

## Blog Post 1: The Grim Reaper, Sea Turtles, and The Rhetorical Situation (2020-09-03 19:44)

There are some issues that demand attention yet do not receive nearly enough coverage in the mainstream media. One such pair of issues are the massive pollution of the oceans due to humans dumping waste into the sea and the consequent dying of aquatic life unfortunate enough to encounter the garbage thinking it is food, only to die a slow, painful death. Laura Bolin Carroll says that *rhetoric is “the way we use language and images to persuade”* (46). However, no matter how many articles and studies are done to show the extent of the pollution and death, the situation does not seem to improve that much, if at all. This means the wrong vehicle may be being used. Instead of lengthy written pieces detailing the devastation with cold, hard facts and figures, perhaps another medium with more potential for delivering an *emotional appeal* must be used. This is what artist Jenny Jinya has begun to do in her web comic series “Loving Reaper,” and the comics are already better at performing a *call to action* than any news article could hope to accomplish.

For some background, the comics follow the Grim Reaper as he encounters various organisms dying, usually through man-made means. Getting back to the *exigencies* of ocean pollution and aquatic life dying, this blog will focus on the comic titled “Slow” which follows a mother green sea turtle laying her eggs. To begin, the mother already has a ring of plastic around her neck but her excitement for her babies being born allows her to push through and make it to the beach. However, this excitement quickly disappears when humans dig up the eggs, a practice common in countries like Costa Rica and Nicaragua. With her hope destroyed, the plastic starts to cause the mother turtle to choke and die. The Reaper, meanwhile, is powerless to help but informs the turtle that all her deceased children, family, and friends are in his realm; a realm in which the mother is also now a member. The last page of the comic gives a few facts about the situation green sea turtles face and website links to two organizations determined to help the species (Jinya, 1-16).

This comic expertly uses *pathos*, with a splash of *logos* at the end, and has a clear *purpose* (help save the oceans and the animals living in it.) The *intended audience* is primarily teenagers and people in their early twenties (groups that are the most likely to read a web comic.) What makes this series great though, is *that the unintended audience is anyone who stumbles upon the series/one of the comics* (Carroll, 49). This is because the comics focus on situations that almost all humans would agree need to be resolved, such as turtle eggs being poached and aquatic animals dying from human garbage.

For the sake of criticism, the comics do not offer “multiple vantage points” that Rebecca Jones says are often missing from political argument (158), but to be honest that is not what these comics are about.

*Link to Comic:* [1][https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/slow/viewer?title\\_no=353275&episode\\_no=10](https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/slow/viewer?title_no=353275&episode_no=10)

1. [https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/slow/viewer?title\\_no=353275&episode\\_no=10](https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/slow/viewer?title_no=353275&episode_no=10)

## Blog Post 2, Electric Boogaloo: Lions, and Reapers, and Marketing Oh My (2020-09-06 14:42)

Anyone trying to sell something *must perform some kind of marketing if they wish to be successful*. This includes artists, who begin profiting from their work once they find their niche group of fans/consumers. In marketing, this is called the *target audience* and discerning it is crucial. Not every artist finds success, but fortunately the work of Jenny Jinya, known as “Loving Reaper,” has gained traction with her mix of animal rights awareness and sad, yet beautiful storytelling.

This week’s blog will focus on the comic titled “Royal.” It begins with the Grim Reaper walking up to a circus tent to find the soul of a lion wandering the grounds in denial of his death. The lion asserts that he is a king, but then admits that he never felt like one due to the abuse he suffered at the hands of the circus. Remembering the trauma and humiliation, the lion begins to cry until the Reaper says that he has some subjects that he can rule over in the land of the dead. The comic ends with the lion happily sitting with his new “subjects,” a group of house cats, and a message from Jinya briefly describing the abuse circus animals go through (Jinya, 1-16).

