

Election 2020 – We knew it was going to be weird, but...

## Course Proposal - Election 2020



Inbox x



**Karl Hakkarainen** <kh@queenlake.com>

to Barbara ▾

Barbara -

This proposal is for B Session of Fall 2020.

kh

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Karl Hakkarainen

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Mon, Apr 1, 2019, 9:55 AM



# An omen?

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

Late Edition

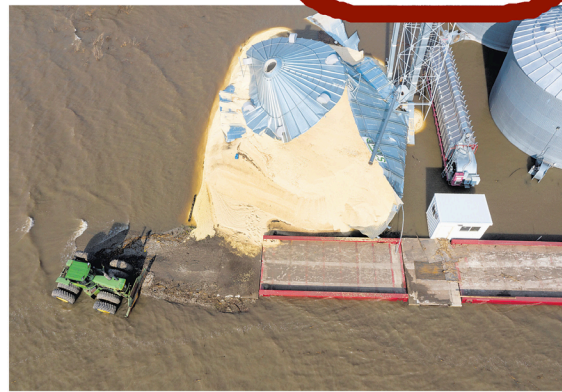
Today, mostly sunny, breezy, a chillier day, high 47. Tonight, clear, seasonally cold, low 36. Tomorrow, sunshine, then increasing clouds, high 51. Weather map is on page A14.

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NEW YORK, MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2019

\$3.00



In Hamburg, Iowa, a levee that held during flooding in 2011 gave way in March. Many areas are now without any flood protection.

## Budget Brings Congestion Tolls And Plastic Bag Ban to New York

By JESSE MCKINLEY  
and VIVIAN WANG

ALBANY — After weeks of intraparty bickering, the New York State Legislature and Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo on Sunday signed off on a \$175 billion budget that was wreathed with progressive initiatives, including changes to the cash bail system, a new tax on high-end homes and a ground-breaking plan to charge motorists to drive into Manhattan's busiest stretches.

The budget deal was immediately hailed as "transformative" by Mr. Cuomo, and it will clearly have an impact felt far beyond taxpayers' wallets. The agreement included deals that will probably change the way millions of New Yorkers shop, commute and vote: bans on plastic bags from retail stores, billions in new funds for New York's troubled subway system and a new paid



A ban on plastic store bags aims to end scenes like this.

three-hour break on Election Day. The budget's progressive theme was a victory for Mr. Cuomo and the newly elected Democratic majority in the State Legislature, most notably Democrats who helped give the party control of the State Senate for the first time in a decade. They largely

Continued on Page A17

## Hard Choices in the Midwest As Levee After Levee Drowns

By MITCH SMITH and JOHN SCHWARTZ

CORNING, Mo. — The wide-spread, severe flooding in the Midwest over the last month has exposed the vulnerabilities in a levee system that is now so full of holes that many here ruefully describe it as "Swiss cheese."

With dozens of costly breaches across Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and nearby states, the surging waters have left large areas without even cursory flood protection. "Breaches everywhere: multiple, multiple breaches," said Tom Ballock, the top elected official in Holt County, Mo., where crews were rushing last week to patch a leaking levee that, if it failed completely, would flood the small town of Fortescue.

And with the fear of more floods in the coming years — and perhaps even the coming weeks — many people said living and farming near the water might not be vi-

able much longer without major changes.

"We can't keep this up and make a living," Michael Poirer, who grows corn and soybeans on fertile bottomland in north Missouri, said last week after trying to find a path to his submerged farm in a motorboat.

On the river-speckled western prairie, the thousands of levees are an insurance policy against nature's whims. But at their best, keep crops and towns dry, floodwaters surge and the agriculture-driven economy churning. But the levees are aging, subject to uneven reinforcement, and in many cases, not designed to withstand the river's

seen in the last decade. The recent flooding — which has devastated farms, roads and Native American reservations —

Continued on Page A12

## In Devastation of Opioids, Family Spied New Market

Sacklers Saw Addiction to Their Own Drugs  
as a Chance to Profit, Suits Reveal

This article is by Danny Hakim,  
Roni Caryn Ruben and William K.  
Hochstetler

The Sacklers had a new plan. It was 2014, and the company the family had controlled for two generations, Purdue Pharma, had been hit with years of investigations and lawsuits over its marketing of the highly addictive opioid painkiller OxyContin, at one point pleading guilty to a federal felony and paying more than \$500 million in criminal and civil penalties.

But as the country's addiction crisis worsened, the Sacklers eyed another business opportunity. They could increase their profits by selling treatments for the very problem their company had helped to create: addiction to opioids.

Details of the effort, named Project Tango, have come to light in lawsuits filed by the attorneys general of Massachusetts and New York. Together, the cases lay out the extensive involvement of a family that has largely escaped personal legal consequences for Purdue Pharma's role in an epidemic that has led to hundreds of thousands of overdose deaths in the past two decades.

The filings cite numerous records, emails and other documents showing that members of the family had explored the market for a new opioid treatment, continued after the company had admitted in a 2007 plea deal that it had misrepresented the drug's addictive qualities and potential for

abuse.

The business potential of adding addiction treatment to the mix was illustrated in internal company charts and diagrams.

"Pain treatment and addiction are naturally linked," one Project Tango document, included in the New York complaint, said. It depicted a big blue funnel. The fat end was labeled "pain treatment"; the narrow end was labeled "opioid addiction treatment."

The company, the document said, could make money at both ends of the funnel as an "end-to-end pain provider." Dr. Kathie Sackler, one of the eight family members sitting on Purdue's board, instructed employees to devote "immediate attention" to the effort, according to an email included in the Massachusetts filing.

The two lawsuits are part of a burst of recent litigation that has taken aim at the Sacklers, a far-flung billionaire family that has a network of trusts and companies in the United States and abroad. Their philanthropic gifts have built namesake wings housing the Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and oriental antiquities at the Louvre in Paris, as well as a library at the University of Oxford and a scientific institute at Columbia University.

In addition to New York and Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Utah have filed suit against members of the family.

Continued on Page A11

## Biden Strives To Stem Crisis Over Touching

By SYDNEY EMBER  
and JONATHAN MARTIN

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. scrambled on Sunday for a way to defuse a growing crisis for his administration, as he sought to calm security agreements and make allies to praise his treatment of women after Lucy Flores, a former Nevada legislator, accused Mr. Biden of kissing and touching her.

Mr. Biden also issued a sweep-

## Moscow Gains Clout in Africa, Alarming West

By ERIC SCHWITZ

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — Russian troops steadily expanded their presence in Africa, with alarming arms deals, security agreements and training programs for unstable countries or autocratic leaders.

In the Central African Republic, where a Russian has been in-

A course on Election 2020 would be good, they said...



# Course outline

Date	Topic	Notes
10/26	How we got here	May be overcome by events
11/4	What the heck just happened?	
11/11	Congressional and state results	
11/18	Transition and aftermath	
12/2	What did we learn?	

