

In Time of Crisis: US Presidential Elections 2020

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Topics for Tonight

- The Primary Elections
- The Virus Impact on Late Primaries and Conventions
- General Election Campaign: Issues
- After 3 Nov: What to Expect
- Questions & Answers

- John Oliver

“This is a country that is in an emotional civil war with itself.”

Trump: No Serious Challenge to Re-Nomination

Strongest opponent, Bill Weld, ex-governor of Massachusetts, got 10% of the votes in Massachusetts primary. In all others, he got single digits, usually under 5%

In 20th Century and later, only Truman (1952) and Johnson (1968) denied re-nomination. Three other strong attempts failed (Taft 1912, Ford 1976, Carter 1980)



Democrats: Open & Chaotic Process



Democratic Debates: Early, Long, Complicated & Overall Successful

First debate: 26 June 2019

Eleventh debate: 15 March 2020 (Biden & Sanders)

To Qualify to be in first debate: 1 % support in three polls, and donations from 65,000 people. Qualifications increase for all succeeding debates.

Debates split center and left wings of party. But, introduced new political personalities to the public

Iowa, New Hampshire & Nevada: First Primaries--Chaos and Crisis

- Biden does badly: 4th IA, distant 5th NH,
(Klobuchar 4th NH) distant 2nd NV
- Buttigieg 1st Iowa, 3rd NH, 4th NV
- Sanders wins NH & NV, 2nd Iowa
- Warren 3rd in Iowa, 4th in NH, 4th NV
- (Iowa counting flawed—rules and
equipment confusing)



South Carolina (29 Feb): Clyburn, Biden, & Super Tuesday (3 Mar)

- South Carolina primary history:
Bush 2000, Clinton 2008, Biden
- Jim Clyburn: Kingmaker
- “We know Joe; Joe knows us.”
- South Carolina Results:

Biden 49%

Sanders 20%

Steyer 11%

Buttigieg 8%

Warren 7%

“We know Joe; Joe knows us.”



Super Tuesday (March 3) Results

- **10 Biden Victories & Vote %**

- Alabama 63%
- Arkansas 40%
- Maine 33.4%
- Massachusetts 33.4%
- Minnesota 38.6%
- North Carolina 43%
- Oklahoma 38.7%
- Tennessee 41.7%
- Texas 34.6%
- Virginia 53.3%

- **4 Sanders Victories & Vote %**

- California 36%
- Colorado 29%
- Utah 36%
- Vermont 50.6%

- **Michael Bloomberg Victory and Vote%**

American Samoa 49.9% (175 votes)

Shutdown & Convention Planning

- On March 17, Washington DC and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia set up shutdown.
- On March 17, Federal government offices generally moved to working from home where possible.
- On scene campaigning ended. States began shifting campaign dates to later in spring or early summer.
- On April 8, Bernie Sanders---last remaining active Democratic opponent to Biden---suspended campaign and endorsed Biden

Party Conventions: Drastic Change from Virus Restrictions



Impact of the Conventions

- Democrats beat Republicans in TV broadcast audience.
- On cable TV: Fox leads in audiences (2-to-1) over CNN and MSNBC during Republican Convention. (no data on streaming audience).
- On cable TV: MSNBC wins audiences in Democratic convention. MSNBC has 5-to-1 margin over Fox and 5-to-4 margin over CNN.
- Lesson: What television station you watch tells your political profile.
- “National conventions no longer serve their original purpose, or the uses the parties and the press have made of them in the past half-century. The national conventions were, for their first 130 years, a unique communications medium. They were the only place and time where party politicians could communicate frankly and bargain personally. They were the only place where people could discover which candidates had genuine support and which just gave lip service.” Michael Barone, conservative political analyst, Rasmussen Reports, July 24, 2020

Kamala Harris: Picking a Black Woman for VP

- What are the qualifications for Vice President?
- Biden committed himself to picking woman vice president candidate
- Third woman vice president candidate: Geraldine Ferraro (D, 1984), Sarah Palin (R, 2008)
- Harris bio: Parents: Jamaican father (professor), Indian mother (doctor). BA, Howard University; JD (law degree) Hastings school of law. (San Francisco). Prosecuting attorney in SF government, District Attorney San Francisco, California Attorney General, US Senator.