Jinya’s *success lies in her marketing*. To begin, the *segmentation variables used are demographic, psychographic, and a dash of behavioristic*. More specifically, the variables of *age, motives, beliefs/values, and loyalty* (to the web comic) are utilized to *target the intended audience of **young people between 15 and 25 years old, who are interested in occult fiction***. The *brand loyalty* has allowed Jinya to branch out from her initial topics of cats and dogs to other animals suffering from abuse and *raise awareness* to their causes. The genius of Jinya, however, is that her comics do not only appeal to her target audience. They are designed so that anyone with a conscience who comes across/is sent a comic will feel at least a twinge of emotion and perhaps check out the rest of Jinya’s work. *This is because the comics use emotional appeals to draw reader’s attention to cases of animal abuse and get them to acknowledge that these issues must be dealt with. There is also a very faint logic appeal via the comics implying that the actions causing animals to suffer are wrong and anyone who partakes/supports these actions is a monster*. To use “Royal” as an example, the lion’s suffering is shown so that readers clearly see how his pride of being “king of the jungle” was stripped from him until he was a cowering shell of what he should have been.



The lion, close to his death, stares into the void

According to Patino, et al (2018), segmentation allows for public policy messages to be

communicated more effectively because they can be tailored for a given target audience. Once this group is known, the message can then be displayed on the media platform the audience is most likely to utilize. Jinya has done this with “Loving Reaper” and the world is better for it.

*Link to Comic:* [1][https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/royal/viewer?title\\_no=353275&episode\\_no=7](https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/royal/viewer?title_no=353275&episode_no=7)

1. [https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/royal/viewer?title\\_no=353275&episode\\_no=7](https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/loving-reaper/royal/viewer?title_no=353275&episode_no=7)

**Blog Post 3, The Third One: Trump Puts A Damper on His Rich Friends' Fun (2020-09-12 20:15)**

It is a known fact that the wealthier one gets, the more brazen their hobbies become to one up their previous dopamine high. A staple rich person hobby is big game hunting, where people go overseas and kill their chosen beast. The problem with this is that it is not the same as domestic hunting. In the U.S., animals, such as deer, can be hunted because their population will not be significantly reduced by the season's end. This is not true for big game species like big cats, elephants, and giraffes. Poachers have long targeted these animals for their meat, hides, and bones and allowing them to be hunted only hurts their populations more.

Not surprisingly, *people have formed groups to make their voices heard by government officials to end big game hunting. Usually, these cries would have fallen on deaf ears, but the groups found an unexpected listener in President Trump. **Trump disbanded a wildlife panel that promoted big game hunting and was unproportionally made up of pro-hunting advocates.*** Initially, the panel was created to serve as an advocate for the benefits of big game hunting, such as the money paid to obtain a permit to hunt being used to fund habitat conservation and anti-poaching efforts. However, federal law required the panel to be ideologically balanced, which groups like the Humane Society and Center for Biological Diversity argued it was not. This led to the panel expiring in December of 2019 (Grandoni, par. 1-8).

*This article is a prime example of how being an active participant in one's government can cause change. People saw a government action that they thought was immoral and spoke out against it until someone heard their pleas and decided to take action. If people did not continually speak up, there is a chance that the panel would still be active. The relationship between a government and its people should be one based on active listening. The government passes legislation/forms organizations which the people can either support or protest. If there is enough support for a logical case against a government construct, like there was in this article, then said construct should be abolished. Stimson calls this type of relationship dynamic representation and sums it up as when public opinion changes, public policy responds (Stimson, et al., p. 1).*

*There is also the matter of the government representing the will of the people. In premise, people are elected or selected for a governmental position and are tasked with completing objectives that their constituents think is best. If the appointed person does not do this, then they are voted out or receive pressure to resign. Stimson says that policymakers calculate electoral implications with respect to their actions and act accordingly; labeling this behavior as rational anticipation (Stimson, et al., p. 1). This concept is tricky, however, as sometimes the constituents are wrong in the grand scheme. Therefore, deciding to yield to constituents should be done case by case. Fortunately for the big game animals, Trump's decision was, for once, rational and the will of the people was followed.*