## Contact information

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508 829 5825

Slides will be available on Election 2020. (Slides will be available within 15 minutes of the start of class.)  
Recordings will be available on <https://assumptionwise.org/Course-Recordings>





Predictions from a quieter time

Voters in early primary states will signal whether, finally, Democrats are ready to embrace a candidate unafraid to promote progressive ideals such as universal free college and “Medicare for All” ... or Joe Biden.

Kamala Harris will be this person’s running mate. Unless the candidate is Elizabeth Warren, because an all-female ticket might make Americans nervous. Don’t they have an [all-lady government in Finland](#)? Do we really want to be like Finland? Hey, isn’t Finland a socialist country?

What will 2020 hold? Predictions are dangerous, but that hasn’t stopped us from making some

**Robin Abcarian, Los Angeles Times, December 20, 2019**

The great cycle in December 2020 represents the death of kings and the ending of kingdoms. When people ask me, "Who's president next year?" I go, "I don't care because whoever it is dies in office. Just look at the vice president. That's who's going to be your president."

**Anne Ortelee** – Certified astrologer based in New York City

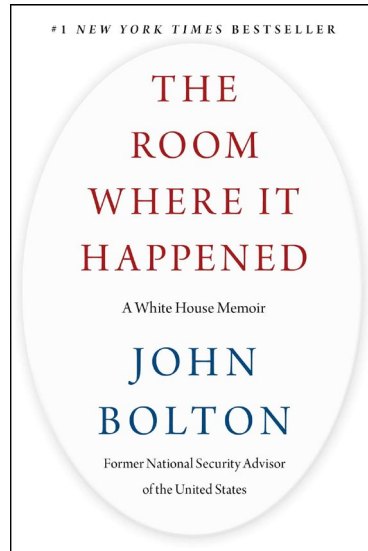
## Predictions - (via Glenn Altschuler), July 29, 2020

- Vicious social media campaigns
- No convention bounce
- Voting issues
  - Mail-in ballots
  - Registration will be strong
  - Long lines
- States to watch
  - Arizona
  - Florida
  - North Carolina
  - Georgia
  - Texas
- Impact of demographics and identity politics
  - Voter turnout among Black, Latinx, Southeast Asian

# Key themes and topics

- Tribes, demographics, and the electorate
- It's (almost) all about Donald Trump
- Lawyers, guns, and money
- Voter participation and suppression

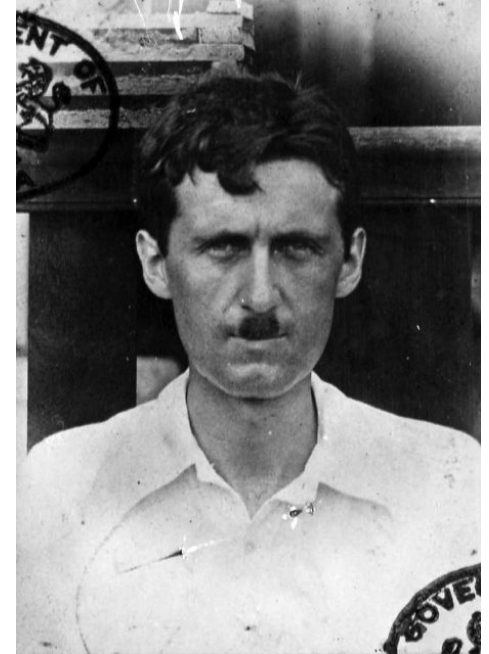
November 3 is the day that voting ends, not just the day that we vote



Election 2020 - Class 1



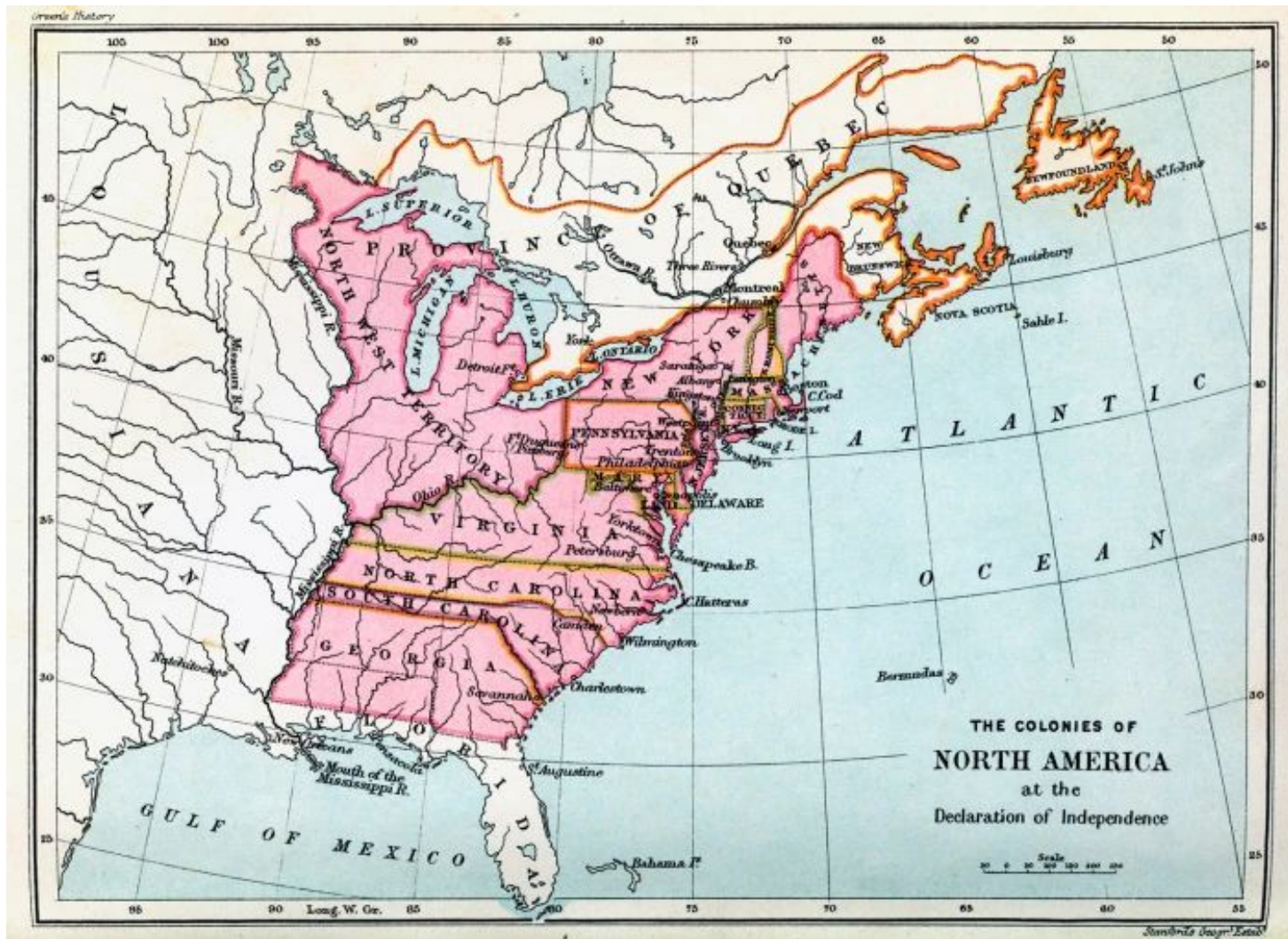
A nationalist is one who thinks solely, or mainly, in terms of competitive prestige. He may be a positive or a negative nationalist – that is, he may use his mental energy either in boosting or in denigrating – but at any rate his thoughts always turn on victories, defeats, triumphs and humiliations.



