

THE EPOCH TIMES

# ARTS & CULTURE

COURTESY OF CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY



Central Park's more than 800 acres of beautifully sculpted greenery can almost make you forget that the park sits amid America's biggest metropolis.

## TRADITIONAL CULTURE

### THE OLMSTED LEGACY

## *A Core Belief in the Inherent Goodness of People and Nature*

SANDY CHING/UNSPLASH



#### CORA WANG

Sunlight filters through the branches of billowing trees. A cloudless cerulean sky and a warm breeze make it a perfect day for an outing. Throughout the park, couples, families, and friends sit in groups of twos and threes, enjoying the last remnants of summer. Amid this peaceful oasis, you can almost forget that you are in the center of America's biggest metropolis.

"Every day, millions of people wander through Central Park. ... They never think about someone going through the process of designing these places," said Lucy Lawless,

co-chair of the National Association of Olmsted Parks in an interview with *Elite Magazine*. "We forget that these aren't just little random pieces of nature that the city left behind."

The birth of Central Park in the 19th century had a profound impact on the landscape-design industry. Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the primary architects, became known as the father of American landscape design. His remarkable legacy also includes Prospect Park in Brooklyn and Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, among hundreds of other projects.

Olmsted's work was motivated by a commitment to providing visually

compelling and accessible green space to people of all economic backgrounds. He believed in the restorative and healing power of nature, as well as its role in promoting a stronger sense of community, especially in urban areas.

His views are especially relevant today as we cope with the COVID pandemic. While indoor gatherings are considered unsafe, people are turning to the outdoors to connect with friends and family members. Places like Central Park provide people with a safe space to unwind and get fresh air.

*Continued on Page 4*



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**THE EPOCH TIMES**

TRUTH AND TRADITION



Robin Hood stood bravely against the oppressive powers that were taxing people into misery. Do we still honor his adventurous spirit?

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

## COURAGE AND CULTURE: Defending Civilization

JEFF MINICK

Recently, the students at Gregory the Great Academy in Pennsylvania held their annual Robin Hood Days in a forest on the school grounds. For three days, the boys camped out without tents—it rained the first night—and fired off arrows, wrestled, hiked in the woods, cooked by campfire, heard tales of Robin Hood, sang old folk songs, and gathered for morning and evening prayer and a church service.

The academy offers several similar events throughout the year, designed in part to test the boys and help forge them into men. Though only some 60 students attend St. Gregory's, the school has won several state championships in soccer and rugby. And in addition to the classical education they receive, these young men study such subjects as art, carpentry, music, and animal husbandry. (The school raises and slaughters pigs and chickens for use in the dining hall.) When the students graduate, they have read many standard works of literature and philosophy, their religious faith is strong, and they have a solid grasp of history and politics.

Whether planned or not, the results of this infiltration are the same. The "1619 Project," the teaching of critical race theory in our colleges and corporations and even in our military, the scorn heaped on Western literature and art, the denigration of our American history and its heroes, the attacks on "dead white European males"—these are the poisonous flowers grown from seeds planted years ago.

### Silencing is an effective weapon.

Such a bastion of Western civilization—my son-in-law, a graduate, is on the staff, and my oldest grandson

is a sophomore—should bring us all a flicker of hope for the future.

But what about our culture at large? What can we do to preserve and promote our civilization?

### Radicals

Sometimes that cause of preservation seems hopeless.

For almost half a century, American culture and our traditional understanding of the past have suffered cuts and blows. As a result of that unceasing assault, what was once the "counterculture" has now become the establishment. This establishment today controls most of our universities, with its ideology infiltrating our elementary and secondary schools, and its graduates serving as the managers and CEOs of many major corporations, as well as in control of many agencies in our federal and state governments.

Whether planned or not, the results of this infiltration are the same. The "1619 Project," the teaching of critical race theory in our colleges and corporations and even in our military, the scorn heaped on Western literature and art, the denigration of our American history and its heroes, the attacks on "dead white European males"—these are the poisonous flowers grown from seeds planted years ago.

### Cancel Culture Never Sleeps

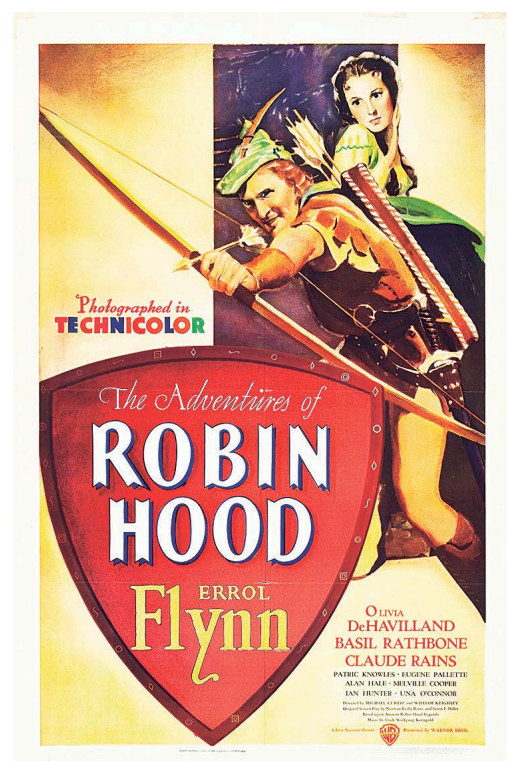
And on it goes. In his online essay "Disgusting Professorial Teachings," writer and teacher Walter E. Williams gives us some recent samples from around the country of radi-



Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne, 1832, by Thomas Bewick. A woodcut print from "Robin Hood: a Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, Now Extant Relative to That Celebrated English Outlaw, State Library of New South Wales."



A Falun Gong practitioner is silenced by Communist China's police in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, sometime after July 20, 1999.



The 1938 poster for "The Adventures of Robin Hood," a classic adventure of derring-do.

calized university professors. Here, Williams reports what Midwestern States University professor Nathan Jun wrote on Facebook: "I want the entire world to burn until the last cop is strangled with the intestines of the last capitalist, who is strangled in turn with the intestines of the last politician." New School's Richard Wolff "has called for the abolition of grades," claiming that they "are a means of propping up capitalism." Some of the other quotes by professors include obscenities best omitted from a family newspaper.

Those who seek to abolish our history, indoctrinate us, and cancel our culture are indefatigable in their efforts to subjugate the rest of us.

Because of this domination of our institutions, many people are afraid to speak up when they disagree with certain ideas and changes. College students with differing opinions must censor their speech and opinions, afraid of reprisals should they speak out. Some in the work force fear losing their jobs should they oppose the Marxist organization Black Lives Matter or some governor's dictate on masks, and rightly so, for businesses and employers have fired employees who took these positions.

This silencing is an effective weapon. It worked well in the past in places like Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, and continues

to work in places like Communist China, North Korea, and Cuba. And now it's working in America.