Also, I am just going to leave this here:



Link to Article: [1]<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/the-energy-202/2020/02/10/the-energy-202-trump-administration-scuttles-panel-that-promoted-big-game-hunting/5e3ef8d288e0fa0a47d9c89b/>

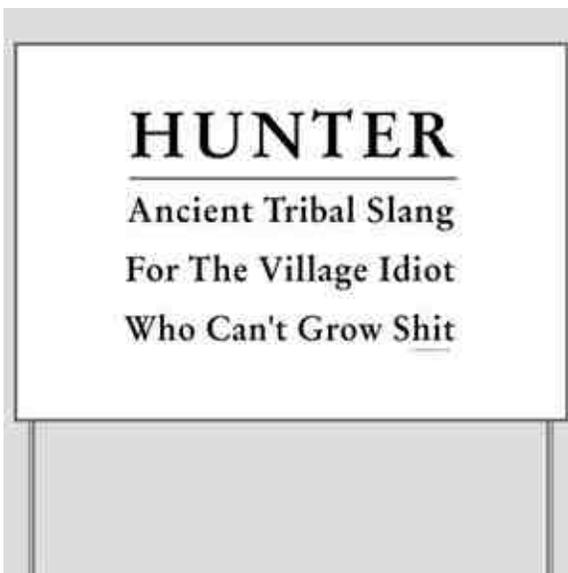
1. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/the-energy-202/2020/02/10/the-energy-202-trump-administration-scuttles-panel-that-promoted-big-game-hunting>

**Blog Post 4, Something Completely Different: What I Learned at Braver Angels Is... What I Learned at Braver Angels Is... (2020-09-19 17:18)**

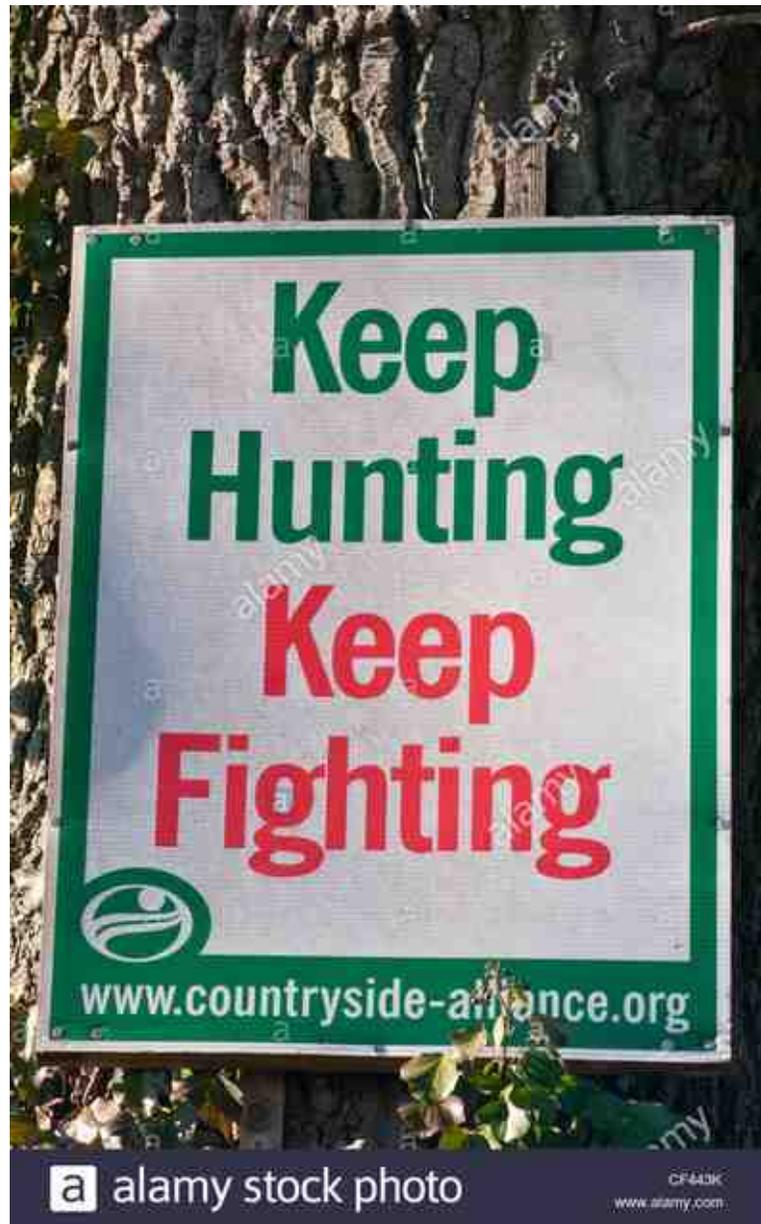
One would think that this week's topic would be hard to connect with my theme of animal rights, but just like a literature teacher I am going to draw an accurate comparison that no one would think exists.

