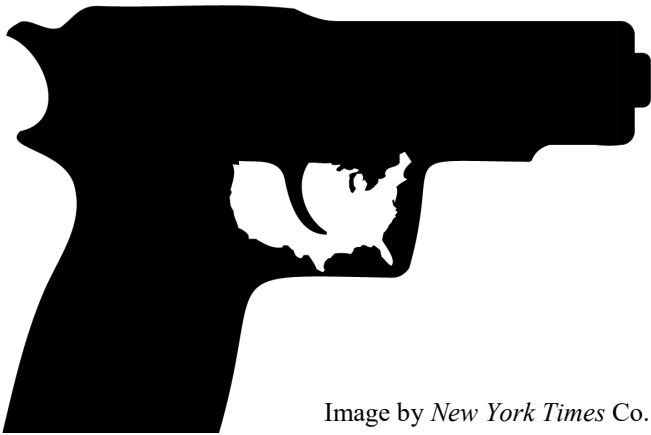


Image by *New York Times Co.*

als. America has always struggled with people and media being radicalized, however there are ways to combat this. One idea that seems to be catching on is keeping the names of the shooter and/or victims anonymous so as to report without generating attention to the motive/shooter. As for the increase in extreme right wing ideals and the correlation between gun owners, this dangerous correlation can be fixed with education. Those who are less educated tend to be more bigoted and extreme. While education is a grand investment, it may be hard to convince people to give up money for schools.

One type of firearm is not always more lethal than the other in fact, according to this *Reuters* report handguns cause more deaths than rifles in mass shootings. Only the rate of injury seems to be influenced by a gun's design in the context of mass shootings. While it is shown that banning certain types of firearms does reduce the occurrence and lethality of shootings, that is almost certainly impossible to accomplish in

America. The political consequences of restricting weapons anymore in America is simply too great and will likely see a short term increase in gun violence as people who are scared act more violently.

One of the most prevailing arguments is that people do not need weapons that fall into the class of semi-automatic assault rifles. While this is true in that most people do not need one, it would be contradictory and largely nullify the reason for the 2nd Amendment.

The Second Amendment exists for foreign invaders equally if not more so than domestic threats. Think back to the American revolution, minutemen. These people that owned firearms to near equal of the invading British reinforcements were critical to the success of the revolution. So yes in today's modern society most people do not need such a rifle but to restrict the option is to go against why the amendment exists.

Building for Triton's Future

New MS/HS Should be Considered

By Griffin White & Sam Mollineux
Staff Writers

Triton High school was built in 1970, opened in 1971, and it's only renovation was in 1999, 22 years ago. Today, the school is decrepit. The roof is constantly leaking, the walls have grown rusty, and the utilities are ailing. Most of the classrooms are either uncomfortably hot or freezing cold, with few rooms having bearable temperatures. The concrete on the exterior of the school is cracked and water damaged. The school is behind most other 21st century schools in terms of design.

There have been two proposals to fix the issues One is a renovation project that will fix most of the issues with Triton. The other proposal however is far more enticing. Rather than making small fixes that likely will not last long, there is an option to build a whole new school building.

Of course, the biggest concern is how expensive a new building would be. A fair comparison to make would be with Pentucket's new building, which is still in the process of being built. Assuming that the process will be roughly the same, it can be expected for construction to take two-three years. The cost for the Pentucket school was roughly \$146 million. The cost for the new Triton building is estimated to be about the same, possibly cheaper due to the fact that the Triton building would likely end up being smaller. Judging by the sketches and design ideas for the Pentucket project, there is massive improvement aesthetically and functionally, which is something Triton High school needs. For a new school building, \$140 million dollars is not a terrible deal.

Superintendent Brian Forget says that a new building could end up being more cost effective than simple renovations because Triton could be partly reimbursed the cost by the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Unless the project will be a long term solution, it wouldn't be possible to partner with MSBA for it, long term being 50 or more years. By building a new, more modernized school, it would be possible to ensure that it lasts longer. Plus, if the project is a long term solution, then MSBA could help pay for nearly 50 percent of the cost. So rather than costing nearly \$150 million, it could be essentially halved, bringing the cost down to around \$75 million. A new building would also allow the school to have a clean slate, one that is based in the 21st century.

HMC Architects, a company that builds schools, has a list from 2018 with six 21st century school considerations. Such considerations include natural lighting, bright colors, flexible furnishings,
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Pay College Athletes

By Jared Leonard
Staff Writer

This has been one of the hottest debates in college sports over the last decade: Should college student athletes be paid? My answer is yes. College athletes have a lot on their plate every day, and they bring in a lot of money for their schools, so why shouldn't they get paid?

Being a student athlete is just like having a full time job. Every day you're in the weight room, on the field practicing, studying, doing homework, or watching game film. Playing a sport at the collegiate level is time consuming when it comes to practices or games every day for months. Student athletes in higher divisions can make different tournaments or be a part of postseason activities that can take them out of school for weeks. This leads to more homework and studying to



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do when they get back to campus. College athletes bring in a lot of revenue to their schools from playing in big games that are on national television. Colleges make money for every televised game, so students should receive some of the profit that goes to the school. In addition, colleges gain revenue by selling the athletes' apparel and using their names as marketing tools to gain money and to spark the interest in younger athletes.