### The Resistance

On the other hand, I have met many people who speak up fearlessly for their rights, their opinions, and the preservation of our culture. My editors here at The Epoch Times, a friend in St. Paul, a 19-year-old woman who wrote to me asking how she could encourage truth-telling in our culture, a couple of my children—these and others are stouthearted warriors for tradition.

In an article for The College Fix published last January, editor Jennifer Kabbany looks at professors Rachel Fulton Brown and Bruce Gilley and the attacks they have withstood because of their academic research. Brown, who teaches history at the University of Chicago, came under fire for her defense of Western Civilization and her essay "Three Cheers for White Men," which celebrated "men's support for the ideals of chivalry, consensual marriage, the vote, and free speech." As a consequence, she was denied a promotion to full professor.

Bruce Gilley, professor of political science at Portland State University, has been savaged by his colleagues and others for his academic article "The Case for Colonialism." Kabbany reports that "the article was later taken down after the journal's editor [for Third World Quarterly] received credible death threats." More recently, Gilley's book "The Last Imperialist" was withdrawn from publication at the last minute without explanation.

Yet both these stalwart professors continue to fight against such suppression. Gilley is still looking for a publisher for his book and has even founded a "Critique of BLM Reading Group" for students, with the usual predictable outcries.

On Kabbany's article on both Gilley and Brown, Brown offers some excellent advice for the rest of us seeking to preserve the past and our culture: "I have learned through bravery, perseverance, level-headedness and determination they can be beaten ... but it takes an iron stomach. And most people cannot summon the strength alone. They need backup. They need allies." She added: "It's not easy to remain defiant when it seems like everyone in your entire discipline is gloating over your impending downfall, but it helps if you can laugh ... [N]o matter how awful my ordeal, I have kept

a smile on my face. I have never let them rob me of my joy, which oddly enough has made my tormentors really very angry."

### The Rest of Us

In a recent conversation, a friend told me that she had just finished watching "The Adventures of Robin Hood" with Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland. She remarked on the bravery and candor of both Robin Hood and Lady Marian, and wondered whether most Americans could show such courage today in the face of oppression. Like her, I have watched this film several times—it was the first "late night movie" my parents permitted me to view many years ago, and I showed it several times to my children. And after our phone call, I checked "Robin Hood" out of a local library and watched it again.

And like my friend, the forthright courage shown by Robin and Marian as they face King John and the Sheriff of Nottingham moved me. Both characters spoke out boldly against injustice and acted accordingly. Neither let the fear of imprisonment or even death stop them from doing the right thing.

Unlike professors Brown and Gilley, who are frontline warriors in the culture wars, I am in the rear of that battle. I sit in front of a computer screen many hours a day composing articles such as this one. But the college kid who takes the hits for her opinions in class, the guy who refuses to attend a critical race theory workshop at his place of work, the high school teacher who puts aside the assigned text and teaches the nuances of American history at the risk of her job—these are the real modern-day heroes in the struggle to protect tradition and culture.

The iconoclast H.L. Mencken once wrote: "It is a fine thing to face machine guns for immortality and a medal, but isn't it a fine thing, too, to face calumny, injustice, and loneliness for the truth which makes men free?"

Let's follow the advice of Professor Brown about finding allies and living with joy, and then push back against those who would raze our culture and take away our liberty.

After all, it's a fine thing, isn't it?

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See [JeffMinick.com](http://JeffMinick.com) to follow his blog.



# TRUTH CAN BE BLOCKED BUT NEVER STOPPED

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Throughout Central Park, couples, families, and friends enjoying the last remnants of summer.



Belvedere Castle recently underwent a \$12 million, 15-month restoration process. The stunning structure, reminiscent of fairy tales, has been a beloved playground for generations of New York families.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

THE OLMSTED LEGACY

A Core Belief in the Inherent Goodness of People and Nature

Continued from Page 1

Embodying American Values

Central Park was the first urban landscaped park in the United States. The idea for establishing a large green space in New York City was proposed initially in the 1840s. However, construction didn't begin until 1857, after Olmsted and his co-designer, Calvert Vaux, won the rights to the project through a park-design competition with their proposed Greensward plan. The project spanned nearly two decades and cost \$10 million. It wasn't officially completed until after the Civil War, in 1876.

Nearly all of Central Park was built by hand. The only machine used through the entire process was a rock crusher.

"It's amazing to me because of how little of our work today is done by our own hands," Lawliss said. Thousands of men worked for hours every day, grinding rock formations into walkable roads. Central Park was built on land that was especially difficult for construction of any kind. It had been chosen because of its rockiness, which made it unsuitable for commercial buildings.

Transcendentalism was a core concept in the creation of Central Park. Developed in the United States in the 1830s, the philosophy is based on a core belief in the inherent goodness of people and nature. "In this country, nature has been a theme from the very beginning," Lawliss said.

Olmsted had traveled throughout Europe and spent time studying many European cities. He observed that while they had many well-designed piazzas, historic cathedrals, and beautifully paved streets, their designs consisted mostly of hardscape—there wasn't much nature.

Olmsted viewed the Central Park project as an opportunity to make nature an essential part of the American experience, even for those living in big cities. "He's saying that our democracy would be based on setting aside places of nature for everybody—that this is what would make America distinct," Lawliss explained. After the successful establishment of Central Park, other cities in the United States began deliberately leaving green spaces during their development process, leading to

an urban landscape model that would endure for generations.

A Glimpse Into the Future

Landscape artists face the challenge of maintaining a balance between artificial and natural elements. "You don't have one without the other," Lawliss said. It's important to make sure a park doesn't look overly polished and manufactured, but at the same time ensure that it doesn't look unkempt. The organic and synthetic elements need to come together in tranquil harmony, thus enhancing your experience of both.

Landscape architecture is also unique in that you often have to wait decades—if not centuries—to see a place the way the designer intended it to look. At the time of the park's 150th anniversary, many people noted that the park looked closer to Olmsted's vision than it did when it was first completed. The small saplings planted back in the 1870s had transformed into sturdy, towering oaks.

"As landscape artists work with living materials, we have the ability to see the future in a way that architects and other artists don't," Lawliss said. "We have to be willing to wait and say, 'Yes, I am going to plant that little seed, and someday that seed will be a giant oak tree.'" In an age when technology can make everything instantaneous, and people desire immediate results, landscape design recalls an earlier tradition.

The Beauty of Central Park

Using seemingly endless green lawns, undulating rock formations, and winsome flower fields, Olmsted created a stunning new landscape out of what was previously just rocky terrain. Central Park has many iconic features, such as its transportation network. Various modes of transportation can pass through Central Park unimpeded: Horse-drawn carriages travel gracefully along the roads, special bike paths allow cyclists to travel with ease, while pedestrians can stroll along the park's many paths.

