

Documents for group work: prepare a summary of your document that you will present to the class

Document 1 ★

Video: Who is Zohran Mamdani, and what are his plans for NYC?



Document 2: Opinion ★★

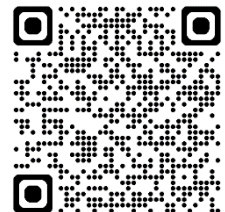
Video: The Corruption Behind Trump's East Wing Demolition ★★



Document 3 ★★★

Video: Why did Trump reverse his position on Epstein files?

(warning: you need to have prior knowledge of what the Epstein files are about)



Document 4: video + article ★★

Trump signs executive order rebranding Pentagon as Department of War

[Joseph Gedeon](#), *The Guardian*, Fri 5 Sep 2025

Donald Trump signed an executive order on Friday to rebrand the Department of Defense as the Department of War, a callback to the department's original name used from 1789 to 1947.

The directive will make Department of War the secondary title, and is a way to get around the need for congressional approval to formally rename a federal agency, an administration official said.



"We won the first world war, we won the second world war, we won everything before that and in between," Trump said at the signing. "And then we decided to go woke and we changed the name to the Department of Defense."

The administration has already begun implementing the symbolic changes: visitors to the Pentagon's defense.gov website are now automatically redirected to war.gov.

The move comes days after a deadly US navy airstrike killed 11 people on a small boat in international waters, which the military said involved a drug vessel operated by the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. Some legal experts questioned whether the strike was lawful under international law.

The combination of aggressive military action and symbolic rebranding goes in contrast with Trump's repeated claims to be "the anti-war president" who campaigned on promises to end conflicts and avoid new wars. Trump said during the signing of the order that his focus on strength and trade has improved America's position in the world.

Trump has argued the original name better reflects military victories and honestly represents what the department does. The rebrand would reverse the 1947 name change made as part of postwar reforms that emphasized defense over warfare.

Seven US warships and one nuclear-powered fast-attack submarine were reported to be heading for the Caribbean following Monday's strike, another layer in the measures Trump has taken to combat what he claims is the threat from Tren de Aragua.

Congressional approval would ultimately be required for any permanent name change, though the House member Greg Steube from Florida and the senator Mike Lee from Utah, both Republicans, introduced legislation to make the switch official.

"We're going to go on offense, not just on defense. Maximum lethality, not tepid legality. Violent effect, not politically correct," the secretary of defense, Pete Hegseth, said in the Oval Office. "We're going to raise up warriors, not just defenders. So this war department, Mr President, just like America is back."

Document 5 ★★

Trump's war on the press: 10 numbers from the US President's first 100 days

Published on 25.04.2025, www.rsf.org

(RSF = Reporters Without Borders)

As President Donald Trump approaches the 100-day mark of his second presidency, he continues to carry out the threats he made on the campaign trail against the news media by intensifying his monumental assault on press freedom. In both his personal and official capacities, he is attacking the credibility, independence, and sustainability of the news media in the United States and around the world. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) lays out 10 key numbers that illustrate his administration's unconstitutional assault on the country's press freedom and the right to reliable information in the US and globally.

Donald Trump campaigned for the White House by unleashing a nearly endless barrage of insults against journalists and news outlets. He repeatedly threatened to weaponize the federal government against media professionals whom he considers his enemies. In his first 100 days in office, President Trump has already shown that he was not bluffing.

"The day-to-day chaos of the American political news cycle can make it hard to fully take stock of the seismic shifts that are happening. But when you step back and look at the whole picture, the pattern of blows to press freedom is quite clear. RSF refuses to accept this massive attack on press freedom as the new normal. We will continue to call out these assaults against the press and use every means at our disposal to fight back against them. We urge every American who values press freedom to do the same."

Clayton Weimers

Executive Director, RSF North America

Here is the Trump administration's war on the press by the numbers*:

- **427 million** – Weekly worldwide audience of the USAGM news outlets silenced by Trump

In an effort to eliminate the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM) by cutting grants to outlets funded by the federal agency and placing their reporters on leave, the government has left millions around the world without vital sources of reliable information. This leaves room for authoritarian regimes, like Russia and China, to spread their propaganda unchecked. However, RSF recently secured an injunction against the administration's dismantling of the USAGM-funded broadcaster *Voice of America*, which also reinstates funding to the outlets *Radio Free Asia (RFA)* and *the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN)*.

- **8,000+** – US government web pages taken down

Webpages from more than a dozen government sites were removed almost immediately after Donald Trump took office, leaving journalists and the public without critical information on health, crime, and more.

- **3,500+** – Journalists and media workers at risk of losing their jobs thanks to Trump's shutdown of the USAGM

Journalists from *VOA*, *the MBN*, *RFA*, and *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* are at risk of losing their jobs as the Trump administration works to shut down the USAGM.

Furthermore, at least 84 USAGM journalists based in the US on work visas now face deportation to countries where they risk prosecution and severe harassment. At least 15 journalists from *RFA* and eight from *VOA* originate from repressive states and are at serious risk of being arrested and potentially imprisoned if deported.

- **180** – Public radio stations at risk of closing if public media funding is eliminated

The Trump administration reportedly plans to ask Congress to cut \$1.1 billion in allocated funds for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which supports *National Public Radio (NPR)* and the *Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)*. These cuts will hit rural communities and stations in smaller media markets the hardest, where federal funding is most impactful.