Money should vary based on how big the school is or what division it is in, but any college that makes money off of their athletes playing for them should have to financially compensate the athletes in return.

Some people say that scholarships
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Make App Fees Free

By Ellie Gay-Killeen
Staff Writer

Fees for college applications pile up during senior year for students who want to attend higher education. It's a time of demanding deadlines and a long list of potential schools. Whether accepted to the school or not, upwards of \$105 application fees hover, often turning students away from applying to more than a few.

The purpose of an application fee is for a college or university to help pay the cost of reviewing applications and then making an admissions decision. According to *Accredited Schools Online*, instead of using funds included in sky-high tuition costs, this separate way to raise money is one a majority of colleges use.



Students at Leman Manhattan Preparatory School in New York during a college admissions preparatory class (*New York Times Photo*)

Some schools have long given up the revenue from application fees including Wellesley College in Massachusetts and Reed College in Oregon. In 2016,
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Yes, Lots of Opinions...

Normalize 4-Day Weeks All Weekends Should be Three Days Long

By Sam Lind
Staff Writer

In our society, we prioritize our labor output over our own health. Whether you're sick or just want a day off, you have to come in to clock in that nine-to-five. The United States is in fact the only developed country to not offer mandatory maternity leave or paid leave for holidays and vacations. All of this and more has led to groups in the United States pushing for a four-day work week, as opposed to our current five-day schedule.

In countries such as Iceland, New Zealand, Spain, and Japan, citizens have

launched four-day pilots, which have reportedly increased productivity. According to *Business Insider's* "Microsoft experimented with a 4-day workweek," not only has the four-day work week already been

proven to work in other countries, but it has been seen to be more effective. Microsoft Japan noticed a 40 percent boost in productivity after implementing the four-day schedule. Microsoft also reported that electricity consumption was down 23.1% as well.

Contrary to the shortened week, weakened labor laws and new technologies have actually allowed bosses to work their employees far beyond the standard 40-hour work week. People just don't want to work in our current day conditions in our modern America. According to the *New York Times'* "Is the Four-Day Workweek Finally Within Our Grasp?," the idea of a shortened work week echoes decades into the past. Even former president Jimmy Carter agreed that a four-day work week would benefit all Americans and "would

conserve energy amid the oil crisis, and considered urging companies to adopt it".

Some might claim that a four-day work week will make the life of a customer harder, as they will want to shop at places on Friday, which would be closed, unbeknownst to them. This will also allegedly hurt the economy, as laborers aren't able to put out enough goods to meet demands due to the shortened timespan.

However, the exact same argument could be made for our existing weekends. A lot of people do not work on weekends, but it is where customers do the majority

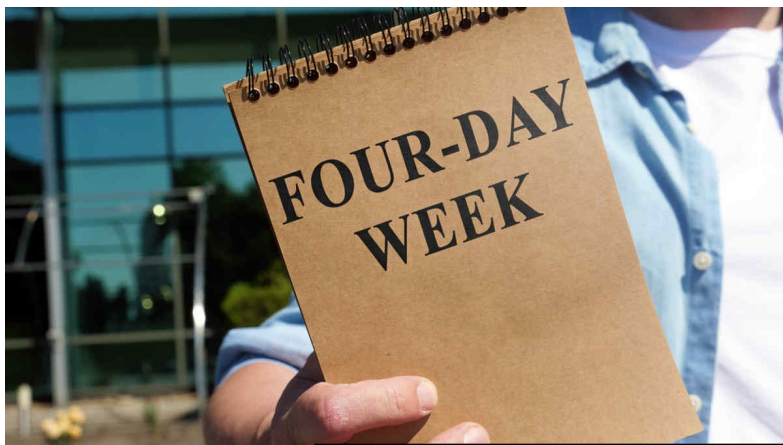


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of their shopping. Productivity does not decrease because we have weekends, and removing weekends might even lower productivity. Also, adding an extra day to the weekend would not majorly affect the economy as productivity goes up by a staggering amount. Americans need the four-day work week to advance and be more productive as a nation.

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not equal cash in a player's pocket. According to collegexpress.com, "The average student athlete's day starts around 5-6 a.m.. They get in a morning lift at the practice facility, then make their way to classes until about 4 p.m.. After classes, they go to practice for a couple hours, then come home, do homework, and go to bed". This full schedule is just as rigorous as a professional athlete's, but the difference is that professional athletes don't have to worry about school work, and their bank account increases every day.

College athletes spend hours upon hours every day practicing, working out, and studying to become better student athletes, but for what? We all know these collegiate athletes aren't playing the sport they love to keep their colleges financially stable. Out of all of this money that is awarded to the college as a result of the athletes' hard work, don't you think some of it should be awarded to the students?

even being admitted. After adding up the costs associated with submitting 20 college applications, ACT and SAT subject test reports, and a supplemental financial aid application his total came to \$1,700.