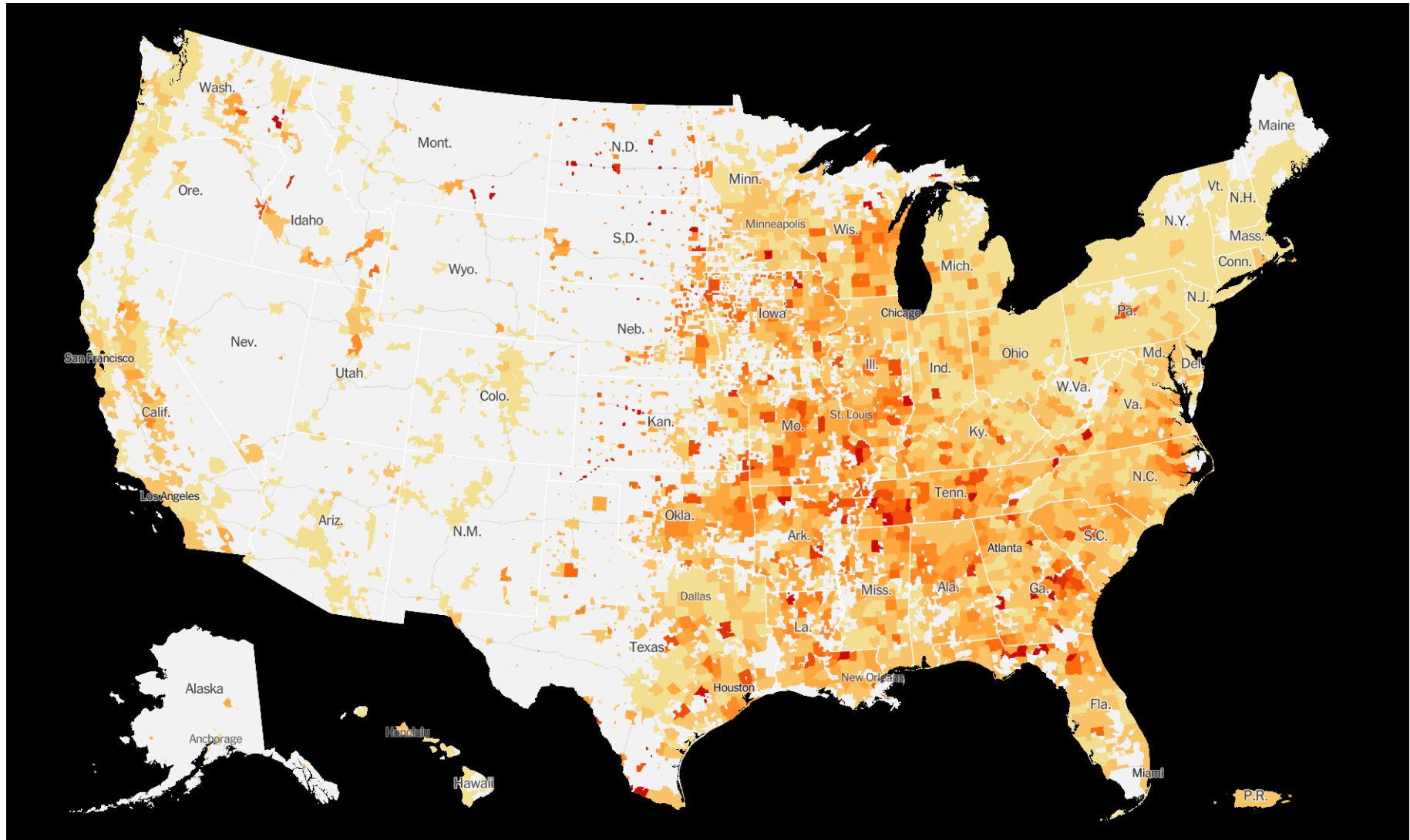


Debates

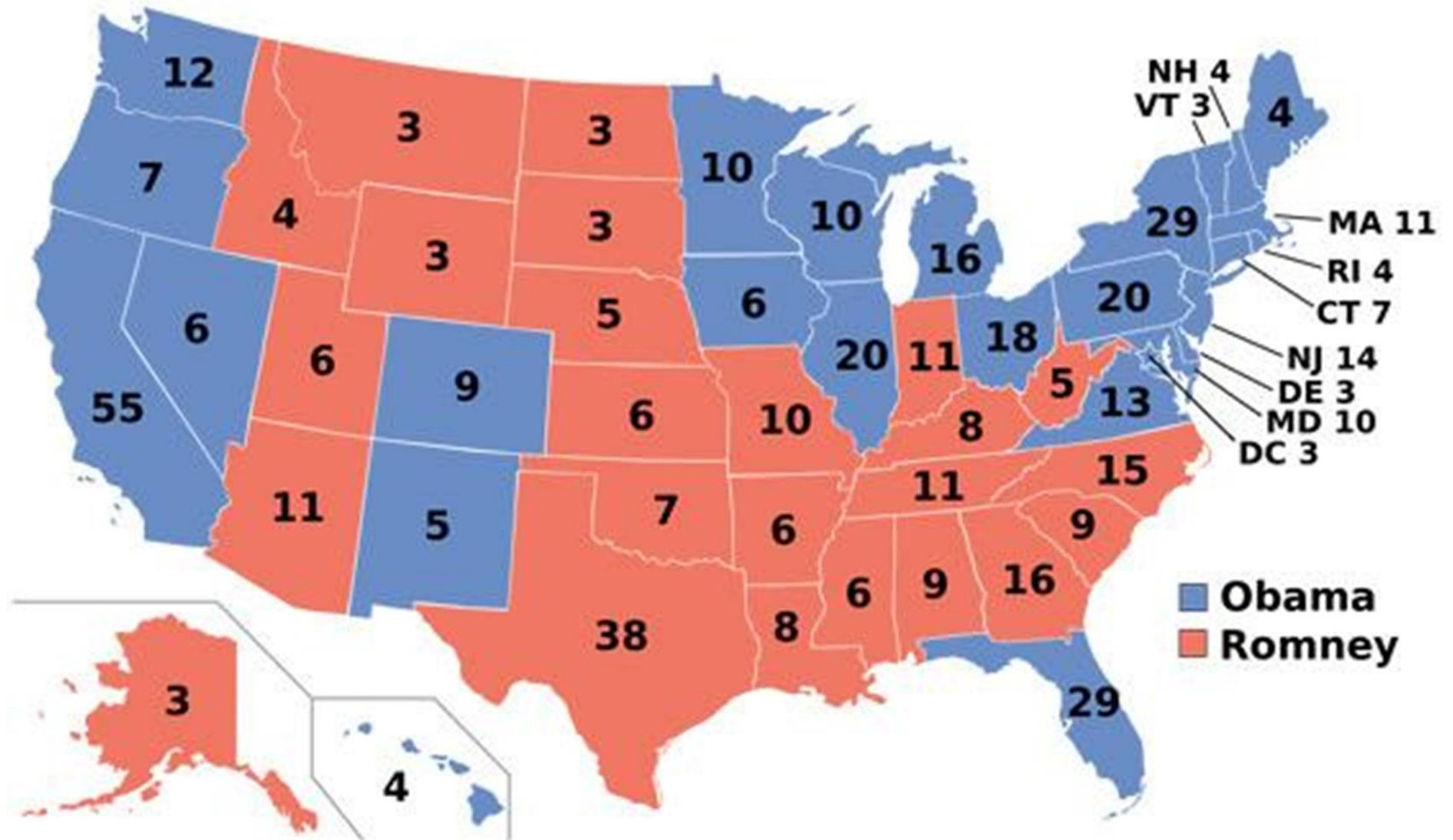


- September 29
 - October 7 (VP)
 - October 15
 - October 22
-
- **8 States begin “early voting” before the first campaign debate and 5 more states have all-mail voting.**