Nationalism is power hunger tempered by self-deception.

## Notes on Nationalism

George Orwell, 1945



## The U.S. as a federation of tribes

[C]ultural cognition strongly motivates individuals—of all worldviews—to recognize such information as sound in a selective pattern that reinforces their cultural predispositions.

We hear what we want to hear

Donald Braman et. al., Cultural Cognition of Scientific Consensus, 14 J. of Risk Research 147 (2010).

# Who's running for President

- Federal Election Commission Candidates
- 1743 in 2016 (134 of whom raised more than \$0)
- 1224 in 2020 (166 of whom raised more than \$0)







## The Impeachment

As for his assessment of Putin himself, he never offered an opinion, at least in front of me. I never asked what Trump's view was, perhaps afraid of what I might hear. His personal take on the Russian leader remained a mystery.

John Bolton,  
The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir


“Look,” Trump said, “when you’re running a country it’s full of surprises. *There’s dynamite behind every door.*”



Woodward, *Rage*, p. xxi

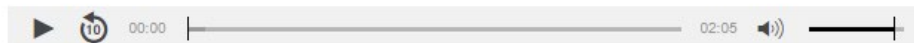


## Too early to say Sars is back: HKU expert

2019-12-31 HKT 14:15

 Recommend 44

Share this story  



Professor Leo Poon talks to RTHK's Richard Pyne

A Hong Kong University virologist says it is too soon to say whether an outbreak of a pneumonia-like illness in the mainland city of Wuhan marks the re-emergence of the deadly Sars virus, and further tests are needed.



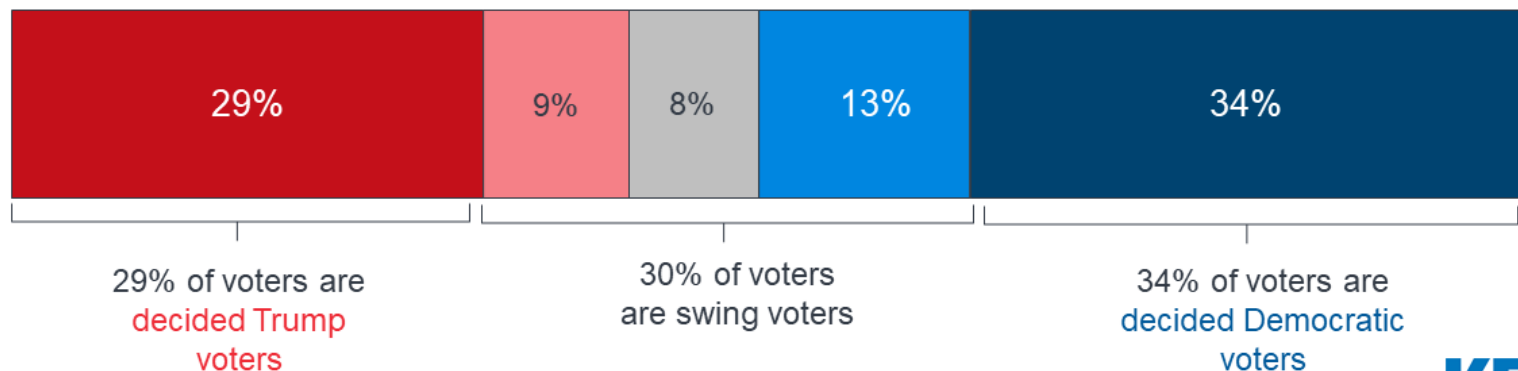
## An 'Off-the-Shelf, Skeleton Project': Experts Analyze the App That Broke Iowa - February 5, 2020

Figure 1

## Three In Ten Voters Say They Have Not Made Up Their Mind About Which Candidate They Are Voting For In 2020

AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: Thinking about the upcoming presidential election in 2020, do you think you are...?

- Definitely going to vote for President Trump
- Probably going to vote for President Trump
- Undecided (Vol.)
- Probably going to vote for the Democratic nominee
- Definitely going to vote for the Democratic nominee



SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Polls (conducted May 30-June 4, July 18-23, 2019). See topline for full question wording and response options.



## The Myth of the Swing Voter

**BBC** Sign in Home News Sport Reel Worklife Travel

# NEWS

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## Trump on Dr Fauci's popularity: 'Nobody likes me'

US President Donald Trump questions why he's not as popular as his coronavirus task force experts.

🕒 28 July | [BBC News](#) | [US & Canada](#)

Trump on Dr Fauci's popularity: 'Nobody likes me'

**The  
Economist**

How Abe changed Japan

Wall Street's expansion in China

The case for digital ID cards

Why Britons walk their dogs so much

SEPTEMBER 5TH-11TH 2020

# America's ugly election

How bad could it get?



The view from early September

# Accelerating toward tribes

- How Hatred Came To Dominate American Politics
  - The decline of local news outlets has let national news dominate.
- “Cultural values are much more connected to geography than economic values”
  - 60 to 70 percent of people view the other party as a serious threat



**From:** Proud Boys <[info@officialproudboys.com](mailto:info@officialproudboys.com)>

**Subject:** Vote for Trump or else!

**Date:** October 20, 2020 at 3:10:10 PM EDT

**To:** [REDACTED].[COM](mailto:[REDACTED].COM)

[REDACTED] we are in possession of all your information You are currently registered as a Democrat and we know this because we have gained access into the entire voting infrastructure. You will vote for Trump on Election Day or we will come after you. Change your party affiliation to Republican to let us know you received our message and will comply. We will know which candidate you voted for. I would take this seriously if I were you. [REDACTED] good luck

U.S. government concludes Iran was behind threatening emails sent to Democrats

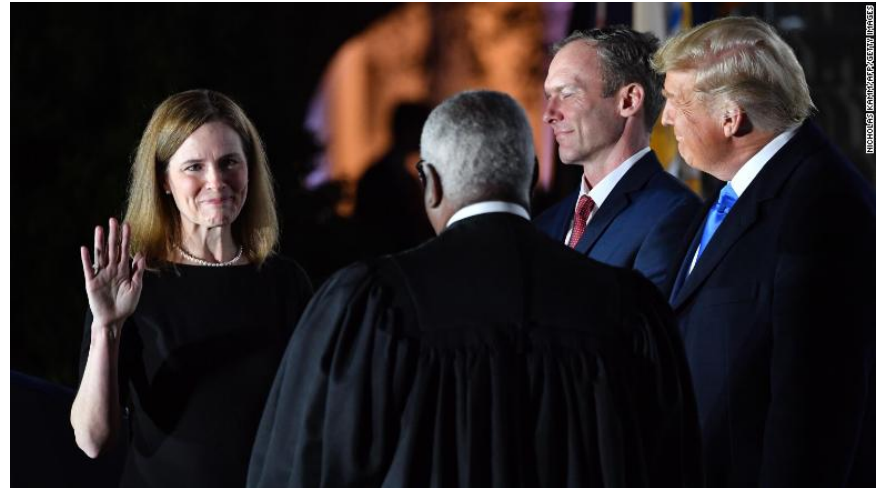


## Nielsen ratings for first presidential debate

Traditional TV only, 1976 to 2020

Year	Candidates	Viewership
2020	Trump/Biden	73.1m
2016	Trump/H. Clinton	84.0
2012	Romney/Obama	67.2
2008	McCain/Obama	52.4
2004	W. Bush/Kerry	62.5
2000	W. Bush/Gore	46.6
1996	Dole/B. Clinton	36.1
1992	H.W. Bush/B. Clinton/Perot	62.4
1988	H.W. Bush/Dukakis	65.1
1984	Reagan/Mondale	65.1
1980	Reagan/Carter	80.6
1976	Ford/Carter	69.7

