

From: diane.fisher
To: [Holly Young](#)
Subject: 4th of July subcommittee
Date: Monday, April 28, 2025 9:52:01 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hi Holly,

Can you confirm for me who is on the 4th of July Subcommittee?

Also what is the budget? I heard Commissioner Kane say something about using this year's budget and then it starts over in July?

I would like to share these ideas with the subcommittee.

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/248919617/push-pin-world-map-poster-turquoise>

I was thinking that families visiting our table could put a pin on a world map showing where they were born, and then choose a book, until we run out.

Here are the books I'm considering:

1. Apple Pie 4th of July by Janet Wong, ages 4-7 yrs.
2. Of Thee I Sing by Barack Obama, ages 3-9 yrs.
3. Pie is for Sharing by Jason Chin, ages 2-6 yrs.
4. America My Love, America My Heart by Daria Peoples-Riley, ages 4-8 yrs
5. We Came to America by Faith Ringgold, ages 5-8 yrs

Diane

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: Gordon Yamate [REDACTED]
Subject: Idea for Community Project/Engagement
Date: April 28, 2025 at 10:59 AM
To: RBaker@losgatosca.gov, kimberly@numulosgatos.org, [REDACTED]

GY

Hi Ryan, Kimberly and Jeff—I hope that this email finds all of you well. I’m contacting you in my personal capacity and not on behalf of the Town’s DEI Commission. I recently came across a short article in the New Yorker magazine (<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2025/04/28/activism-for-introverts-copying-the-constitution>) that gave me an idea for a community project around the theme of social justice. I felt there was something centering, contemplative and educational in the simple act of transcribing the U.S. Constitution and thought this could be a different but compelling way to engage our local community during these difficult times. I can envision creating a space in one or more public settings where multiple scribes could gather at a table and transcribe all or a portion of the Constitution. New scribes could continue where someone leaves off. It would be interesting to capture the interaction among the participants in some manner. I’d also envision using sheets of white foam board as the surface for the transcription so that the board might later be assembled together in some sort of presentation.

I’m familiar with artists who have used text extensively in creating art work and am reminded of the artist Diane Samuels, who exhibited at the ICA San Jose some years ago. Ms. Samuels had created a huge work based on the transcription of the entire text of Herman Melville’s Moby Dick. (<https://www.dianesamuels.net/portfolio/moby-dick-herman-melville/>) Her art work demonstrated the powerful visual manifestation of a literary work.

My hope with a project built around transcribing the U.S. Constitution is that the act(s) would be unifying in these current times of divisive rhetoric, and that these acts would signal a need to return to understanding the roots of our democracy and appreciating its strengths, evolution, values and core principles. If you have an interest in pursuing this further, I’d be happy to get us together to chat.

Gordon Yamate
[REDACTED]

PROTEST DEPT.

ACTIVISM FOR INTROVERTS! COPYING THE CONSTITUTION


Every month at the Old Stone House, in Brooklyn, citizens are invited to find consolation in troubled times by writing out the nation's founding document, by hand.

By Henry Alford

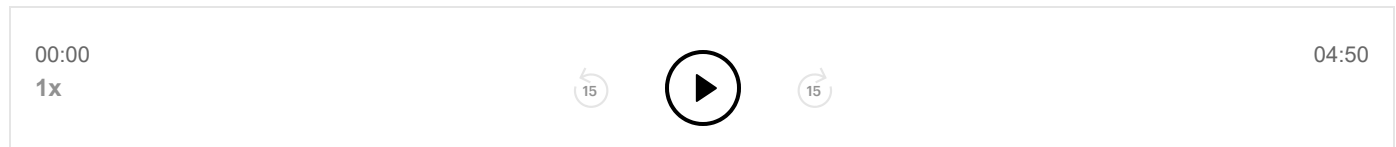
April 21, 2025



Illustration by João Fazenda

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It is sometimes said that democracy wants education. Also: strong foundations make for good buildings. And: the more larnin', the more votin'. So, the other night, when three New Yorkers showed up at the Old Stone House, a re-created 1699 farmhouse turned community center in Brooklyn, to take part in a social art project in which they would each write out a copy of the Constitution—or as much of the Constitution as they could in two hours—nothing less than the fate of the nation seemed to be at stake. One participant, upon sitting at one of the four tables in the house's great room and eying the Uniball pen and xeroxed Constitution before her, cleared her throat with a vehemence that seemed to augur spitting.

