

Good morning. Welcome to NonPolar's second newsletter edition! Through this Newsletter, you will be able to hone your critical thinking skills, develop a greater understanding of your own political beliefs, and begin your journey towards helping us (little by little) improve political discourse and trust between opposing parties. It starts with you!

This week we'll be discussing one of the most contentious policy areas in the US: immigration.

Tips and Tricks

Want to learn more about politics but don't know how to begin? Start here with these tips:

Politics can be an intimidating field to follow- many people feel they have to be active participants in campaigns or advocacy in order to be in the know. You're not alone: check these tips from a [Quora post](#) with the same questions as you.

1. **Start with what interests you.** While politics is a broad field, you don't need to know the nuances of every policy issue in order to understand what's going on. Start small and find topics that interest you, and over time you'll begin to see how other areas of policy intersect with what you care about.

2. **There are (at least) two sides to every issue.** In our bipartisan system, it can be easy to assume there are two unified sides for our political debates. While this is true in some situations, this binary thinking is typically simplistic and is more divisive than productive. It is helpful to consider both sides of the issue without considering them to be mutually exclusive.

3. **Don't overwhelm yourself.** US politics is full of rich history and literature, but that doesn't mean you have to read political theory from textbooks to be interested in politics. If you are learning about a topic where the information is going above your head, consider watching a video or reading an article that introduces the context surrounding the topic. No matter the content, the most important part of staying up to date is to maintain a critical eye on everything you consume.

Immigration: A Constant Battle At The Border

Background

Immigration has been a frequently debated topic in U.S. public policy since Uncle Sam was a little lad. The United States of America is the melting pot of the world fueled by immigration, and the resulting diversity is a piston in the engine driving American innovation. Current situations at America's borders have inflamed this argument once more. Despite what people thought Biden's immigration policy would be, in reality not much has been changed from the immigration policies Trump implemented. In fact, U.S. immigration policy has not evolved much over the past several presidents (who can forget Obama being nicknamed "Deporter-in-Chief"). Most notably, the current administration has continued to refuse asylum claims and expel immigrants at the border in the name of public health. Regardless, the fight rages on over policy concerning the fate for both incoming migrants, and those with established lives inside the United States.

The Haitian Incident

Increased political and economic instability in Haiti has led more Haitians to flee their homeland and seek asylum in the United States. This issue took the national spotlight in late September after photographs surfaced displaying US border patrol agents on horseback herding Haitian migrants. While initial reports that the agents were using whips to control the migrants were disproved, both Democrats and Republicans used the situation to attack the Biden Administration. Democratic congressional leadership criticized the agents' behavior and the Biden Administration's continued use of Title 42 (already over [700,000](#) times!), a Trump-era policy used to justify immigrant expulsion as part of an effort to prevent coronavirus spread. In contrast, Republicans have pointed to the photographs to depict the Biden Administration's immigration stance as an open-border policy that invokes chaos.

Public Health Risk

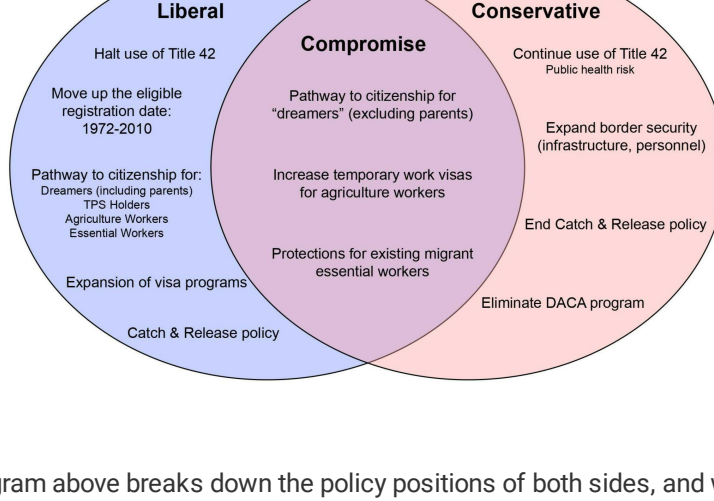
The Covid-19 pandemic continues to influence liberal and conservative political arguments about immigration. Republican governors Ron DeSantis of Florida and Greg Abbott of Texas blame immigrants for high rates of Covid-19 in their states, and leveraged the pandemic to rationalize restrictive immigration legislation. However, this concern appears largely superficial, as both governors have criticized and prevented other types of disease prevention measures such as mask mandates and indoor capacity guidelines. Although only a "small number of migrants" have come to the United States with the virus, there have been multiple cases of viral hotspots arising inside immigrant detention centers (Hansen, "Politics Rage at the Intersection of Immigration and Coronavirus Policy"). As a result Democrats and immigrant advocates argue for policies that reduce detention.