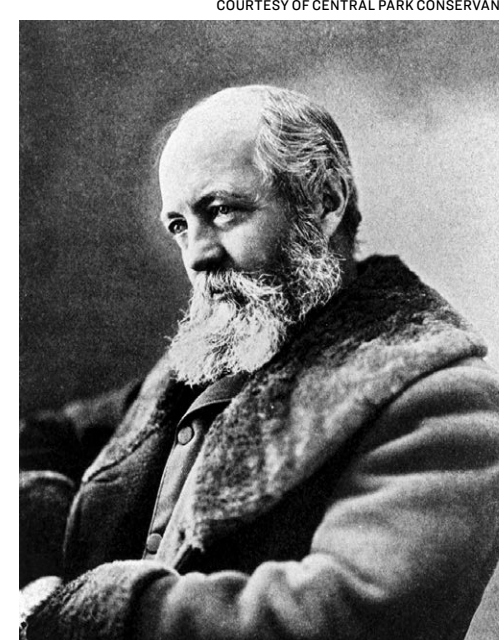
Central Park's beauty, as well as its many amenities, could not exist without constant maintenance. Take, for example, Belvedere Castle. The fairy-tale-like landmark built in 1867 had deteriorated over the years. The

After the successful establishment of Central Park, other cities in the United States began deliberately leaving green spaces during their development process.

Central Park Conservancy renovated the structure for the first time in 1983 and turned it into a nature observatory. In 2018, it was closed once again to undergo extensive restoration. The stunning structure has been a beloved playground for generations of New York families, and it stands today in its original majesty.

Though New York City has changed drastically in the last century, Central Park remains a comforting constant. It coexists with the towering skyscrapers, and has established itself as one of the most prominent symbols of the Big Apple. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the city, Central Park provides a relaxing retreat.

According to Lawliss, visiting Central Park is one of the best ways that outsiders can experience New York City. "I think that is one of the greatest experiences New York has to offer, because it is sort of a crossroads of all kinds of people—tourists and natives, the young and old," she said. With his original vision, Olmsted seems to have transcended space and time. People from all backgrounds and walks of life gather in the park's sprawling green space, sharing joy and laughter.

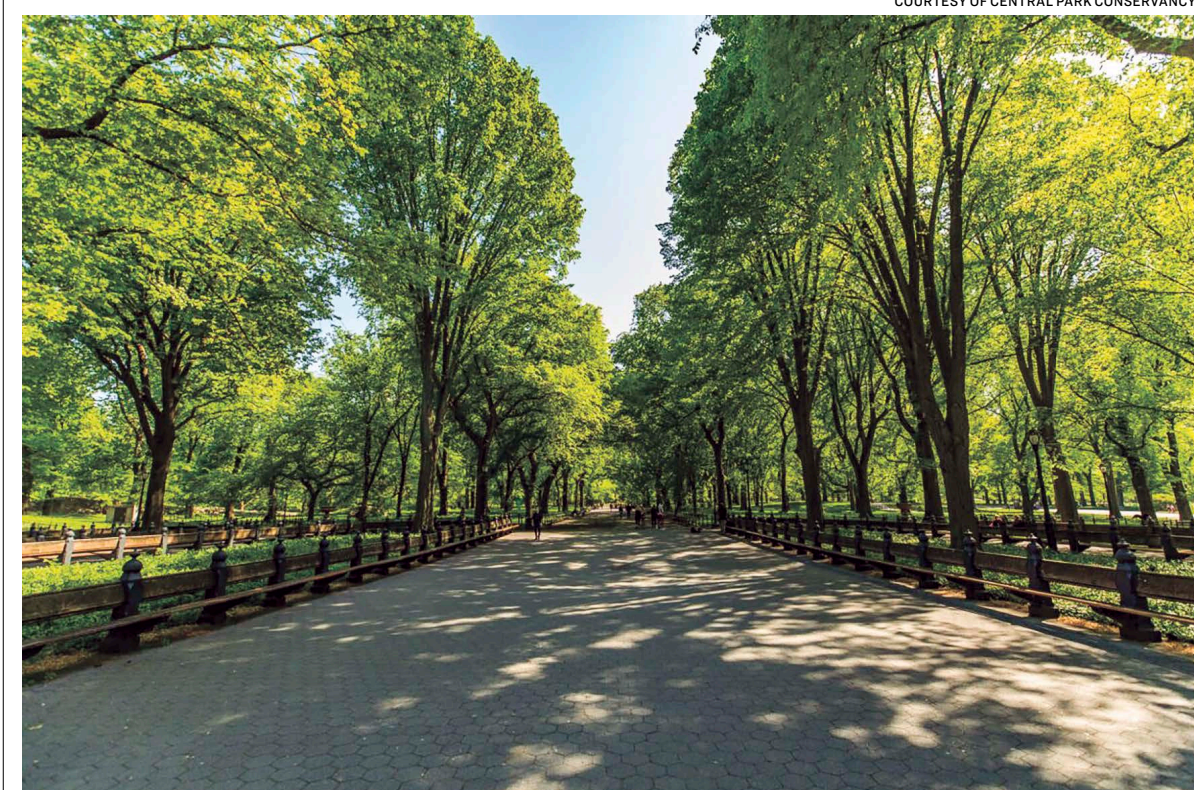


(Above) Beginning in 1857 with the design for Central Park in New York City, Frederick Law Olmsted went on to become known as the father of American landscape design.

(Right) In the midst of the COVID pandemic, outdoor spaces like Central Park have become more important than ever, as they provide people with a safe space to unwind and get fresh air.

Established in 1980, the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) is a coalition of design and preservation professionals dedicated to preserving and furthering the Olmsted legacy. On April 26, 2022, NAOP will be holding the Olmsted 200 event to celebrate the bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Olmsted. It will be a coordinated national and local celebration, bringing together supporters and experts from all over the world to explore the many ways in which Olmsted's values are relevant to 21st century America. For information, see [Olmsted.org](http://Olmsted.org)

This article written by Cora Wang and translated by Angela Feng is reprinted with permission from Elite Magazine.



The Central Park Mall in 2019 (left) compared to 1923. Though New York City has changed drastically in the last century, Central Park remains a comforting constant.



1023—Central Park (The Mall), New York, N. Y., U. S. A.

## CRAFTSMANSHIP

# 'Someone Somewhere': Easing Poverty by Appreciating Mexico's Rich Artisanal Traditions

LORRAINE FERRIER

Mexican company "Someone Somewhere" helps artisans literally make their way out of poverty, using their age-old traditional handicrafts.

Antonio Nuño co-founded the company in Mexico with his best friends, Fátima Álvarez and Enrique Rodríguez, in 2016. The friends, all under 30 years old, launched their company via a Kickstarter campaign selling T-shirts and backpacks. Orders came in from 27 countries across the world. The campaign raised their \$50,000 goal in just two days; they had to close the campaign down as they'd reached the maximum orders they could fill.

The Kickstarter campaign enabled the company to launch its online business in Mexico. On Aug. 27, the company launched in the United States.

“Listening to and working together ... has been the key to building a business that works in these communities.”

Antonio Nuño, co-founder

Someone Somewhere markets its products—mainly bags, backpacks, and T-shirts—to millennials. The founders discovered that millennials were one of the market segments who cared the most about the impact of the products they bought. The founders are millennials, too. “We know that if we don't do something to solve the world's problems, we're going to suffer,” Nuño said on a video call.