- **74** – Days the *Associated Press (AP)* has been banned from the White House

On February 11, the White House began barring the *AP* from its events because of the news agency's continued use of the term "Gulf of Mexico," which President Trump prefers to call the "Gulf of America" — a blatant example of retaliation against the media. Despite a federal judge ruling the administration must reinstate the news agency's access on April 9, the White House has continued to limit *AP*'s access.

- **64** – Disparaging comments made by Trump against the media on Truth Social since inauguration

In addition to regular, personal attacks against the media in press conferences and public speeches, Trump takes to his social media site nearly every day to insult, threaten, or intimidate journalists and media workers who report about him or his administration critically.

- **13** – Individuals pardoned by President Trump after being convicted or charged for attacking journalists on January 6, 2021

Trump pardoned over a dozen individuals charged with or convicted of violent crimes against journalists at the US Capitol during the January 6 insurrection.

- **6** – Federal Communications Commission (FCC) inquiries into media companies

Brendan Carr, co-author of the “Project 2025” playbook and chair of the FCC, has wasted no time launching politically motivated investigations, explicit threats against media organizations, and implicit threats against their parent companies.

These include inquiries into *CBS*, *ABC* parent company Disney, *NBC* parent company Comcast, public broadcasters *NPR* and *PBS*, and California television station *KCBS*.

- **4** – Trump’s personal lawsuits against media organizations

While Trump settled a lawsuit with *ABC*’s parent company Disney, he continues to sue *CBS*, *The Des Moines Register*, Gannett, and the Pulitzer Center over coverage he deemed biased.

- **\$1.60** – Average annual amount each American pays for public media

Donald Trump has threatened to eliminate federal funding for public broadcasting, framing the move as a cost-cutting measure. However, public media only costs each American about \$1.60 each year, representing a tremendous bargain as it gives Americans access to a wealth of local, national, and lifesaving emergency programming.

**Figures as of the date of publication.*

Men like Trump represent what the founders were fighting against

By [LZ Granderson](#), Columnist, *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 22, 2025 3 AM PT

George Washington was quite the man.

Life handed him the keys to this brand-new country, and instead of clinging to the steering wheel until he drew his last breath, he pulled over and let someone else drive.

It was this peaceful transfer of power that made America exceptional — and Washington the defining figure of American masculinity. Even after the American Revolution, the dominant model for rule around the world was heredity. Kings beget kings, and power was passed down like grandpa’s cottage in the woods. For centuries, rulers governed not because of proven character but by accidental birth.

And the founders hated it.

Read Thomas Paine’s 250-year-old essay, “Common Sense,” and you see few things bothered Colonial men more than servitude to geopolitical nepo-babies. It’s evident in the writings and personal libraries of our earliest presidents, such as Thomas Jefferson. You can trace that sentiment all the way back to the Greek philosophers whom the founders studied before this nation began.

Their aversion wasn’t to wealth and power. It was about what can happen to a person who grows up knowing nothing but wealth and power.

“Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent,” Paine wrote in 1776. “Selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.”

In some ways Paine’s summation is the original diagnosis for toxic masculinity. Inherited wealth and political power were considered traits that made men susceptible to corruption and weak-mindedness because of a lack of civic duty. Aristotle believed that without a sense of civic duty, concepts such as “virtue” and “concern for others” were hard for a person to grasp. Successors to a lot of that ancient Greek thinking, including Washington and Jefferson, defined manhood not by surrendering to individual impulse but by having mastery over them.

That’s why, although the men who fought for freedom and founded this nation weren’t perfect or above reproach, Donald Trump should never be compared to them.

He was a millionaire by age 8; accused of (or personally bragged of) cheating on all three of his wives; and lived through five wars without serving in any of them. Judging from Paine's own words, men like Trump represent what this country was fighting against, not what men in America ought to be.

There have been no better examples of that than his actions over the course of this week.

First: When Catherine Lucey, a correspondent for Bloomberg News, asked Trump a question he didn't like, the most powerful man in the world pointed an angry finger at her and said, "Quiet, piggy." He presumably didn't like the question because it was tied to his administration's handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files. Each time that name is mentioned, voters are reminded that he and Epstein — a financier, convicted sex trafficker and pedophile — partied together for years. The House recently released a collection of emails related to Epstein that mention the president's name several times. In response, he ordered that his political rivals be investigated.

Second: When some Democratic lawmakers — including Sen. Elissa Slotkin, who served three tours in Iraq, and Sen. Mark Kelly, who was a Navy pilot in the first Gulf War — released a video urging U.S. troops to honor their oaths and refuse illegal orders, Trump said the words of the members of Congress were "punishable by death."

"Our laws are clear," the group said in the video. "No one has to carry out orders that violate the law or our Constitution."

The president called their message "SEDITIONARY BEHAVIOR" in a post online and shared another user's post that said "HANG THEM GEORGE WASHINGTON WOULD!!"

Hence the need to remind you what kind of man Washington was — or as we would say now, what kind of grownup.

The reason Trump reacted so vehemently to lawmakers reminding members of the military to follow the law is because "men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent." When Paine wrote that 250 years ago, it resonated with people because they had witnessed it. They were living through it. That's why American masculinity was defined by the founders to be the antithesis of all of that.

Today we are having cultural conversation about masculinity. Some misguided saps on a mic point the finger at women with careers as the reason men are struggling.

I say we're struggling because too many of us still view Trump's behavior and rhetoric as good examples. We've forgotten that the forefathers wanted civic duty — not impulsive insults and lawlessness — to be the hallmarks of American virtue. It wasn't Washington's use of military might that separated him — separated us — from the others — it was the power he showed in restraint.