Morgan O'Hara, an eighty-four-year-old conceptual artist who was raised in Japan, started handwriting documents that are meant to protect human rights—a practice she calls “activism for introverts”—in 2017. Appalled by the level of discourse in the 2016 Presidential election, she decided that copying out the Constitution in a public place would provide consolation by deepening her understanding of the document. She saw no need to *talk* about the Constitution, though. “There have been so many experiences in my life where I have a lot to say but the extroverts always win,” she said the other day, over the phone from Venice, where she lives now. So O'Hara took herself to the New York Public Library's majestic Rose Reading Room with pen and paper and got monkish.

“I told one of my studio neighbors about it, and she asked, ‘Can I put it on Facebook? People want to share it with their friends.’ It spread that way.” Since that initial foray, more than two thousand people across the world—from Taipei to Toronto to Berlin—have hand-copied their own relevant rights-bearing documents, in a hundred and forty-seven public writing sessions. Participating institutions have included Paris’s Bibliothèque Nationale, Harvard’s David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, the central library in Macau, and a women’s correctional facility in New Hampshire.

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At the Old Stone House, the three people who showed up to join the venue’s director of education, Maggie Weber, were all female Brooklynites: a political-science student, an attorney turned novelist, and a middle-school teacher. The U.S. Constitution is famously short—4,543 words, or 7,591 if you include all twenty-seven amendments—but don’t tell that to someone tasked with writing it down, which can take twelve hours. (The Old Stone House will host sessions on the first Monday of each month for the rest of the year.) The four women, studiously bent over their work, looked by turns irritated, amused, and exhausted. One of those present thought, *Why does the phrase “foreign emoluments” always make me think of Bain de Soleil?*

Fifteen minutes before the end of the session, the women started talking politics. “Right now, we have a Department of Justice that’s answering to the executive

branch,” the attorney-novelist said. “But that’s not how it was set up.” They discussed Mitch McConnell’s legacy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s reluctance to retire. The poli-sci student confessed, “I was secretive about coming to this. I thought, *Am I crazy to do this?*”

The attorney-novelist said, “Section 2, paragraph 3, brought me up short.” She read aloud the passage about how the apportionment of “Representatives and direct Taxes” would exclude “Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.” The middle-school teacher commented on the irony that one of the Constitution’s “shortest articles, the one about the judicial branch, is also the least understood one, but it’ll be the most important one for getting us out of our current mess.”

O’Hara, who has written out the Constitution in full three times, said, in a phone call, “It’s a very calming experience. And when you’re calm you make better decisions.” She went on, “What really surprised me was the structure—that the executive is in between the judiciary and the legislative. That was a big relief when I found that out. And it shocked me how long it took for women to get the vote, and how long for slaves to be considered people.”

At the Old Stone House, the mood was a mixture of satisfaction and unease. The attorney-novelist said, “Maybe we should do this with Congress.” The others laughed.

Tariffs were in the news. Someone mentioned Article I, Section 10, which details duties and imports being “subject to the Revision and Controul of the Congress.” But these days, it was observed, even “controul” is out of control. ♦

Published in the print edition of the April 28, 2025, issue, with the headline “Write It Again.”

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DEPT. OF DISPOSAL

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Chicken bones? Nope! Greasy pizza boxes? Uh-uh. For two weeks in April, the Department of Sanitation sent inspectors to rifle through your trash and fine landlords for failure to compost.

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Ad

DEEP STATE DIARIES

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Other countries have watched their democracies slip away gradually, without tanks in the streets. That may be where we're headed—or where we already are.