Nuño is passionate about making people understand how traditional crafts can help artisans move out of poverty. Previously, he worked for NGOs and corporations such as McKinsey & Co. He sees Someone Somewhere as a bridge between millennials and artisans, and as the company grows and gains more experience, the easier it becomes to connect both worlds.

## A Disappearing Way of Life

Nuño and his friends' interest in artisans piqued during a volunteer trip in high school to Puebla in east-central Mexico. Everywhere the friends went, they were warmly welcomed as treasured guests, as was the local custom. “They gave us the best food they had. They shared so many things without knowing us, without expecting anything back,” Nuño said. But as they became closer acquainted with the families, they realized the level of poverty in the community.

After that first trip, the friends spent months living with different artisans, observing their everyday life, to see firsthand the poverty they faced. “We decided to go and live in these communities to really understand the root of the issue,” Nuño said.

They found two issues. First, there was a lack of job opportunities. The artisans lived in remote villages in the middle of the mountains, cut off from the rest of the world, with the main job opportunities being in agriculture or handicrafts. Secondly, artisans, many of whom are women, were struggling to survive; and their children, seeing their mothers struggle, were not motivated to learn the craft. If the younger generation was not learning the craft, this presented a real

risk that the handicraft techniques, which for years had been passed from generation to generation, would disappear, Nuño explained.

These communities faced other risks to their way of life. Most of the women wore traditional dresses, but the teenagers dressed like people in the movies or the novelas (soap operas), believing it was cool to do so.

“That was very sad,” Nuño said, because the handicrafts convey the heritage of these communities. “Every single color, every single shape has a meaning,” he said. A lot of the patterns tell the history of the community: the first arrivals, the first animals they saw, or the type of flowers they harvested. “A lot of things are tied to the craft, and if the younger generations aren't interested in learning it, that history will be lost,” he said.

Nuño believes that artisan communities would be the happiest places on earth if they could survive on earnings from their crafts. He believes their way of life is better than in the city, but the only issue is that they're losing it.

“All the media makes them aspire to live the way [people in] the big cities live. But when you are there [in these artisan communities], it's the best quality of life: They're connected to nature. They care a lot about each other. They worry about big things like what they are going to eat tomorrow or what happens if somebody gets sick. But they don't aspire to have a lot of material things,” Nuño said.

Such communities embrace the philosophy of “buen vivir,” an ethos that Someone Somewhere has adopted. Nuño says that the indigenous philosophy can be found in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia, as well as Mexico, although the name differs from community to community and country to country.

“The best phrase, I think, that describes it is that they want to live well and not live better.

...The ‘better world’ they see as craving and always needing more.” The essence of this way of life is to enjoy living in their environment without wanting more, which is not sustainable, he added.

## A Modern Solution

Once Nuño and his friends returned to their lives in the city, they thought: How can we live like this, knowing that there are so many people struggling? “But, even worse, now that we know, how we can solve this,” Nuño said. That was the turning point for them. “We knew a solution that we could develop that could help a lot of people.”

Nuño explained that in most countries, artisans usually sell their handicrafts in tourist cities via two channels. Either the artisan sells directly to tourists in the street by laying a carpet on the ground to display products, or the artisan sends consignments to souvenir shops where products are piled sky-high. Both sales methods neglect to tell the buyer the story of the handicraft. “It feels almost like a commodity instead of something that has a lot of meaning and [that] each artisan

spent hours creating,” Nuño said. Someone Somewhere sells products on its website, educating the buyer about the artisans and their crafts. Each Someone Somewhere product has either the material or some part of the product handmade by an artisan.

Once an artisan has woven the fabric or hand-stitched some embroidery, they sign the label with their name under “Someone” and their village under “Somewhere.” The component is sent for assembly in a number of workshops in Mexico City, depending on the product. Many of these workshops are in poor areas, and the company helps educate the businesses to ensure they thrive, too. The artisans themselves take pride in knowing that someone from the United States, France, or Spain is wearing their creation, Nuño said.

## The Key to Community Success

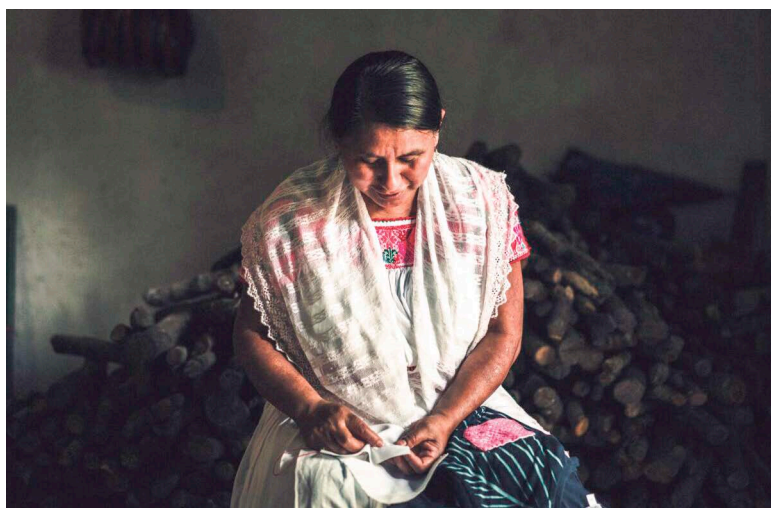
Listening to and working together with the community has been the key to building a business that works in these communities, Nuño said. It doesn't work to impose the city's pace and processes on the artisans. The pace has to come from them.

Someone Somewhere artisans decide how much work they want. There are older ladies who are content with producing one product a day. And younger ladies, saving for their dreams, may make five products a day. Nuño says that for single mothers, the only way to make money before was by working 10 to 12 hours in the fields under the scorching sun, which wasn't practical for those with three or four children. Now these mothers can work from home, making it more convenient for them and their families.

Many of the women artisans now earn more than their husbands. The artisan's income has increased by

Artisans in the mountainous region of Puebla, in east-central Mexico, hand-embroider their traditional designs.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOMEONE SOMEWHERE



(Above) A Mexican artisan in Puebla counts the stitches in her hand embroidery.

(Middle left) An artisan in Oaxaca, in southwest Mexico, weaves material used for the Mint Light-pack (pictured). The thread in this fabric is more tightly woven than the fabric produced by industrial machinery.

(Middle right) Every Someone Somewhere product is signed by the artisan who contributed to it. Here, an artisan writes her name (Someone) and the place she calls home (Somewhere). (Left) Mexican crafts are full of meaning: Every color and pattern tells the history of the village it was made in. The pattern on this hand-embroidered square represents the four cardinal directions and the rising sun.

(Below) In 2016, Antonio Nuño (R) co-founded Someone Somewhere in Mexico with his best friends, Enrique Rodríguez and Fátima Álvarez.

