

## Living in an Imperfect World: And What to Do About It

**Steven A. Zecola**

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*Living in an Imperfect World is a passionate text that suggests practical solutions to contemporary political problems.*

Candid and personal, Steven A. Zecola's political treatise *Living in an Imperfect World* explores the perils that US democracy faces and makes compelling suggestions for the nation's protection.

From Zecola's perspective, the Constitution does not reflect twenty-first-century realities. He points out that, despite numerous upheavals in American society, just eight changes have been made to the document in the past hundred years. His book argues that this reluctance to adapt to the times, together with a voting system that's over two hundred years old, gives small, rural states the ability to block the will of the vast majority of Americans.

Drawing on personal experiences in the worlds of business, government, and education, as well as on disillusioning personal encounters with the US health-care system, Zecola cites striking examples of political imbalance to spur fellow citizens to action. Still, while the book is consistent in its passion and with the intent of its explorations, it is scattered. It takes on a variety of topics, including the handling of the nation's debt and finances; the crimes and duplicity of former president Donald Trump and the dangers he poses to democracy; and the reasoning behind evangelical opposition to abortion. But the text is also brief; thus, while it presents facts and figures to back up its arguments, it does not go into great depth on individual topics. Its perspectives are always progressive, though, and it employs hard-hitting language in defense of its startling claims, as with its urgent warning that not enough is being done to guarantee the preservation of American democracy.

Many of the book's notions are intriguing, including its assertion that the focus placed on a candidate's oratory skills, ability to engage a crowd, and fundraising acumen doesn't correlate with choosing strong public servants. Its proposed solutions are broad-minded; political candidates in the US, Zecola says, should have to demonstrate experience, competency, and success in governance as they do elsewhere (though the specific names of the countries alluded to are withheld). The book also issues warnings regarding what can happen when power falls into the wrong hands, with the performance of former president Trump cited as evidence. But the book's inclusion of a large number of credibility-bolstering personal letters are a distraction from its central topics.

*Living in an Imperfect World* meditates on topics including national governance and health care, suggesting practical solutions to contemporary problems.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January 10, 2023)

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