Over 73 million people watched the first debate on TV



October surprise in September – RIP RBG

# Lawyers, Guns, and Money

# Law and elections

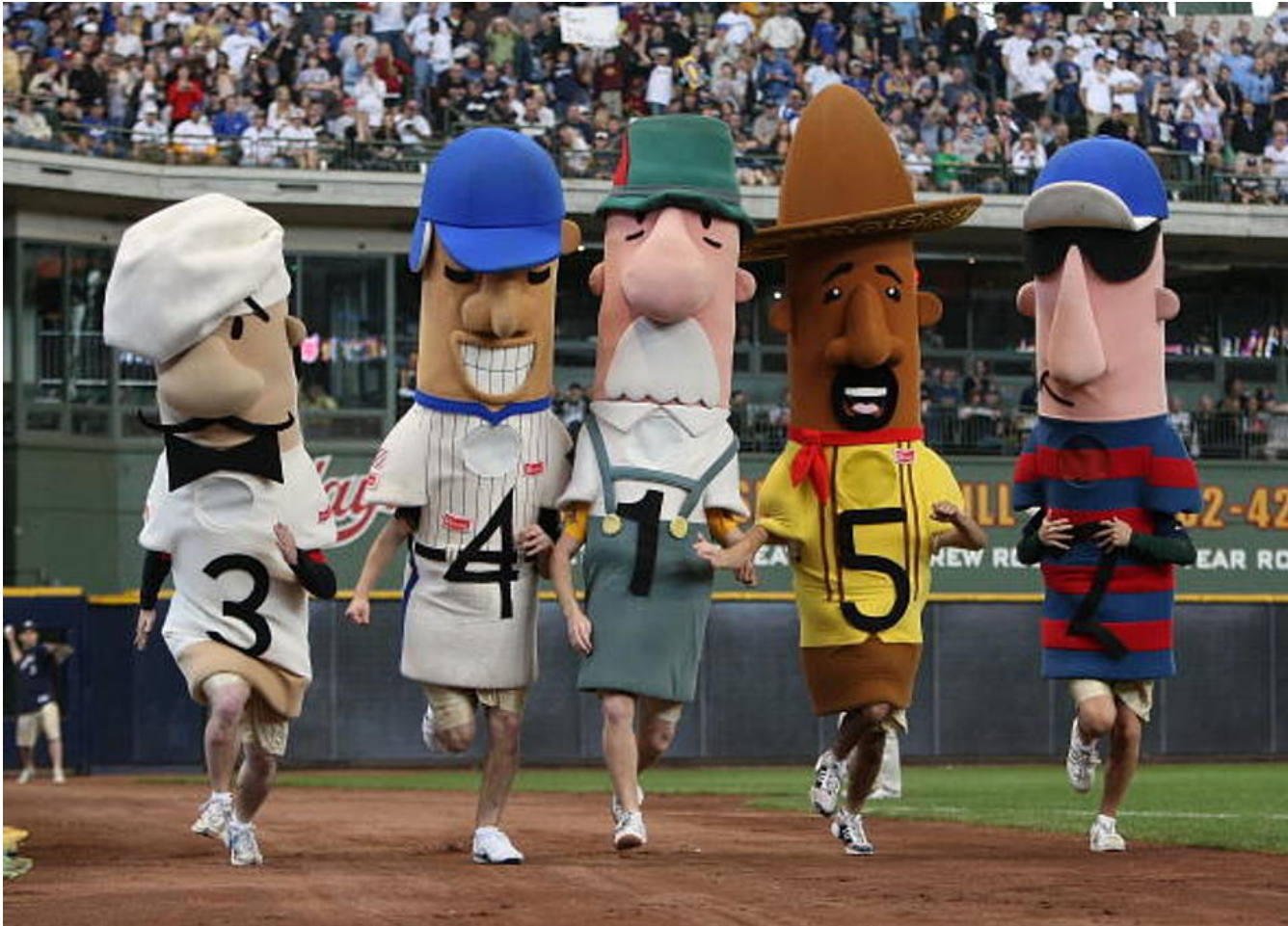
- Rick Hasen, Chancellor's Professor of Law and Political Science at the University of California, Irvine:  
Election Law Blog
- Stanford/MIT Healthy Elections Project:  
COVID-Related Election Litigation Tracker, 418 cases nationwide
- WISE course, Electing a President the American Way with Jack Ross



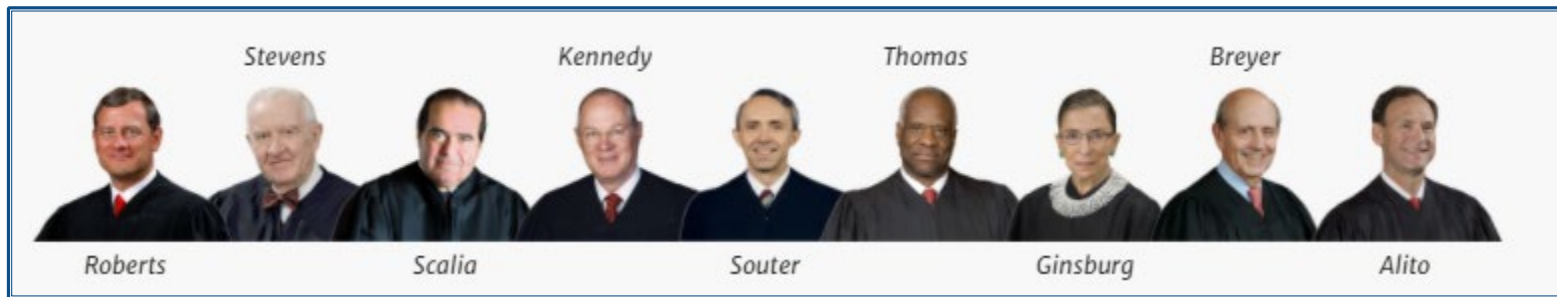
## Bush v. Gore

How Amy Coney Barrett played a role in Bush v. Gore — and helped the Republican Party defend mail ballots