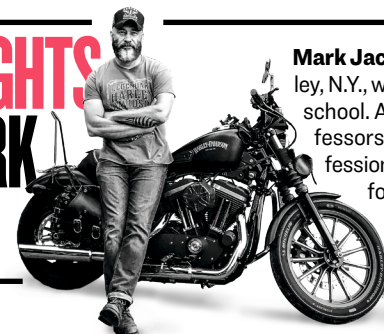


ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA/PARAMOUNT PICTURES/PATH/HARPO FILMS



(Left) Andrew Young (André Holland, L.) and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo) in “Selma.” (Top right) Alabama Governor George Wallace (Tim Roth, L). (Bottom right) President Johnson (Tom Wilkinson, L) meets with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo).

## FILM INSIGHTS WITH MARK JACKSON



Mark Jackson grew up in Spring Valley, N.Y., where he attended a Waldorf school. At Williams College, his professors all suggested he write professionally. He acted professionally for 20 years instead. Now he writes professionally about acting. In the movies.

## POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

# Out of the Frying Pan, Into the Fire

MARK JACKSON

When Martin Luther King Day rolls around, do you sometimes scratch your head and go, “Why'd he get his own holiday again, exactly?” Some have forgotten, and some never learned what Martin Luther King Jr. did for this country.

And yet when “Selma” debuted in 2015, news headlines regarding race were eerily reminiscent of headlines from 1965. Did we learn anything in 50 years?

The superb “Selma” can teach your teens a powerful history lesson, while putting the “moving” back in movies. “Selma” is not the type of lifespan-sweeping hagiography that dulls senses with overstuffing, but much like Steven Spielberg did with “Lincoln,” it puts the focus on one key passage of King's journey.

## To Set the Stage, a Church Bombing

“Selma” opens with King (David Oyelowo) at a 1965 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. Meanwhile, thousands of miles away, five young black girls dressed in their Sunday finest descend a church staircase in the American South. A bomb detonates, killing them all.

The film depicts the standard 1960s humiliations suffered by Southern blacks, due to America's deep-seated and lingering Jim Crow-era prejudice, which for all intents and purposes rendered black people's constitutional right to vote null and void.

Dr. King's been in talks with President Lyndon Baines Johnson (Tom Wilkinson)



## 'Selma'

Director  
Ava DuVernay

Starring  
David Oyelowo, Oprah Winfrey, Tessa Thompson, Carmen Ejogo, Cuba Gooding Jr., Giovanni Ribisi, Tim Roth, Tom Wilkinson

Rated  
PG-13

Running Time  
2 hours, 8 minutes

Release Date  
Jan. 9, 2015

★★★★★

(Left) Five little black girls, as portrayed in “Selma,” died in a tragic church bombing.

(Bottom left) Nurse Annie Lee Cooper (Oprah Winfrey, C) resists arrest in “Selma.” (Right) (L-R) Andrew Young (André Holland), Rev. Ralph Abernathy (Colman Domingo), Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo), and James Orange (Omar Dorsey).

(Bottom right) The Selma to Montgomery march of 1965 in Alabama: a 54-mile route where protesters, walking around the clock for three days straight, were confronted with deadly violence from local authorities and white vigilante groups while under the protection of federalized National Guard troops, in “Selma.”

about a protest march meant to hurry the passage of LBJ's Voting Rights Act that will allow blacks to vote, but the president feels that's all a bit hasty. He's more focused on his “War on Poverty,” pointing out that it's something that would also benefit blacks.

It's been pointed out that LBJ came up with the poverty idea after touring Appalachia and witnessing the dirt-poor existence of Southern whites there, but that's another topic.

King's campaign of civil disobedience lasted three months in 1965, culminating in a nonviolent protest march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery, the state capital—meant to gas up and turn on the car of President Johnson's Voting Rights Act.

LBJ wants no part of the march. He's caught between a rock and a hard place; he's not stupid, he has foresight and knows King's stance is the future, and he rather agrees with it (which has been criticized elsewhere as erroneously painting LBJ as a sort of reluctant progressive).

As president, LBJ also needed to take meetings with the openly racist governor of Alabama, George Wallace (Brit actor Tim Roth in fine, arrogant, smarmy form), and his ilk. As LBJ says to MLK, “You're an activist. I'm a politician.”

King knows that Wallace and other local authorities will probably rain down violence on his intended march and so makes sure there's a massive media turnout.

“Selma” brings home vividly just how much the marchers were endangering their lives by demonstrating. It's violent and visceral and none of it is gratuitous. It takes a page from “12 Years a Slave” in that the brutal billy-club beatings, bullwhips, shootings, and face-kicking by police and Southern white locals carry more violence in the intensity of the inner hatred rather than in bloody visuals.

## The Players

Some of King's fellow activists are John Lewis (Stephan James), who was, during the making of “Selma,” the only living member of the “Big Six” leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, along with James Bevel (Common), and Coretta Scott King (Carmen Ejogo).

Oprah, eschewing Her Winfreyness, gives herself over to the role of nurse Annie Lee Cooper, lending an air of authenticity in serving the cause.

But British actor David Oyelowo is king of—as well as King in—this film, as well



as possibly establishing the definitive on-screen portrayal of King to date. He shows us a man, and he shows us why that man is now a legend.

He shows us a man with self-doubt, a man who calls gospel singer Mahalia Jackson in the middle of the night, seeking strength and inspiration from her singing. A conflicted man who loves his wife but wasn't faithful. A man who sheds tears with the bereft, and a man who enjoys the jokes and friendship of his fellow leaders.

## Transcendent and inspiring, 'Selma' is one of the most important films of 2015.

Oyelowo also put on the requisite weight and holds King's facial gestures to the point of channeling. He's got King's speech patterns down, which in their uniqueness border on caricature, or a least stylization, but he never crosses the line. The virtuosos speeches and sermons are explosions of virtue and inspiration. It's a great feat of theater craft, not to mention the fact that Oyelowo is British.

It's always a challenge to bring life, let alone high tension, to political wheeling and dealing, but director Ava DuVernay pulls it off.

Ultimately, “Selma” doesn't promote hate or assign blame. Rather, it shows how people can get together, cooperate, and change things. Transcendent and inspiring, it's one of the most important films of 2015, and worth a viewing during this time in America when race relations have taken a new turn, and not necessarily a good turn.

## From the 2020 Perspective

Most people today don't realize that modern socialism, liberalism, and progressivism are way stations designed specifically by Marx and Engels—solely for the purpose of moving societies, incrementally, à la the proverbial boiling frog—toward communism. When communism finally wraps itself around society's throat like an “Alien” facehugger, it's too late. Communism also deviously finds ways to undermine a country by trying to divide it. America's troubled racial history was seen as low-hanging fruit for factions of the Communist Party that took root in America and infiltrated the Civil Rights Movement; witness the Black Panther Party collectively waving Chinese Communist Party leader Mao's Red Book. And it's no secret that Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors said in a newly surfaced video from 2015 that she and her fellow organizers are “trained Marxists.”