The main thing I learned in the workshop is that both sides (rightfully) believe their parties have fallen victim to hyper polarization, with extremists serving as the spokespeople for all members. I had this suspicion prior to this workshop, but it was confirmed after witnessing both sides present their beliefs, none of which were radical. In fact, some of the sides' beliefs were centered on the same principle and just had different methods of solving the issue such as welfare. Unfortunately, it is the voices of the extremists that are often loudest and thus receive the most attention. This then leads people to believe the values of the extremists are the values of the whole party via the availability bias. If these voices could be muffled, then perhaps both sides could realize they have more in common than they think.

This relates to my theme of animal rights in that just as democrats and republicans tend to have a bias against the other side due to the availability heuristic, so do hunters and animal rights activists. In my experience, hunters tend to think of activists as being whiny snowflakes and activists tend to think of hunters as being murder-happy hicks. Just as in politics, it is the extremists who have become the representatives of their respective side, with most people being normal, logical individuals. Once again, if these voices could be muffled, then perhaps both sides could come to an understanding and people on both sides could avoid making inherently divisive messages like this:



And this:



And all of these:



These signs do nothing but further divide the two groups, reinforce stereotypes, and imply that if either side "wins," then the other group will suffer a catastrophic loss to their way of life. This mindset is, in two words, overdramatic and ignorant.

Switching gears, I will now talk about my personal experience with the workshop. While it was going on, I found myself mostly intrigued by what both sides were saying. I was resistant to this exercise at first because I thought it would not work, but after being proven wrong I was fully on board for the second day. There is absolutely value in simply understanding the other side, because reaching an understanding is the first step towards true progress. If the goal had been to convince the other side to convert, then this workshop would have been pointless as simply talking will not make anyone switch sides. In fact, it would have probably caused both sides to cling harder to their beliefs.

Hot take, but I do not believe having a better understanding of the other party will help convince them to switch. Knowing about the other side is only useful for refuting it. The only person who can convince people to switch sides, in my opinion, is themselves. Someone else may present a strong case as to why their party is better, but ultimately you can only lead a horse to water; you cannot make it drink. That being said, I do believe Braver Angels is doing important work and are helping people have collaborative rather than combative rhetoric.

## **Blog Post 5, A Long Way From Animal Rights: Being a Democrat, Being Socialist; According to This Sign They're The Same Thing (2020-09-27 02:23)**

*Remember when people could argue about political issues and still come together at the end of the day because, even though they may have different political opinions, they still liked each other as human beings? Yeah, that time is all but over; replaced with hyper polarization that makes people from opposing political parties, as Hetherington and Weiler phrase it, view people on the other side as not humans with a different opinion, but aliens from another world (25). Indeed, America has become so polarized that liberals and conservatives differ in all aspects of life including where they live, their occupation, and even what coffee/beer they drink (Hetherington and Weiler, 115-148).*

