RAMPART

A Cross-Partisan Journal of Civic Argument

Our Editorial Charter

The Name

Rampart takes its name from the national anthem — a word that appears in American civic memory as protective, foundational, and non-partisan. A rampart is not a weapon. It is a position worth defending. The publication exists to defend the practice of serious, structured disagreement at a moment when that practice is under pressure from every direction.

The name carries no ideological coding. It belongs to anyone willing to argue within the rules.

Mission

Rampart is a monthly cross-partisan journal founded at Hofstra University. It publishes serious arguments from writers across the political spectrum, organized around the conviction that disagreement conducted honestly and in good faith is more valuable than consensus achieved by silence.

The publication is built to scale beyond Hofstra. Its editorial standards, network relationships, and founding contributor culture are designed from the outset for a national student readership.

Format

Rampart publishes monthly in digital format. Each issue is built around a hybrid structure:

- One commissioned anchor essay on a specific question or problem, written by a contributor with a strong, clearly stated position.
- Open submissions responding to or independent of the anchor, selected on the quality of the argument rather than its ideological alignment.
- An editorial introduction that contextualizes the issue's conversation without advocating for any position within it.

Pieces run between 800 and 1,500 words. Longer submissions may be accepted at editorial discretion for work that genuinely requires the space.

Editorial Philosophy

Rampart distinguishes between contested interpretations and factual errors. Contested interpretations are protected. Factual errors are corrected before publication, or the piece does not run.

The publication's identity is defined by method, not position. What makes a piece eligible for Rampart is not what it argues but how it argues: with specific claims, honest engagement with opposing views, and writing disciplined enough to make a hostile reader take it seriously.

No single ideological perspective will dominate the masthead, the editorial board, or the contributor pool. This is not a courtesy. It is the structural condition under which the publication operates.

Editorial Standards

All submissions are evaluated against three criteria:

- Claims must be specific and provably true. Vague assertions that cannot be tested are not argument.
- The piece must be distinct to the writer's genuine perspective. Generic arguments interchangeable with any writer's byline are not published.
- Language must be concrete enough to visualize. Abstract decoration is edited out.

Every contributor who believes a published piece misrepresents their position has the right to submit a response for consideration in the following issue.

Editorial decisions are final. Disputes about process, not content, may be raised with the editorial board.

Epistemic Standards

Rampart evaluates arguments on the basis of evidence, transparency, and reasoning — not institutional prestige. A claim sourced to a major newspaper carries no more automatic weight than one sourced to a primary document, a peer-reviewed study, or a firsthand account. What matters is whether the source is shown, whether it actually supports the claim, and whether the writer has engaged honestly with what it says.

Writers are expected to show their sources and engage seriously with the historical and political debates their arguments enter. Mainstream consensus is a data point, not a ceiling. Where credible evidence or serious scholarship contradicts the received narrative, writers are not only permitted to say so — they are expected to.

This standard cuts in every direction. It applies equally to writers who distrust elite institutions and writers who defer to them. The question Rampart asks of every piece is not "who published this source" but "does the argument hold."

What Rampart Will Not Publish

Rampart's commitment to free expression and dissenting argument is not without limits. The following will not be published under any circumstances, regardless of the ideological direction from which they come:

- Ad hominem attacks. Argument that substitutes personal insult for engagement with a position is not argument. Writers may critique individuals sharply — but the critique must be of what they did, said, or decided, not who they are.
- Deliberately fabricated facts. A piece that knowingly misrepresents evidence, invents citations, or presents fiction as documented reality will not run. Writers who do this lose the right to publish in Rampart.
- Incitement. Content that calls for or reasonably foresees violence against individuals or groups has no place in civic argument and will not be published.
- Content designed to harass. Pieces written to target, intimidate, or humiliate a private individual rather than engage a public question will not be published.

These limits are not ideological. They are the floor beneath which an argument ceases to be an argument. Rampart will invoke them consistently and will not use them as cover for suppressing positions it disagrees with. Any rejection on these grounds will be explained to the writer in writing.

Editorial Calendar

Each monthly issue operates on the following cycle:

- Week 1: Anchor essay commissioned, open submissions open.
- Week 2–3: Submissions close. Editing begins. Contributors receive feedback.
- End of Week 3: Final versions due. No extensions.
- Week 4: Final review, editorial introduction written, issue published.

Deadline culture is enforced from the first issue. The standard established at launch is the standard that holds.