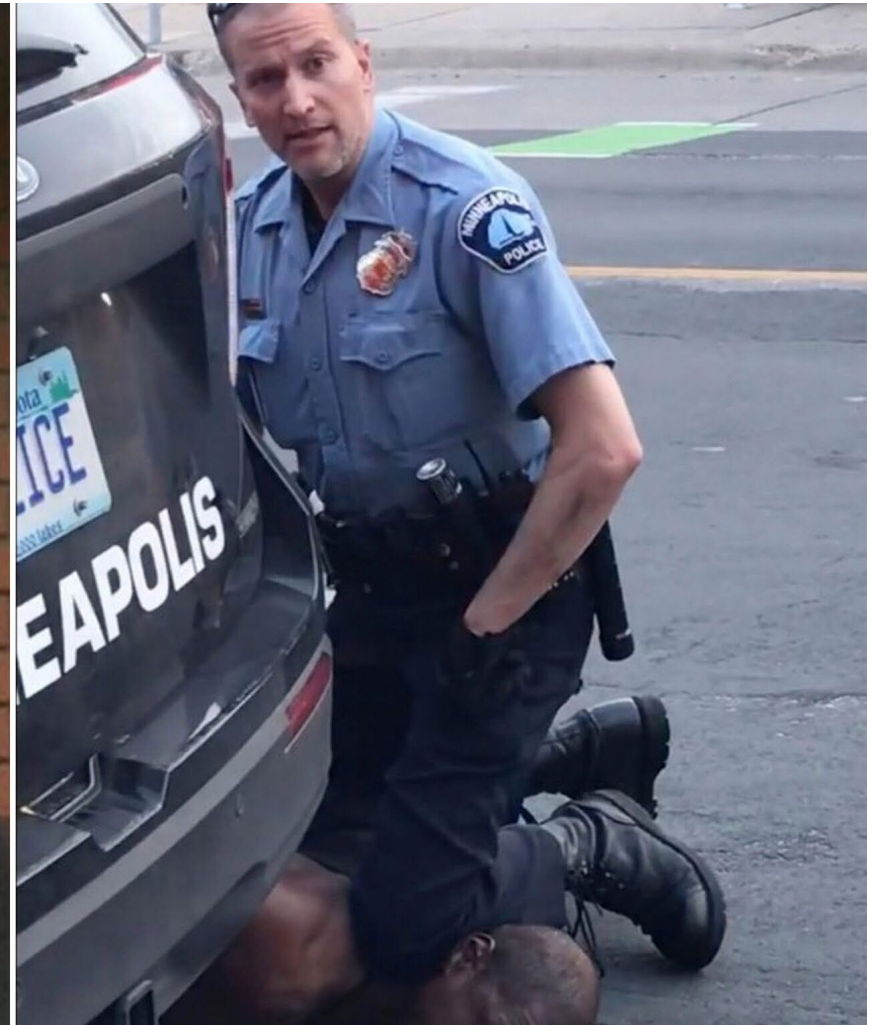


Wisconsin GOP tries to stop Racing Sausages from promoting civic participation



The Purcell principle: A presumption against last-minute changes to election procedures





## Guns

## *A Divided Nation Agrees on One Thing: Many People Want a Gun*

Gun buyers say they are motivated by a new destabilizing sense that is pushing them to purchase weapons for the first time, or if they already have them, to buy more.



Brandon Wexler, the owner of Wex Gunworks in Delray Beach, Fla., showing a gun to potential customers. Scott McIntyre for The New York Times

### POLITICS

## Michigan judge halts Benson's ban on open carry of guns at polling places

Beth LeBlanc The Detroit News

Published 5:14 p.m. ET Oct. 27, 2020 | Updated 8:26 p.m. ET Oct. 27, 2020

[View Comments](#)

Michigan Court of Claims Judge Christopher Murray issued a preliminary injunction Tuesday that effectively halts Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson's directive banning the open carry of guns near polling locations on Election Day.

Attorney General Dana Nessel announced almost immediately after the decision was issued that her office would appeal to the Court of Appeals "as this issue is of significant public interest and importance to our election process."

The edict by Benson "smacks of an attempt at legislation" and lacks public input instead of following the regular rule-making process, Murray said during a Tuesday emergency hearing. Further, the state already has a law prohibiting voter intimidation, said Murray, an appointee of Republican former Gov. John Engler.

"The Legislature has said: Here are the places you cannot carry a weapon," Murray said during the hearing. "The secretary has expanded that. And so how is that in accordance with state law?"



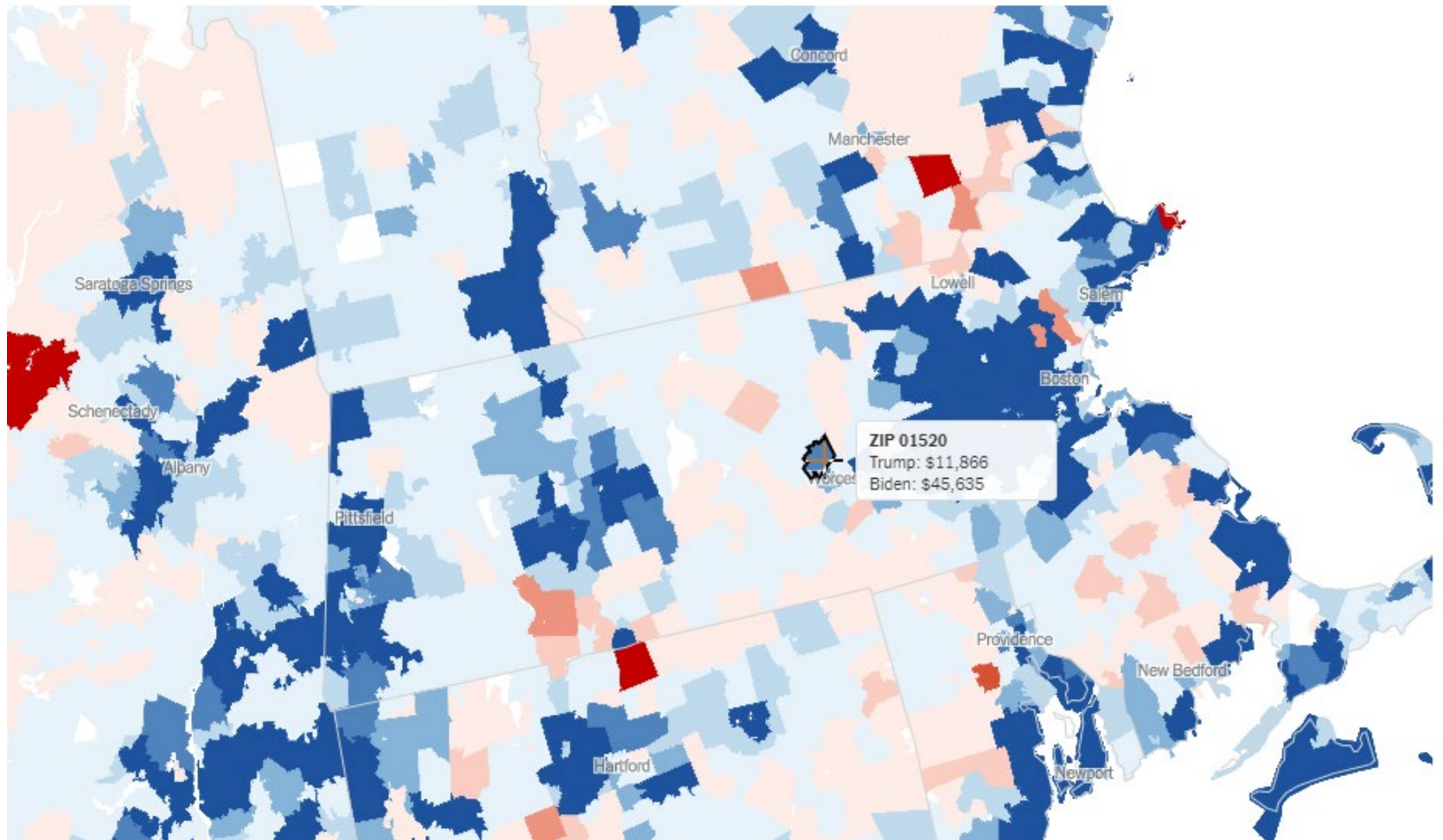
A woman wears a custom Kimber .45 pistol in a black leather holster. Dale G. Young, Detroit News File