*Differences in worldview have become the backbone of both American politics and marketing, with Republicans and Democrats representing more fixed and fluid versions, respectively (Hetherington and Weiler, 48-49). However, the most disturbing part of this hyper polarization is that both sides see the other as their mortal enemy, hell bent on taking over the country in the name of their supreme leader. This can be seen with the political message I have chosen to discuss, seen below:*

✕

*This sign combines its **product preference, Trump supporters**, with the political message that Democrats are not just “wrong” but are socialists and implies that a vote for Biden is a vote for said socialism (this, of course, being framed as a bad thing.) **This sign thus mobilizes Trump supporters to vote to avoid America becoming socialist.** I am willing to bet, however, that the sign makers really meant communism, as in the Stalin style of communism where everything is government controlled, personal rights and liberties are ignored, there is one supreme leader, and all other citizens are “equal,” which really means they are struggling to eke out an existence. In my experience, people who are not politically educated almost always confuse these two ideas even though they are on completely opposite ends of the political spectrum.*

*While the message this sign is presenting is quite disturbing, even more unsettling are the reviews people have given it. As a disclaimer, I have selected the four reviews below because, at least to me, they best represent the mindset of someone who would purchase and proudly display this sign.*

*“It’s so pretty I’M so happy GONNA put it on my yard, make libs PUKE.”*

*“A great way to show your support for President Trump and the defense of liberty.”*

*“If you don’t see the evidence on T.V, what these signs are saying, get your head out of your dark place and wake up America.”*

*“I never thought that America would be attempted to be taken over from our own elected Officials!!! God blessed this country, gave us freedom and I with President Trump will stand to protect it. Proudly display sign & sticker.. another high quality product..”*

*However, these reviews are not outliers. Of the 69 reviews given for this sign, 95 % of*

them were five stars. This means nearly all the purchasers were quite happy with their purchase.

Speaking of the purchasers, *their mindset*, as summarized by the above reviews, *clearly demonstrate the polarization of America. **These conservatives believe Biden and the Democratic party wish to take over the country and put in under a socialist regime, and that Trump and their fellow conservatives are the country's last hope in defending liberty and freedom.*** Fortunately, there was one person who recognized the absurdity of this sign's message writing:

*"Horrible visual design and weak propaganda. How about saying something with integrity"*

If more people could be like this person, then, perhaps, efforts to depolarize the nation could gain more traction and people on opposite sides of politics could find common ground once again.

*Link to sign's website:* [https://trumpstoreamerica.com/products/say-no-to-socialism-yard-sign?variant=14408851587135&currency=USD&utm\\_medium=product\\_sync&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_content=sag\\_organic&utm\\_campaign=sag\\_organic&gclid=Cj0KCQjwzbv7BRDIARIsAM-A6-3BCMhMvzYT5H-OUhn\\_g5ZN1i9cnmo1yp2kUnb8I9xjkv4JAfaO4VlaAoqgEALw\\_wcB](https://trumpstoreamerica.com/products/say-no-to-socialism-yard-sign?variant=14408851587135&currency=USD&utm_medium=product_sync&utm_source=google&utm_content=sag_organic&utm_campaign=sag_organic&gclid=Cj0KCQjwzbv7BRDIARIsAM-A6-3BCMhMvzYT5H-OUhn_g5ZN1i9cnmo1yp2kUnb8I9xjkv4JAfaO4VlaAoqgEALw_wcB)

**Blog Post 6, WordPress Strikes Back: Analyzing Messages About Ocean Pollution (2020-11-01 21:18)**

Group 16 Joint Submission: Paul Jason, Bryce Malick, Julie Heaney

***Our group's audience is younger conservatives***, anywhere from 13 to 23 years old. *Their persona is one of slight superiority, believing liberals are too easily triggered by seemingly insignificant events (like ocean pollution.) Our big idea is that ocean pollution is a major issue that can have massive impacts on humans and the environment. Therefore, the value we are trying to instill is that swift, bipartisan action must be taken to bolster existing legislation to force stricter adherence to legal regulations.*

*Other related messages either focus on what our ad is doing or attempt to use shock by showing sea animals suffocating from plastic or share frightening pollution statistics to whoever stumbles upon it. These messages share the same value as our ad.*

*Our ad's vehicles will be YouTube and snapchat. That is, our ad will be a 15-30 second video that will be played in the advertisement spaces on channels and subscriptions, respectively, popular with young conservatives. Target videos are ones belonging to people like Steven Crowder, Hunter Avallone, and Ben Shapiro, both for YouTube and Snapchat.*

Message analysis will be done on the following image.