I myself have seen the high application fees, having applied to six schools and spending \$360 thus far, which is just half of the schools on my list. I am grateful that my parents have funded my application fees, yet many students have to pay themselves.

Colleges sometimes allow fee waivers to certain students. The Common Application website explains that you may qualify for fee waivers if you are enrolled in the federal free or reduced price lunch

"One Size Fits All" is Outdated

Brands Should Update Their Messaging

By Olivia Bateman
Staff Writer

Clothing has been around forever, and it is arguably a person's favorite thing to buy. Everyone has a different body type, but one size fits all has become more of a problematic phenomenon than ever. One size fits all never has fit "all". Stores like Brandy Melville which only sell one size fits all have been under fire for a long time now because of it. This toxic ideology needs to be removed from the clothing industry.

One size fits all is associated with a number of problems. It promotes eating disorders and unhealthy self image to try and fit what is truly a size small. According to the *New York Times*, "the trouble is, most women do not have a positive view of their bodies, experts say." Having a standardized size for clothing is an unrealistic idea, because there is no set size for everyone in the world. When there is an item of clothing that your friend is wearing that you would also like to purchase and you can't because they only sell one size, it really affects the way you view yourself. Having an unhealthy self image ruins confidence, mental health and self esteem. Larger companies like Macys, Walmart, Target and J. Crew have many more size-inclusive options that reach a bigger audience. Wharton University says "more than half of women ages 18 to 65 wears a size 14 or higher." If a store can cater to more than half of women, then that would make sales higher too. These retailers fall in line on reaching all sizes and heights of women and men to create a safe retail environment.



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za or online they carry multiple stores that cater to sizes under XL. On the other hand if you're above a size 14 or XL, then you might have one store that you can shop in which limits your style options. Just because a person is a larger size doesn't mean they don't want a cute outfit that makes them feel confident.

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school to change much.

Building a new school allows for many different options for how the administration want to solve the issues, and modernize the school. It could have a better design to boost school spirit and how people view the school. The classrooms would allow for more engaging learning. The quality of water, heat, electricity, and many more utilities would improve. Even if the new building would cost more, in the long run, it could potentially lead to more money being saved, and for kids to have a better school building to receive an education in.

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should be the only pay that college athletes receive. According to the *Huffington Post*, a full Division 1 scholarship, on average, is about \$25,000 per year. This might seem like a lot of money, but this only brushes the surface of all the spending at college. The scholarship money goes towards tuition fees, housing, meal plans, and textbooks, but those are not the only costs that a college student will face. With the continuous sports activities the players are involved in, they have no free time to do anything other than practice or study. If college students try to balance sports, school, and a job, while attempting to maintain a normal sleep schedule, they will find it is pretty much impossible.

While there are times during the off season to work a couple hours at an off-campus job, it is not sustainable throughout the season. Scholarship money does

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several schools joined this trend, resulting in an increased number of students who applied for admission. Trinity College in Connecticut saw success in a similar strategy, waiving their \$65 application fee for any first generation applicants. *Inside Higher Ed* explained that first generation applicants who committed to enroll at Trinity jumped from 8 percent to 12 percent in just a year after the fee was dropped.

Ash Parasa, a high school senior at Morris County School of Technology in Denville, New Jersey told CNBC that he is spending over \$1,000 for college before

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collaborative spaces, tech integration, and hands-on learning. These are all things that Triton, for the most part, lacks. When taking a look at the new Pentucket school, one can see such integrations and considerations made in it's design. Without such changes in design, it is possible that Triton will be left in the dust by other schools.

Of course, at first glance the small repairs seem like the obvious path to take. It seems like the cheaper option, and it has already been done before, back in 1999. So why do something different? While it does seem to be a safer and cheaper option, this isn't exactly true. By simply replacing parts of the school that have issues, there is a good chance that over time, more and more renovations would have to be made with, the time between each one likely shortening. Also, since the repairs would only be building on things that the last repairs did, this doesn't allow for the

program or a federal, state, or local program that aids students from low income families. With an already stressful process where even the most organized have a hard time getting each and every detail complete, applying for complicated fee waivers adds another step.

According to the *PC Prospector*, it can take several steps to get a fee waiver, including talking to admissions counselors and submitting proof. Your own school counselor must complete a fee waiver, too. Seniors simply do not have the time away from school work to get this all done. *PC Prospector* continued, "Fee waivers are available to students who need them, but the process of obtaining one is

lengthy and requires counselor verification and document proof that you qualify." Even once you've applied for a fee waiver, the average wait time for a decision on whether or not you qualify is 4 weeks. Instead of applying to that fifth school on a list students often narrow it down when high application fees are present.

Attending college costs a lot of money already. In an ideal world, college applications should cost around \$20-\$25, but since this isn't necessarily possible, schools should focus on providing easier access to fee waivers. Schools would get more applicants this way, and such a change would also allow more opportunities for less fortunate students.