The 1960s is ancient history, for many reasons. One of those reasons is that the new evil, communism, has come to replace the old evil: the human greed and corruption of the Southern Antebellum and Jim Crow eras of the American past that blacks suffered under.

Watch “Selma” to honor Dr. Martin Luther King's fight against the evils of African-American history past. Then listen to “How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World” to witness the current fight against communism, and its intent to burn American Democracy to the ground.

# The Virtue of the Brush in a Time of Chaos



ALL PHOTOS BY NTD

Renowned calligrapher's first US work featured in documentary

CATHERINE YANG

When Liu Xitong was asked by a film crew to write four words in Chinese calligraphy, he agreed immediately, heartily, and for reasons the crew did not yet know.

Once a famous calligrapher back home in China, Liu had since left the country where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) persecuted him for his faith. In doing so, he had set aside his art in his quest to pursue justice after he moved to the United States.

On the day of the shoot, Liu and the documentary producers discussed the calligraphy scene as they prepared the set. The documentary "When the Plague Arrives," produced by NTD Television, is about humanity at a crossroads during the turbulent times of the pandemic.

In the film, historical events are shown in parallel with the present day. Epidemic diseases threw ancient civilizations in both the East and West into disarray and not only brought death and mayhem but also cast a harsh light on those societies that no longer upheld human dignity.

Liu would be writing a four-word Chinese idiom taken from the classic Chinese text "Four Books" in which Zhu Xi translated the "Analects of Confucius."

It translates as "When things are chaotic to the extreme, order must be restored." The work is now available for sale at: InspiredOriginal.org/Calligraphy

It was then that Liu shared his own story. For practicing truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance, just as the 70 million other Chinese citizens who took up the spiritual practice of Falun Gong, Liu was the target of the CCP's persecution campaign.

## A Chaotic, Evil Society

"I was sentenced to three years in the Chinese Communist Party's illegal labor camp and spent four years in prison," Liu said in an interview after the film was completed. "I lost my freedom and the environment for creation and studying and writing. I endured violent beatings and insults from Chinese Communist



Renowned calligrapher Liu Xitong is featured in the recent documentary "When the Plague Arrives." He was persecuted in his home country of China by the Chinese Communist Party because he followed the traditional spiritual practice of Falun Gong. This is his first large-scale work of art since he escaped to the U.S. two years ago.



“It has always been my wish to continue that path of self-cultivation, return to tradition, and leave a reference to the art of calligraphy for posterity.”

Liu Xitong, calligrapher

## BOOK REVIEW: 'ONE VOTE AWAY'

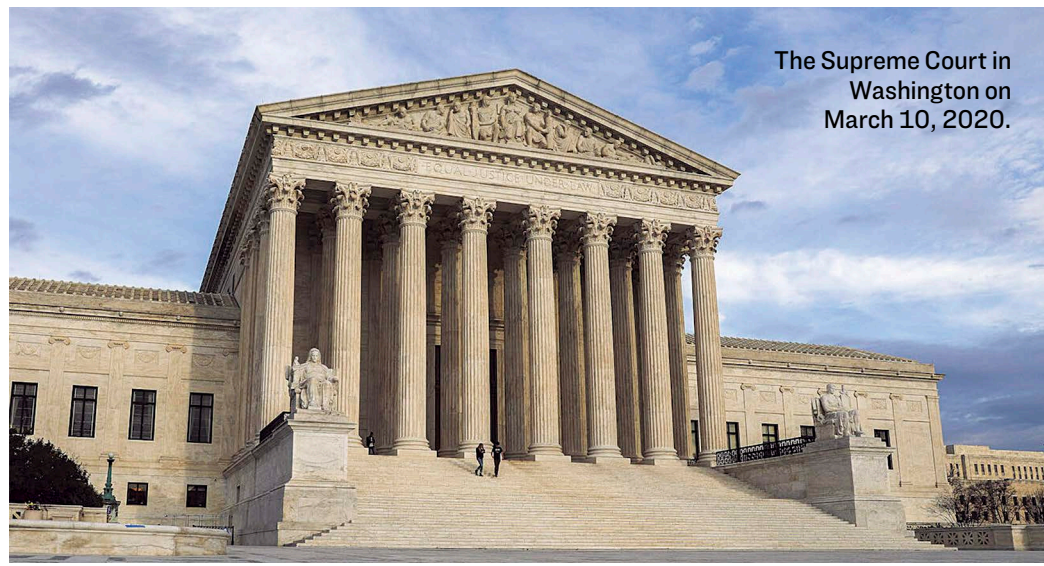
# A Closer Look at the Supreme Court

LINDA WIEGENFELD

“Equal Justice Under the Law”: These words, written above the main entrance to the Supreme Court Building, express the ultimate responsibility of the Supreme Court of the United States—to act as guardian and interpreter of the Constitution.

With the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the recent appointment of Amy Coney Barrett to fill her spot, the idea of packing the Supreme Court, and the presidential election, the Supreme Court has become a hotbed of discussion. It's also the perfect time for Senator Ted Cruz's latest book, "One Vote Away: How a Single Supreme Court Seat Can Change History," to be published.

Sen. Cruz draws upon his long legal background. He



The Supreme Court in Washington on March 10, 2020.

SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

was a Supreme Court clerk, the Solicitor General of Texas, and a private litigator. He also was a contender for the Republican nomination for president in 2016 and is currently the Republican senator for Texas.

Cruz's belief that one seat of the Supreme Court can

change history has a great deal of merit because Congress has increasingly allowed the Supreme Court to decide controversial issues that Congress is unwilling to solve legislatively. As a conservative, Cruz wants Supreme Court justices who will interpret the Con-

stitution strictly rather than enact new laws.

As the book came out before Barrett's appointment, Cruz was explaining that we were one vote away from losing the Republic that the founders handed down to us. Five constitutionalist justices would ensure that

the American experiment continues to thrive, but five liberal activist justices could fundamentally transform our nation.

Cruz's well-written book will still give readers food for thought. The introduction and conclusion contain Cruz's opinions, recommendations, and biographical facts. The other chapters focus on constitutional liberties and crucial Court battles. Included in each chapter is a case that could have had a different outcome if a single vote had changed.

## Freedom of Religion

No right is more precious than the right to religious liberty. It is fundamental to who Americans are. Cruz reminds us that many who founded this nation were themselves fleeing religious persecution.

The Founding Fathers,

Cruz says, wanted to protect faith, not require the removal of God from the public square. Yet this has happened in cases in which the Court banned, in public schools, the public recitation of prayer and also reading of the Bible.

Cruz was involved with the Van Orden v. Perry (2005) (5-4 decision) case. Thomas Van Orden sued Texas, arguing that a Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of the state capitol building represented an unconstitutional government endorsement of religion. The plurality opinion of the Supreme Court stated that the monument was constitutional, as it represented historical value and not purely religious value.

Cruz also talks about the Little Sisters of the Poor, an order of Catholic nuns

Party prison guards and prisoners. I had the blood tests they give to those marked for organ harvesting, and these years were like a contest between life and death."