What does reconciliation have to do with immigration?

During the ongoing reconciliation process, Democrats made two unsuccessful appeals to Senate parliamentarian Elizabeth MacDonough to include immigration policy reforms in their potential spending bill. They first requested the creation of a pathway to citizenship for eight million people in four groups: [\(1\)](#) those who came to the United States illegally as children who remain under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), [\(2\)](#) temporary protected status holders (TPS), [\(3\)](#) agriculture workers, and [\(4\)](#) other essential workers. They then requested to allow immigrants who came to the U.S. before 2010 to apply for legal status, instead of the current date of 1972, a change that would impact almost 6.7 million people. Democrats argued including these measures in the spending bill was justified because they would shift millions of dollars in the government budget. Ultimately MacDonough did not rule in their favor, because she argued the policy changes would "far outweigh the budgetary impact scored to [them]".

Finding Compromise

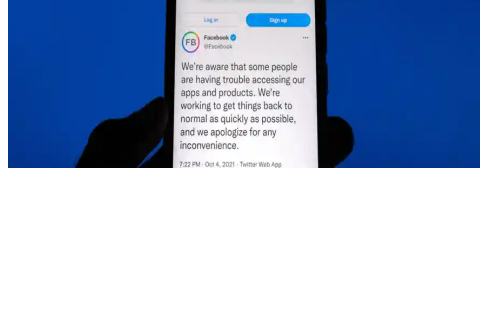
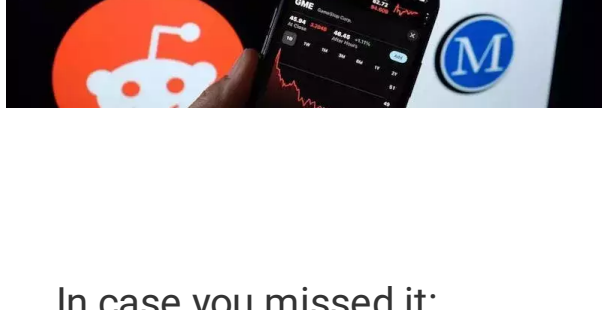
Although immigration remains a highly contentious issue, some policy reforms exist which may garner bipartisan support. In particular, changes which balance conservative business interests with liberal desires for increased immigrant protection and less punitive policies may bridge the ideological divide. Some policies which fall in this category include measures to facilitate an influx of farmworkers to combat the existing shortage, protections for essential workers who already reside in the United States, and a pathway to citizenship for "dreamers," who must show proof of their intention to add to the economy through labor or education.



The Venn diagram above breaks down the policy positions of both sides, and what there is agreement about.

"I believe in friendly compromise...truth is the glue that holds government together. Compromise is the oil that makes governments go." - Gerald R. Ford

Trending in News and Social Media



In case you missed it:

Facebook Whistleblower

- After leaking internal research documents in September, whistleblower Frances Haugen appeared on '60 Minutes' this week to reveal what Facebook knows about the effects of their platform on the mental health of teens, misinformation, and polarization. Watch the interview [here](#).

#CitadelScandal

- On September 28th, [#CitadelScandal](#) was trending on Twitter for the class-action lawsuit currently filed against the hedge fund (Citadel Securities) for their relationship with trading app Robinhood when 'meme stocks' such as Gamestop and AMC were pulled from the market in January of 2021. [Read more here](#).

#FacebookDown

- It's been a bad week for Facebook. The morning after Frances Haugen's '60 Minutes' interview, Facebook servers went down worldwide. With over [3.2 billion users](#) on their services (Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram), the crash affected communications for individuals and businesses worldwide. The internet flooded to other platforms to share the ripple effects of the world's largest site vanish for a day. The result was a display contrasting the demographics and nuances of mainstream social media, and reminding us just how integral social media has become in our daily lives.

Learn More

To learn more about the topics we have covered in today's issue, follow the links below:

Facebook

- Wall Street Journal:** [The Facebook Files](#)- a series of investigative reports of the leaked internal documents from Facebook

Immigration

- The "Intercepted with Jeremy Scahill" Podcast Covers the Haitian Immigration**

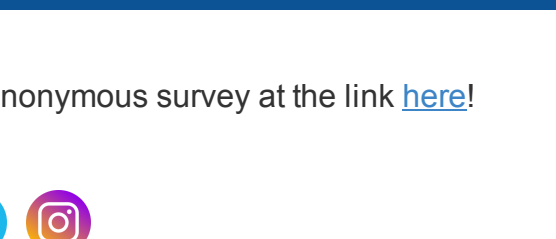
[Listen Here](#)

- CNBC: Can The U.S. Economy Survive Without Immigration?**



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