# More guns

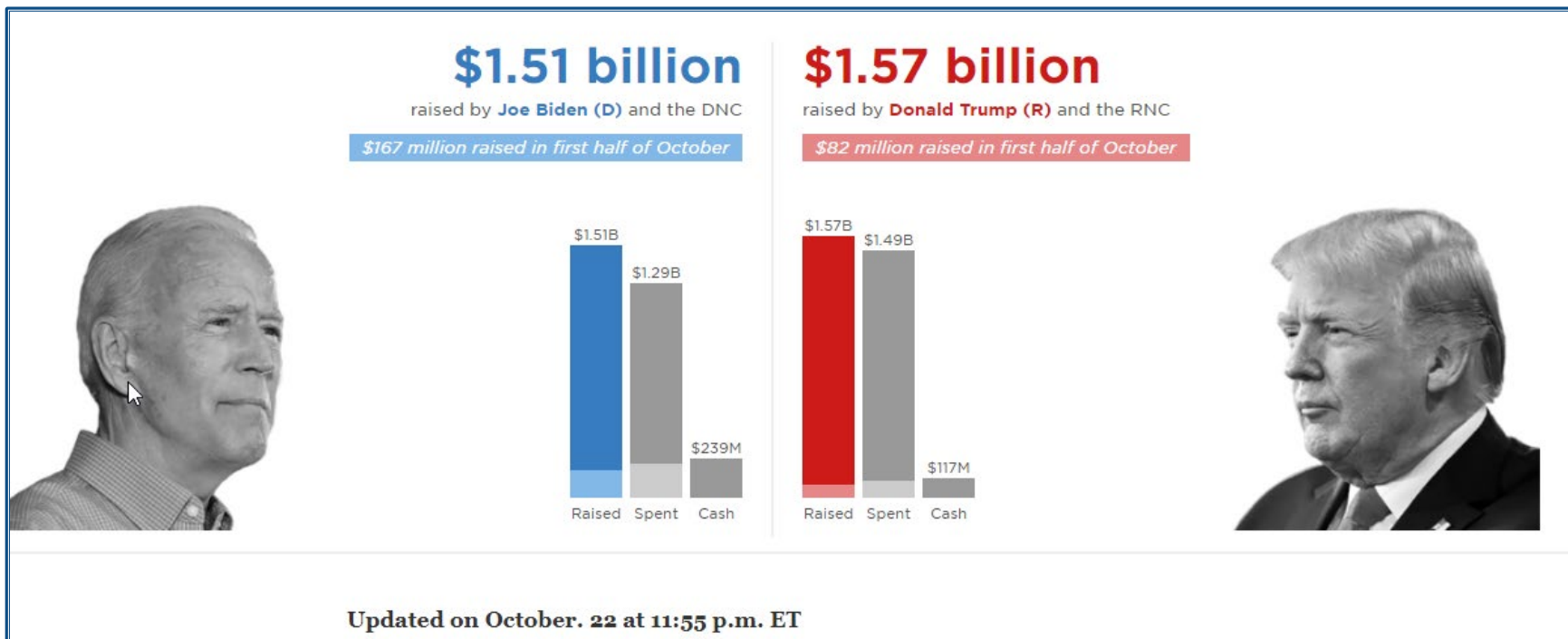
# Money

- Democrats have raised more money faster
- McConnell vented that the party's Senate candidates are being financially overwhelmed because of small-dollar contributions to ActBlue, the online liberal fund-raising hub.