This past year, the advent of COVID-19 and the fallout of the Chinese communist regime's mishandling of the situation also put a global spotlight on the regime's other misdeeds—the decades-long, brutal persecution that affected Liu being but one of them.

After the CCP banned the spiritual practice of Falun Gong on July 20, 1999, thousands went to Beijing for redress, and Liu went too. Afterward, police officers barged into his place of work and forcibly handcuffed and kidnapped him for interrogation before throwing him into a labor camp where he was to undergo "reeducation," or brainwashing methods, from 2000 to 2003. Liu's imprisonment was technically illegal, even under the CCP's laws, and in 2004 he was finally acquitted.

## Art That Heals

Liu said that, after his release, he threw himself into artistic creation the way a fish needs water. His primary mission, as it had been since July 20, 1999, was spreading the truth about Falun Gong's persecution amid the powerful regime's propaganda. But every other hour he had, he dedicated himself to the art of calligraphy, and he created thousands of works.

Meanwhile, he heard strange rumors being spread about him: that his fame as an artist had plummeted when he took up his spiritual practice, that he had been disowned by his parents, or that he'd committed suicide. None of these were true, but instead of refuting the gossip verbally, Liu put on a calligraphy exhibition in 2007.

Despite the controversy, or possibly because of it, the exhibition was packed. Visitors marveled at Liu's work, and told him how different his exhibition was from others they had seen. Several attendees told him that it felt like the whole venue radiated compassion and harmony, and that it left an unforgettable impression on them. And even though propaganda against Falun Gong and its adherents was still being published by the Chinese state-run press, Liu's exhibition was lauded by newspapers, and his comments about traditional art and morality were published as well.

But days after the exhibition, Liu was detained by police again, and his wife was also kidnapped by officers after they ransacked his home. He was interrogated and detained for a month. Then in 2008, he was illegally sentenced to four years in prison, during which time he faced periods of intense torture—all because he would not give up his dedication to Falun Gong.

Liu credits Falun Gong for open-

ing his eyes to virtue, morality, the dignity of human beings, and the importance of God, and says that this undoubtedly influenced his work. In fact, before he started practicing Falun Gong, Liu said, his art was a completely different style.

## A Divine Gift

Born to illiterate parents, Liu was the only one of five children who could write. From age 3, he showed a gift for drawing when he began replicating masterpieces. In school, he showed talent for drawing, painting, sculpture—and calligraphy.

"Since childhood, I have been blessed," Liu said by email. He immersed himself in great ancient works, like those of Qing Dynasty Emperor Kangxi and Tang Dynasty Emperor Taizong, and studied silk manuscripts from the Qin and Han dynasties, bronze inscriptions, and various scripts. There were thousands of years of treasures to mine, each era and great scholar imbuing the art with something of their own, Liu explained. And in studying the greats, Liu developed his own style and his own scripts.

**Calligraphy is not an art that benefits from an impassioned state and frenzied mind. You need instead a pure mind, and to be in harmony with the virtues**

"Chinese calligraphy is not only a treasure of the traditional Chinese culture that was passed down by the gods, but it is a high art that is unique in this world," Liu said. "The history is long, and its development is colorful."

But Liu grew disillusioned in his worldview as he got older. He recounted the arrogant and selfish culture he was immersed in, surrounded by CCP members and working in Party-affiliated departments. This soon seeped into his art, and he followed fads and trends rather than tradition, creating works in modern or "cursive" calligraphy styles. His exhibitions were well received, praised in the press, and honored with awards.

Then in the 1990s, he had a rude awakening.

Falun Gong was introduced to the public in 1992, and millions started practicing in just a few years. In 1996, Liu began practicing too.

Falun Gong taught meditation exercises and the three principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance, and it is part of the ancient Chinese tradition of self-cultivation. Millions took up the practice and, seeing improvements in their mental, physical, and spiritual health, spread the practice through word of mouth. It was a return to traditional Chinese culture and morality that the spirituality-starved people craved.

Liu said that these principles held a mirror up to his soul and dramatically changed his worldview. He felt he had strayed so far from the traditional principles and aesthetics that guide the art of calligraphy. He had become a selfish person himself, who held no high ideals or traditional morals, and this was plainly evident in his work.

Liu didn't second guess his epiphany—he burned all of his modern works and vowed to once again uphold traditional ideals. The art of calligraphy is the pinnacle of a culture believed to be divinely inspired, and Liu's gift was a blessing from God; he intended to honor that.

"If an artist upholds God's instructions and uses the skills given by God to express the enlightening beauty of God's kingdom in this world, to connect humans in harmony with the world, advocating virtue and goodness ... the works will reflect a beauty that truly moves people," Liu said.

He wanted his works to reflect the truth and beauty of the universe. And calligraphy, being a reflection of the artist's soul, required Liu to dedicate himself to just that. He decided to let truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance guide him.

Calligraphy is not an art that benefits from an impassioned state and frenzied mind. You need, instead, a pure mind and to be in harmony with the virtues, Liu explained.

"The process of calligraphy is the exquisite display of the mystery and science of life and the universal, rendered visible by the tip of the pen," Liu said. "Calligraphy is a wonderful combination of innate human potential and acquired effort laid bare on the paper."

A few years ago, Liu was finally able to leave China. When he arrived in the United States, he set aside his passion for the art in order to focus more time on telling the truth about the CCP's violent persecution of Falun Gong. But when word of mouth brought Liu's talent to the attention of a documentary producer, he felt gratified to be able to use his gift in aid of his mission.

"It has always been my wish to continue that path of self-cultivation, return to tradition, and leave a reference to the art of calligraphy for posterity," Liu said.



“When things are chaotic to the extreme, order must be restored.”

A translation of the four characters above, from "The Four Books," by Zhu Xi

To see the documentary "When the Plague Arrives," visit [InspiredOriginal.Org/calligraphy](http://InspiredOriginal.Org/calligraphy)

who have taken vows of the poverty and pledge to help the elderly and the needy. When Congress passed Obamacare, it included a so-called contraceptive mandate that required the Little Sisters and other religious organizations to pay for contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs for others. If they refused to do so, they faced millions of dollars in fines.

**Cruz believes that school choice is the defining civil rights struggle of our time.**

The question on how to balance religious freedom against women's health has been before the Supreme Court three times with different legal ques-

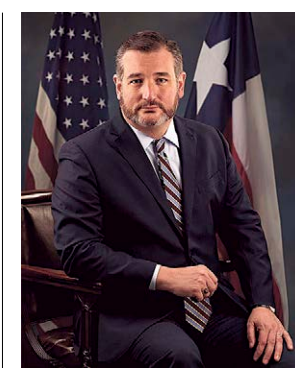
tions. At the moment, the contraception exemption for the Little Sisters of the Poor is in effect, but it could change after the election.