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Diane Samuels

PROJECTS

One Book, One Drawing

Pandemic: 100 Days, 100

Poems

Pandemic: Albert Camus,

Frantz Fanon, Rania

Mamoun

The Overstory, Richard

Powers

Moby-Dick, or The Whale,

Herman Melville

Romeo and Juliet, William

Shakespeare

Poetry Quilt

Scheherazade

First Lines

Midnight's Children, Salman

Rushdie

Metamorphoses, Ovid

The Making of Americans,

Gertrude Stein

Autobiography of Alice B.

Toklas / Testimony Against

Gertrude Stein

Leaves of Grass, Walt

Whitman

The Odyssey, Homer

Was ist Aura? What is Aura?

Walter Benjamin

Five Neighbors, Five

Constitutions (Excerpts)

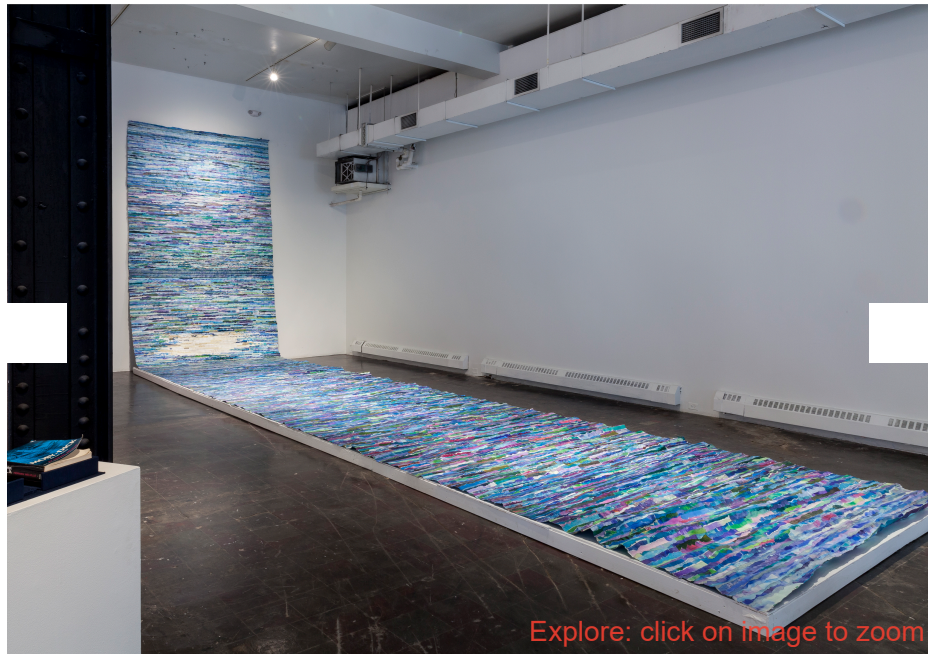
Five Constitutions, Five

Writers

Nosotros, el Pueblo / We the

People

Jerusalem Diary



MOBY-DICK, OR THE WHALE, HERMAN MELVILLE

A hand-transcription of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick, or The Whale* written on remnants of archival paper and Samuels' drawings that have been recycled and painted over and, in places, drawn and collaged on with images that pertain to the specific text. Each page of the book is hand-written as a horizontal row of the drawing, starting with "Call me Ishmael" at the top of the drawing.

Samuels chose *Moby-Dick, or The Whale* because of Melville's descriptions of confrontations with "the other" and his archiving and cataloguing of information about whales and the world. In Chapter Three, Ishmael and Queequeg share a room and a bed at the Spouter-Inn. Ishmael describes his terror in meeting Queequeg. Despite cultural, racial, and language differences, the chapter ends with Ishmael's

Title: ***Moby-Dick***, Herman Melville

Size: 8 feet x 47 feet (w x h)

Materials: paper, ink

Date: 2015

Photographed by: Thomas Little

[Two Poets / Two Sides](#)

[Echo and Narcissus](#)

statement, "I turned in, and never
slept better in my life."

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