

## **Proposal:**

### **Happiness & Rising Populist Authoritarianism**

The focal point of my final research is an examination of global happiness levels and their evolution in relation to the democracy index. The happiness level of particular nations is rated on the Cantril ladder zero to ten scale, with the worst possible life as zero and the best possible life as a ten. Factors that are compared across the happiness index include social support, freedom, GDP, and perception of corruption. Similarly, the democracy index is also ranked on a score out of ten, where the above eight is a “full democracy” and below four is an “authoritarian regime.” The democracy index takes into account factors such as the functioning level of the government, political culture, and civil liberties. With the recent increase in identity politics and “strongman” leaders, I am interested in discovering correlations between happiness and rising disillusionment with global democratic systems. From my final visualization, the intent would be for an intended audience to have a deeper understanding of how current political events have correlated or contrasted perceptions of governmental control, ultimately effecting the nation’s citizens’ happiness levels.