## School Choice

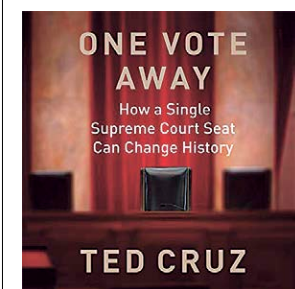
Cruz believes that school choice is the defining civil rights struggle of our time. He wants to give all families and children the maximum choice for a quality education. He refers to the case of *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002) (5-4 decision), where the Supreme Court upheld an Ohio program that gave vouchers to parents in the Cleveland City School District that allows them to send their children to public or private schools of their choice.

**The Second Amendment** The Second Amendment states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Cruz says that the fram-



Sen. Ted Cruz.



**'One Vote Away: How a Single Supreme Court Seat Can Change History'**

Ted Cruz  
Regnery Publishing  
Sept. 29, 2020  
256 pages.

ers of the Second Amendment put that provision in the Bill of Rights to protect our lives, our homes, and our families. In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) (5-4 decision), the Supreme Court decided that the Second Amendment protected an individual's right to keep and bear arms for self-defense. Cruz says that in spite of this decision, gun confiscation is becoming more and more central to the progressive platform.

## Abortion

Cruz is strongly pro-life. His argument against *Roe v. Wade* (1973) is that the Declaration of Independence guarantees that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." "Life" is the very first "unalienable Right" and applies to the unborn.

In this chapter, Cruz discusses two decisions on

"partial-birth" abortions, a late-term procedure in which the physician partially delivers the unborn child and then, with the infant's head still in the mother's womb, uses scissors and forceps to pierce the skull and end the life of the child. In *Stenberg v. Carhart* (2000) (5-4 decision), the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Nebraska ban on partial-birth abortion. Then in 2003, Congress passed and the president signed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. In *Gonzales v. Carhart* (2007) (5-4 decision), the Supreme Court agreed and said that this decision was constitutional.

## Free Speech

The Supreme Court decided in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2009) (5-4 decision) that the free speech clause of the First Amendment prohibits the government from restricting independent expenditures for political

communications by corporations, including nonprofit corporations, labor unions, and other associations.

This decision has been objected to as a way to allow giant corporations to buy political elections. Cruz doesn't agree with that critique, explaining that while corporations are not individuals, they can, legally, be considered as people who come together for a common purpose. It naturally follows that, under these circumstances, the First Amendment on free speech applies.

Ted Cruz's writing is brilliant. After reading his book, it is easy to see the impact that the Supreme Court can have on American lives and why Cruz favors judges who align themselves with the Constitution.

Linda Wiegenfeld is a retired teacher with 45 years' experience teaching children. She can be reached for comments or suggestions at [LWiegenfeld@aol.com](mailto:LWiegenfeld@aol.com)

## POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

# High Schoolers Learn Evils of Communism First-Hand

JOE BENDEL

Kids are not any safer living under oppressive regimes and ideologies than their parents are. That is a lesson all students should learn sooner rather than later, for all our sakes. In 1956 East Germany, the Stalinstadt senior class always basically knew the communist government was vicious and unjust, but dramatic events will prove it beyond all doubt in Lars Kraume's historically based film "The Silent Revolution," which is a perfect supplement for your schooling-at-home lesson plans.

It all started when two high school seniors wanted to see German bombshell Marion Michael in the risqué (for the time) "Liane, Jungle Goddess," naturally screening only in the morally decadent West. This is pre-Wall, when travel between East and West was not strictly forbidden.

However, before the feature, Theo Lemke and Kurt Wächter are amazed by a newsreel accurately reporting the Soviet crackdown on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Lemke is the class clown, and Wächter is the son of a local Party official. Neither fits the revolutionary profile (or rather "counterrevolutionary," according to Party propagandists), but they are both electrified. On returning, they listen to West German radio with their classmates to confirm their reports.

At school, they decide to observe two minutes of silence to honor the fallen Hungarian free-

dom fighters. Essentially, it was Wächter's idea, but a majority agreed to it. The only vehement no vote comes from Erik Babinsky, who believes he is the son of a martyred communist partisan. However, the entire class is in huge trouble when the ministry gets wind of their silent protest. Following Ben Franklin's advice, the two "ringleaders" try to keep the class hanging together, so they do not hang separately, but the communists will ruthlessly exploit any and all of the young students' weaknesses.

## The film can help explain the nature of communism.

"Silent Revolution" is an absolutely terrific film everyone ought to see, just because it's great cinema. It is especially recommended for students, who can surely identify with the teen characters. It can help explain the nature of communism, particularly with respect to the Hungarian Revolution and the divided Germany. The tragically ill-fated 1953 Uprising also casts a shadow over the events it dramatizes. Yet, Kraume's adaptation of Dietrich Garstka's book also addresses worthy themes like personal loyalty, family love and sacrifice, the demands of integrity, and the corrosive impact of lies and propaganda on society.

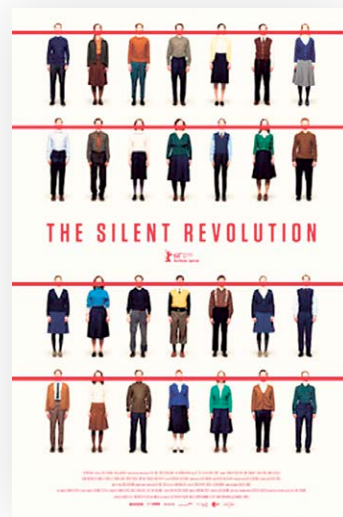


Kraume's film is a great history lesson and also a completely engrossing drama. Leonard Scheicher and Tom Gramenz are excellent as Lemke and Wächter. They bring to life very different personas, but their friendship still seems completely natural and believable. Yet, the unforgettable standout is Jonas Dassler, whose wrenching performance as Babinsky will haunt viewers. Fans of Netflix's "Dark" will also be impressed by Jördis Triebel (the wife of the cop who travels back in time) taking a cold-bloodedly sinister turn as Kessler, the Ministry's enforcer.

There are so many reasons why young people should watch "Silent Revolution" and nothing for parents to object to. Of course, there is teen angst going on during the senior class's prolonged moral crisis, but at one point, Lemke literally tells Wächter that they just can't afford to worry about their petty rivalries now.

It is great filmmaking on all levels. Very highly recommended for

▲ The cast of "The Silent Revolution" playing East German high school students in 1956.



▲ A poster for the film "The Silent Revolution" based on a book by Dietrich Garstka.

regular viewing, "The Silent Revolution," in German with English subtitles, is on the Tubi app and it streams on Kanopy (which many patrons can use with their public library cards).

Joe Bendel writes about independent film and lives in New York. To read his most recent articles, visit [JBSpins.blogspot.com](http://JBSpins.blogspot.com)

### 'The Silent Revolution'

**Director**  
Lars Kraume

**Starring**  
Leonard Scheicher, Tom Gramenz, Lena Klenke

**Running Time**  
1 hour, 51 minutes

**Rated**  
PG

**Release Date**  
2018 (Germany)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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