***The most salient part of this image is the baby holding the needle.*** Why? *Because it appeals to both the sanctity and care emotional foundations. Automatic reactions include finding the child cute and feeling concern or fear because they could be harmed or become sick from the needle or surrounding trash. As Haidt says, "cuteness primes us to care, protect, nurture and interact." Additionally, Haidt also points out that the care foundation can be triggered by any child, hence why you had the reaction you did (Haidt, p. 155).*

*Another automatic reaction that was felt was disgust upon seeing the baby sitting in a pile of garbage. This is due to the sanctity foundation. Disgust was felt because babies, are generally seen as pure creatures that, like all sacred items, must be protected at all costs (Haidt, p. 173). The trash, then, is seen as a threat to the baby's pureness, which created the automatic thought to pull the baby from the pile, quickly take the needle from them, and throw it far away.*

***The second most salient item is the trash itself.*** *The garbage creates an auto-*

*matic feeling of disgust due to the sanctity foundation. Aside from the thought that it is a threat to the baby's pureness somehow, the trash is found to be disgusting because garbage is regarded by humans as a dirty, impure item that is not to be associated with. As Haidt points out, an object like the trash becomes "untouchable" to humans. Anything that freely interacts with it, such as rats and insects, are also seen as impure via a sort of commutative property of the sanctity foundation (Haidt, p. 173).*

After the initial feeling of disgust, there are two feelings you may have. The first is to take the baby and run from trash. The second is to make the trash go away so that it no longer poses a problem for people.

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## **Want to See How An Ancient Greece Version of Donald Trump and a Civil Rights Activist Would Speak? Look No Further! (2020-11-19 21:18)**

Hello Readers,

This past two weeks my class that I do these blogs for has been doing a simulation of the trial of Socrates and the re-establishment of Athens after the defeat of the Thirty Tyrants. My character was a student of Socrates but also came from a well-off family and believed only land owners should govern Athens. This led me to writing two speeches which sound like the words of an ancient Greece version of Donald Trump and a Civil Rights Activist respectively. Below are the speeches. Hope you enjoy them!

Donald Trump Speech:

Friends, countrymen, and the almighty gods, I come before you today to express my happiness concerning the recently passed amnesty legislation for former supporters of the Thirty. This is a wonderful first step in our budding society and I believe it shall set the tone of future assemblies. Had amnesty not been granted, innocent citizens would have been unfairly judged and executed under mob rule and Athens would have quickly fallen into chaos. It is a severe understatement to say that the Thirty's reign was terrible and resulted in much loss; but my fellow Athenians, be aware that just because we land owners initially supported the Thirty, it does not mean we did so throughout their entire reign. I know my positive image of these men began to gradually wane once they broke their promise of not convening an assembly of my fellow solid citizens. Things were exacerbated when the arrests and executions of democrats and metics continued to increase in frequency. I witnessed as these formerly good men gave into their dark desires and truly became tyrants.

By the grace of the gods, however, the Thirty are gone and Athens can begin healing from their abusive rule as a unified people. It is fitting, then, that the amnesty deal that was passed involved a compromise, which will hopefully be a good omen of future collaboration. Solonian Aristocrats, like myself, are now required to either pay reparations or perform community service in exchange for legal immunity from being prosecuted in the lawcourts. After having time to consider this agreement, I like it even more than when it was first proposed.