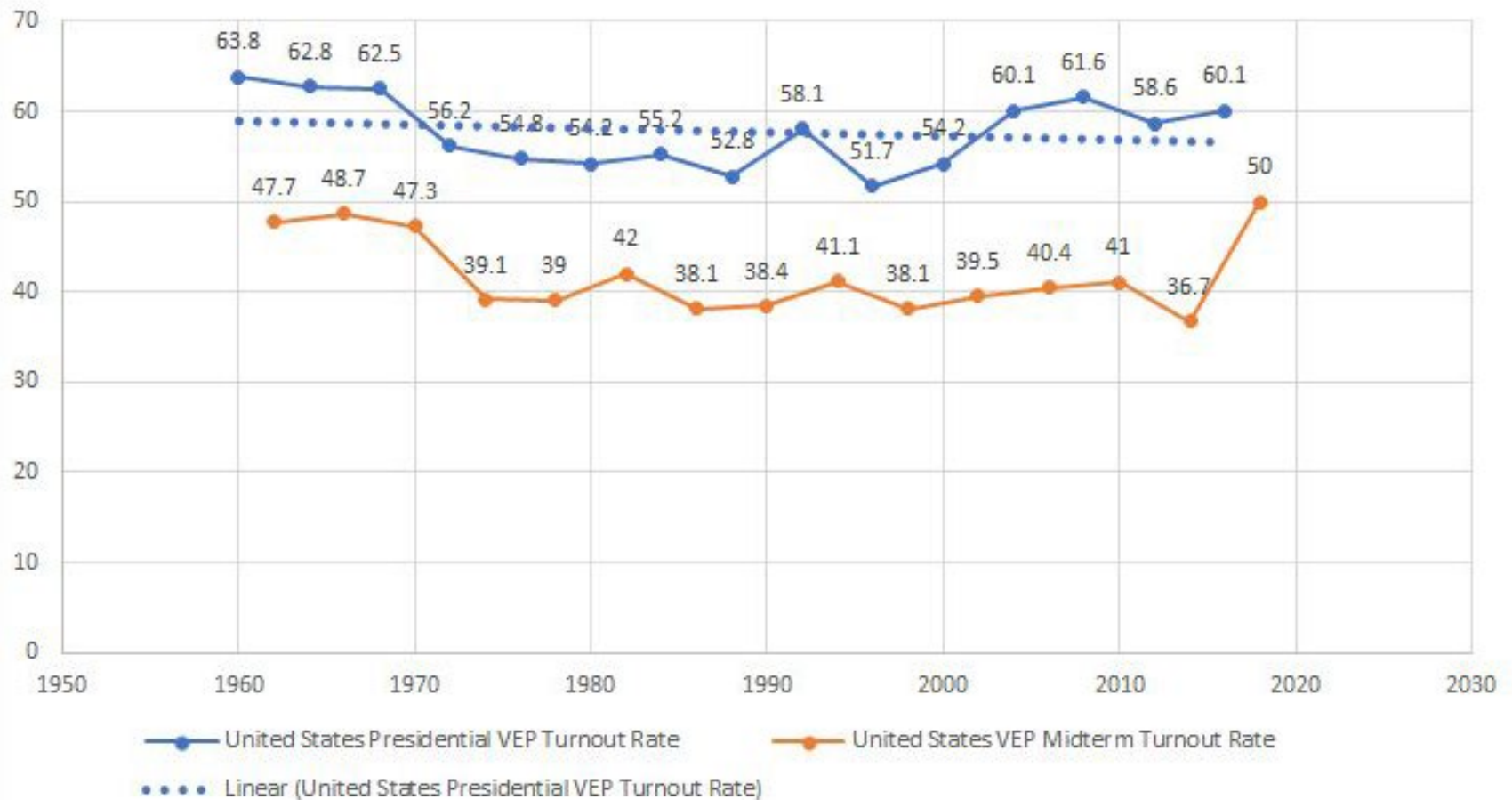


**A new map shows only two Massachusetts towns had more Trump donors than Biden donors**



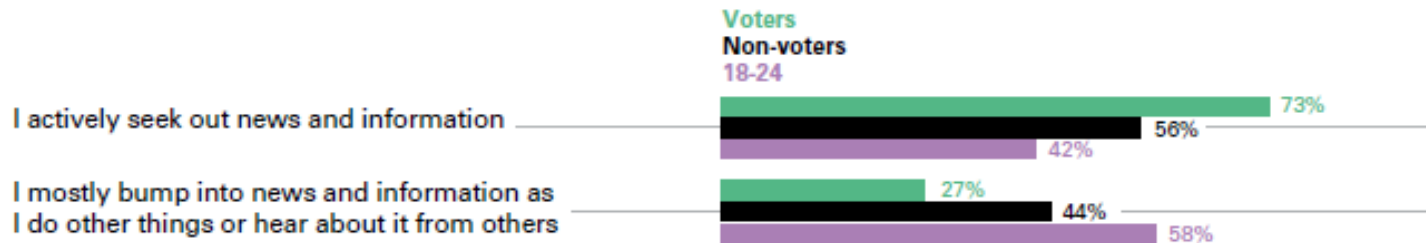
## NPR – Money Tracker: How Much Trump And Biden Have Raised In The 2020 Election

Voter Turnout Since 1960, with Trendline



Source: United States Election Project

Choose the statement that best describes you, even if it is not exactly right.  
 "In general, I actively seek out news and information," OR, "I mostly bump into news and information as I do other things or hear about it from others."



## Voters, non-voters, and emerging voters

The Untold Story of American Non-Voters - Knight Foundation,  
 February 19, 2020

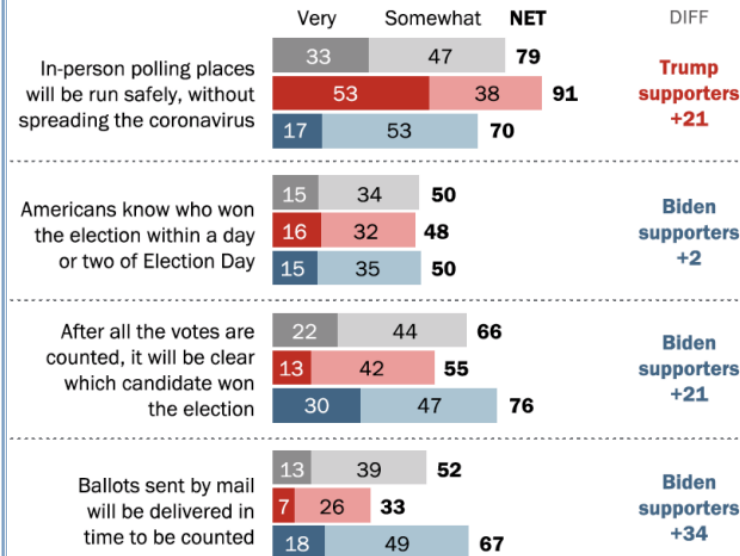


## Wide differences between Trump, Biden supporters over many aspects of voting and election process

% of registered voters who are \_\_\_\_ confident each will happen in the November election ...

Among ...

■ All voters  
■ Trump supporters  
■ Biden supporters



Note: Based on registered voters.

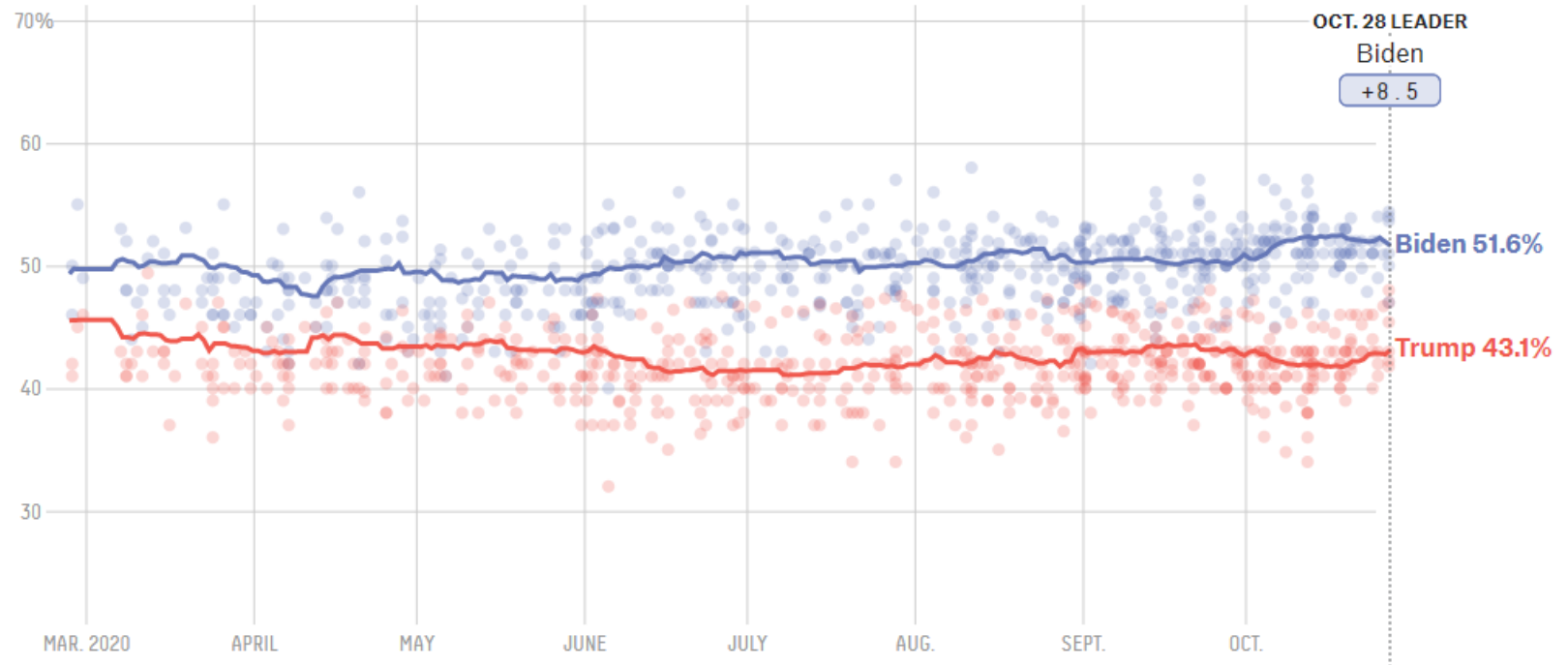
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 30-Oct. 5, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Pew Research Center - Deep Divisions in Views of the Election Process – and Whether It Will Be Clear Who Won

