

## Being a Conservative Minority in a Liberal School

*Written by Tyler Gallant, Brooks School Associate Editor  
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Being a political minority at a boarding school is challenging because of the constant close proximity to and seeming inescapability from the propagation of liberal ideas—both by students and teachers. Liberal students tend to hold onto such mindsets even when faced with evidence invalidating their position. I feel as though many liberals will see facts right in front of them, bright as day, and still refuse to acknowledge them if they don't support their opinion. It seems like most teenagers are easily emotionally swayed because of changing hormones and lack of world experience and therefore have an easier time relating to liberal idealism than to what I believe is a more realistic approach: conservatism. Nothing sounds better than a world without racism, sexism, or any other kind of discrimination. However, these impossible dreams compel the ever-changing brain to sometimes completely disregard common sense. For example, it doesn't take long to come to the conclusion that the liberal idea of taking money from the rich and distributing it to the poor doesn't work out the way one thinks it should. All one has to do is look at the prime example of the collapsing Russian economy. Sadly, many people would rather hold on to the idea that hating the rich and taking their money will solve world poverty. That is but one of the many examples of mankind's failed attempts to implement their liberal ideals on society.

Boarding schools should serve as prime examples of money being put to good use and ending up improving society as a whole. Instead, school administrations and the majority of teachers try to impress their own ideas on students, fostering an environment that discourages young conservatives from stating viewpoints contrary to popular liberal beliefs. Anyone who publicly brings to light a point of view differing from what is being preached in these schools is stamped as a bad person. It feels like liberals think people against Hillary Clinton must be sexist or that criticizing Obama makes one a racist. Similarly, expressing pro-life opinions seems to immediately brand a student as sexist and a terrible person in the eyes of their peers. I find this mentality infuriating as I progress through my three years at Brooks; I experience first-hand time and time again what it feels like to be politically discriminated against.

My history teacher expresses his far leftist views on his students day after day. I tend to respectfully disagree with him, and I hope that the other students in the classroom aren't as influenced as they may seem. He is extremely socialist: he believes all people should be equal in every way. Sadly, this isn't the case in American society and I stay true to my own conservative beliefs about the "American Dream," and the country that our founding fathers wanted to create years ago. It's the incentive of the entire American workforce that drives the fluidity in our social pyramid, and you have to earn what you receive. At seated dinners during the school year I often find myself staying quiet as my own teachers and peers discuss how much they hate Donald J. Trump. I feel forced to stay quiet as my friends from different countries explode at even the

notion of the last name “Trump.” If a person supports him, they automatically are seen as a racist, immigrant-deporting, sexist monster who is a plague to society. However, that’s not the case at all. I’m a 5’ 9”, 16 year old boy who has the utmost affection towards his friends and all others. I acknowledge the combination of my position of power and privilege wishing society combined with any prejudice I may makes me racist (if one subscribes to the definition that power+prejudice=racism)—I do my best to maintain fair and considerate beliefs. My parents both work at a bank; I’ve been interested in finance my entire life, and I look up to men such as Donald Trump. He’s worked to the top and made fantastic decisions that only furthered his wealth and enterprise. Yet at a prestigious boarding school where we pay tens of thousands of dollars to enroll, I feel oppressed in expressing my opinion that he should win the election!

Last week I was at a football game when my German friend approached me. We were talking for quite some time when all of a sudden she brought up the election. Without even offering my opinion, she began throwing her support for Hillary Clinton at me. She had correctly assumed that my parents supported private enterprise as opposed to public well-being--it made me feel horrible to look at her and tell her that they were voting for Trump. Why should I be ashamed of this? This is a question I keep asking myself day after day. Why is it so negative to support yourself and be happy about what you have in life? It’s human nature to have some group in power, and the idea of having a completely fluid society is frightening. It’s pure radicalism, and the change that’s required to accommodate those beliefs is colossal; over time, the realization of a more even playing ground is a morally sound idea, however the entire transformation of our society in a presidential term will be the death of us all. Personally I don’t want my parents to lose even more of their paycheck because they’re ridiculously hard workers. I don’t want to lose what I already have. This doesn’t mean I don’t sympathize with the less fortunate—I truly do. But the issue lies with the approach to this situation. Far too many scenarios involve homeless drug addicts who would abuse anything you gave to them in the first place. I acknowledge this isn’t every scenario, and the treatment of homeless US military veterans is extremely important to me. Listening to Donald speak on CNN caught my attention as he advocated intensely for the treatment of veterans and better public health services. I believe at his core, he’s a sincere man who loves America deeply.

Attending a New England boarding school has sheltered me from politics in a sense. Constantly being on campus without cable affects my ability to follow the current campaign, though many students discuss the candidates on a daily basis. My good friends engage in discussions about the election, often resulting in screaming matches. I’m proud to say I can acknowledge an extreme bias on my part while staying open to hearing others’ opinions. I go to a prestigious boarding school and consider my life quite fortunate. I know others have it worst, and I respect their beliefs as much—if not more—than my own. Living in the “Brooks Bubble” has influenced my beliefs and resulted in my status as a political minority. I often feel unsafe expressing my political opinions to my friends because I think they will immediately condemn me. I don’t want to be harassed for having different beliefs. I think it’s unfair when a school puts so much emphasis on creating a safe community while I can’t say what I believe, or even try to explain

my point of view without my peers jumping down my throat. I understand why others have different beliefs than I do but feel overwhelmed by the incessant deluge of what I find naive and farfetched ideas.