This is another opportunity for Athens' solid citizens to provide for their less fortunate brethren. Just as we give them food, we shall now also give them assistance in rebuilding their lives. My good Athenians, there is one other topic on my mind that I wish to discuss with you. This is the matter of deciding what the composition of the newly reestablished Assembly should be.

I shall be blunt, in order to prevent another invasion and humiliating defeat at the hands of another nation, the new Assembly must not be open to all. The cruelty of the Tyrants does not prove the merits of democracy. Indeed, the fact that the Tyrants were able to be created at all shows the shortcomings of this inferior governance system. It was a democracy-run Athens that lost to Sparta. Shoemakers, potters, and other such average citizens have no place in government. It is absurd that these men were formerly allowed to decide when and how to conduct war, judge their fellow citizens, and be allowed to govern to begin with. I wonder how our beloved nation would have fared if it was operated solely by those competent in battle and governance, without the chatter of laborers and craftsmen to distract them. Democracy

treats all men as equals, but I say to you now, all men are not created equal and should not be treated as such. Some are swifter of foot, others more intelligent, and still others possess more beauty. If our creator, the mighty Prometheus, humanity's most ardent supporter, did not see it fit to make us all the same then it must be that he intended for those with superior qualities to lead and protect their brethren.

While it is true that Athens acquired immense power and riches when democracy was first introduced by Pericles, that time is long over. Power shifted from the most competent citizens, us Solonian Aristocrats, to those democracy is suited for, the weak-willed and weak-minded. Just as there are no pacts between lions and men, there should be no equality of governing power between a solid citizen and a commoner.

Instead of the incompetent mob rule that democracy will bring, it is the belief of myself and fellow Solonian Aristocrats that Athens must return to a form of governance used by the man from whom we take our name.

In the past, Athens was plagued by tensions between the oligarchs and other citizens which resulted in many losing their property and freedom due to debt. Solon showed us the errors of this system and proposed a brilliant compromise. Athenians suffering from debt were freed from their monetary shackles and the premise of becoming a slave due to debt was eliminated altogether. My fellow Athenians, it is my belief that we have been presented with the opportunity to make another such compromise. Just as Solon forgave the indebted, you have been gracious enough to grant the former supporters of the Thirty amnesty. With one part of Solon's structure accomplished, we need only implement the remaining section and Athens will be able to become the mighty nation it once was.

All that is left to do is return to a governance system based on common sense. Restore governing power to those best suited to wield it, the great landowners that keep this nation fed. If Athens were to fall under the rule of a radical utopian democracy, it is only a matter of time before our beloved nation falls again. That is not to say other citizens would have no voice. In fact, the opposite is desired. All citizens may and are welcomed to voice their opinions in the Assembly and appeal court decisions, such are their unalienable rights. The difference between this system and the faulty democratic one is that, just as the almighty gods perform duties they are best suited for, so shall us Athenians; shoemakers shall make shoes, artists shall create beautiful works, and those with the ability to effectively govern shall govern.

We Solonian Aristocrats believe in the values of old that helped mankind prosper. We endorse personal restraint, self-discipline, and adherence to common sense necessities for social order. If all Athenians adopt these traditional values, then we strongly believe Athens will heal from the wounds inflicted by the Thirty and emerge stronger than ever.

Civil Rights Speech:

Friends, countrymen, and the almighty gods, I come before you today anxious, concerned, and yet determined to succeed in convincing you all that Socrates should be acquitted. Growing up, I was obsessed with two things: war and horses. I dreamed of being a cavalry man, hacking away enemy soldiers in the name of the gods. My father saw this behavior and sent me to Athens to break me of this delusion, and I am forever grateful that he did. By being in Athens, I was able to meet and socialize with an incredible group of smart, passionate, driven men with

the most memorable, of course, being Socrates. He enriched my country bumpkin mind by showing me the merits of logic, justice, and reason and, over time, I came to realize that words and thoughts could be just as powerful, if not more so, than a sharpened blade or mighty steed.