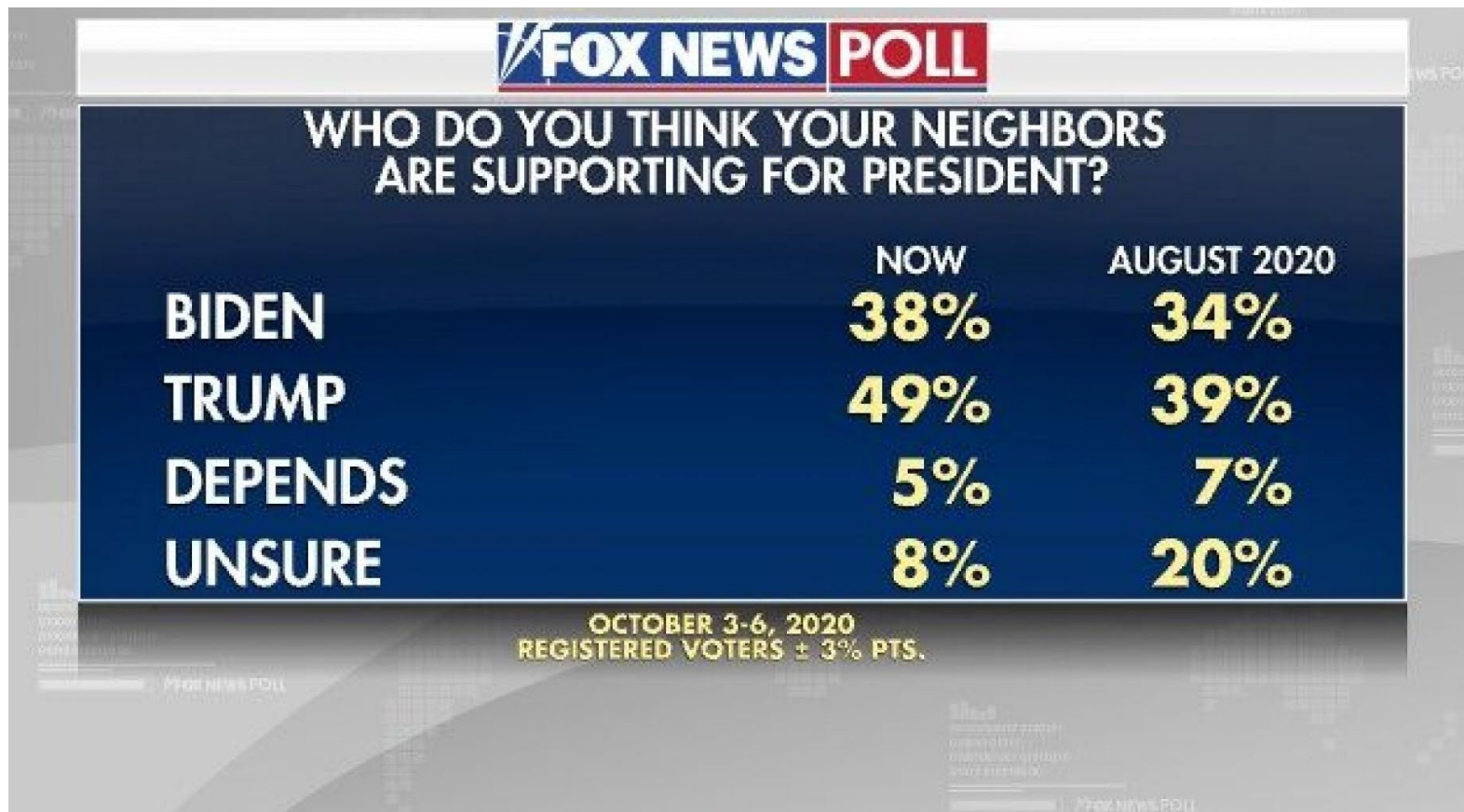
## Who's ahead in the national polls?

An updating average of 2020 presidential general election polls, accounting for each poll's quality, sample size and recency



Polling averages are adjusted based on state and national polls, which means candidates' averages can shift even if no new polls have been added to this page. [Read more about the methodology.](#)

## FiveThirtyEight – Who's ahead in the national polls?



More voters think neighbors backing Trump over Biden: Fox News poll

See [poll details](#)

# Trump's major achievements

- Three Supreme Court justices, 220 federal judges overall (and counting)
- Tax cuts
- ISIS debilitated
- Immigration severely curtailed



60 million cumulative votes

50 million

40 million

30 million

20 million

10 million

### Total early votes cast so far

**Battleground states**

31.1 million

**Likely Biden wins**

24 million

**Likely Trump wins**

9.2 million

Sept. 22      Sept. 29      Oct. 6      Oct. 13      Oct. 20      Oct. 26

## Early voting activities and results

## When mail and absentee ballots are pre-processed

Upon receipt

AZ	GA	MN	NV
AK	CO	DC	HI
ID	IL	IN	KS
MA	MT	NE	NJ
NY	SD	TN	UT
VA	WA		

Before Election Day

FL	IA	MI	NH
NC	OH	AR	CA
CT	DE	KY	LA
ME	MD	MO	NM
ND	OK	OR	RI
SC	TX	VT	WV
WY			

On Election Day

PA	WI	AL	MS
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 KEY PRESIDENTIAL BATTLEGROUND

**NYT: How Quickly Will Your Absentee Vote Be Counted?**





How to find good information on election night





neildegassetyson • Follow



neildegassetyson Asteroid 2018VP1, a refrigerator-sized space-rock, is hurtling towards us at more than 25,000 mi/hr.

It may buzz-cut Earth on Nov. 2, the day before the Presidential Election.

But it's not big enough to cause harm. So if the World ends in 2020, it won't be the fault of the Universe.



56,810 likes

4 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

See you next week