Now, my good Athenians, you may be listening to my words and conclude that I am simply one of Socrates' dogs; groveling at his feet and taking all he has to say as truth, but this is not the case. While I support the right for him to speak freely and agree with a few of his ideas, I am not blind to his many, many flaws. While I find his criticisms of democracy to be remarkable, just as remarkable is his ability to annoy everyone around him. Prior to coming to Athens, I thought I had seen the largest, most stubborn gadfly to exist when it did not cease in tormenting my horse while he attempted to graze, but this insect had nothing on the gadfly that is Socrates, whose abrasive nature could smooth the roughest of stones.

As much as I dislike his personality, I dislike his belief that those adept at wordplay are best suited to rule even more. Just as a shoemaker has no place in governing a nation, a barefooted babbler going on and on about "truth" and "justice" has no place in planning a war, unless the plan is to bore the enemy to death, or crafting and imposing new taxes.

I am sure you all have noticed that I have yet to discuss the fact that Critias, the bastard leader of the Tyrants, was a student of Socrates. This is because, frankly, I do not view it as important. While Critias and the Tyrants went on to murder and ruin the lives of countless Athenians, this cannot be blamed on Socrates. While Socrates was vocal about criticizing democracy, all of his supporters did not rise up at his words and take over the city. In fact, the opposite is true as most of his students are here with us today, working with their fellow citizens to craft a new legislative system for our great nation. The Tyrants were their own radical sect who gave into their greed and lust for power. These vices were within them long before they heard the words of Socrates and would have manifested in some other form had Athens not fallen to Sparta. Just as you cannot blame a lone sword for slaying a man, you cannot blame the words of some unwashed babbler for causing the death and violence that occurred under the rule of the Tyrants.

As a student of Socrates myself, though, I have developed a sufficient reasoning capability to understand that my words thus far may still not have impacted those determined to see Socrates die and that democracy is, regrettably, the governing system that will be used to operate our nation once again. While I may not like the system, I understand that democracy is about making every voice heard and treating all men as equals. Under this type of governance, no tyrants or dictatorial state should be able to emerge as every citizen can voice their opinion and enjoy the right of free speech. It is confusing to me, then, that you supporters of democracy wish to revoke Socrates' right of free speech simply because you view him as a threat to your precious governance system.

If you feel a democracy-run Athens cannot survive the prods of a single gadfly, then, my good democrats, what will happen when a swarm of locust, a bull, a lion, or any other force greater than one abrasive man with different ideas steps foot in our beloved nation? Besides, while you may view Socrates' ideas as radical, it is not like he is the first Athenian to ever have a vision that differed from how things were currently done. Let me remind you that Pericles, the founder of your democratic system, did what he did by implementing what was then labeled as "radical democracy." It is inevitable that citizens will develop opinions that go against the current status quo but, my fellow Athenians, if the people who are in possession of such ideas are merely expressing their opinion, what is the harm? Socrates and his teachings

pose no threat to our great nation.

I shall end my speech by expressing my greatest concern. You democrats may feel that your treatment of Socrates, your attempt to revoke his freedom of speech and silence his dissenting opinion, shall be a onetime occurrence, but I warn you that the path you intend to follow is the beginning of an extremely slippery slope. You may silence Socrates, but his students will continue to echo his teachings. What of them? Will you then make another exception and revoke their rights and silence them? What if, down the line, another citizen emerges with the opinion that Athens should not be run by democracy and gains support. Will you silence them too? If any of you considered silencing the people I have mentioned, then you have just gone further down the slippery slope I have mentioned. As soon as the rights of one citizen are revoked, the possibility that tyranny will rear its ugly head emerges once again. When this becomes reality, what is to stop our leaders from becoming like the Tyrants Athens recently rid itself of? Their word? A solemn vow to not give into evil? My fellow Athenians, I shall leave you with this: when all that is preventing tyranny is the words of men, it is only a matter of time before tyrannical rule grips a nation with its cold, icy, unforgiving grip. Do not go down this path, acquit Socrates and let the gadfly enjoy his right of free speech like every other Athenian.

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