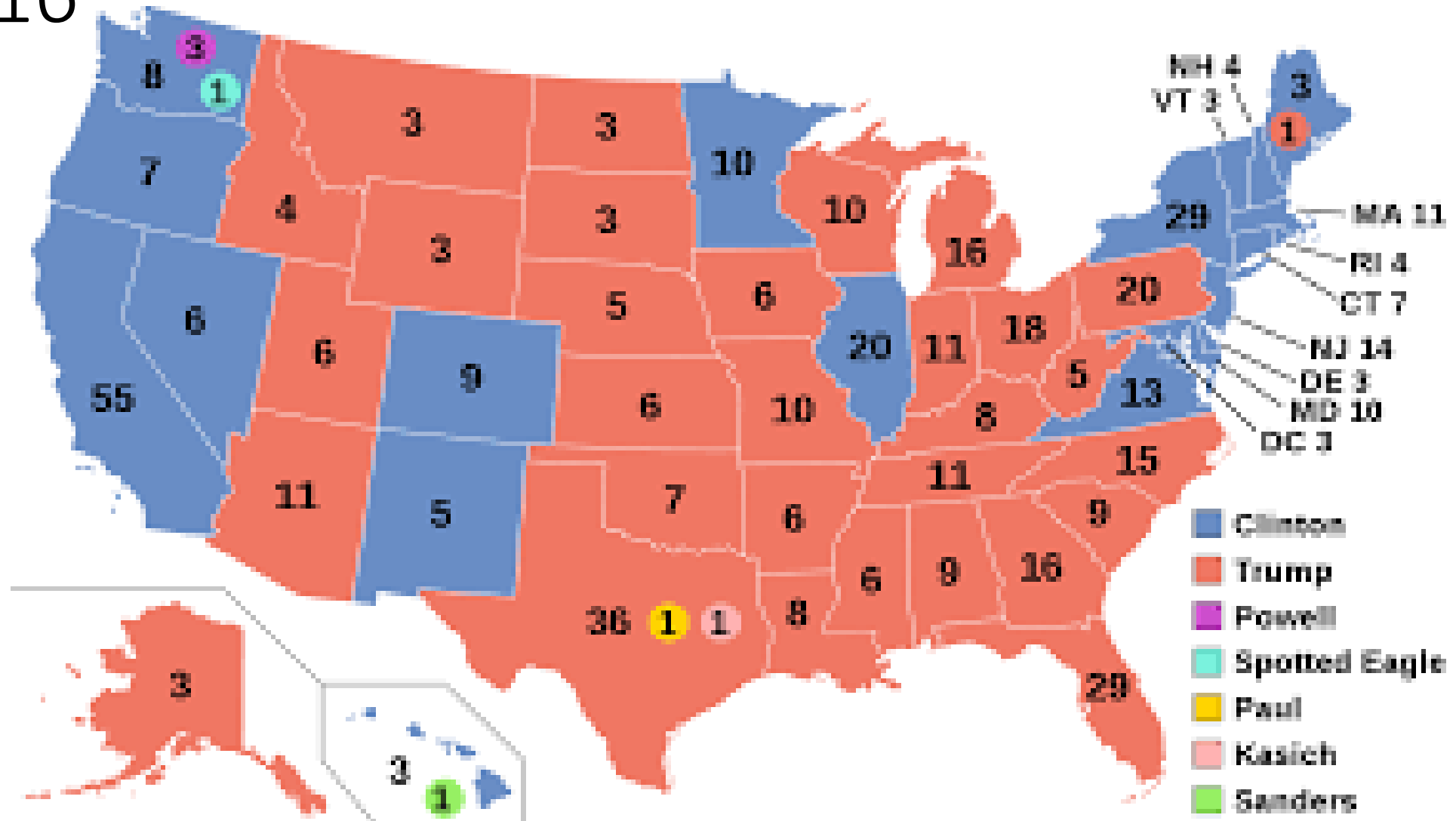
Corona Cases per 100,000 people:
white (few or none), yellow (5-30), orange to red (30-60) NY Times 13/09/2020



2012 Election



2016



Other Elections: Senate, House of Representatives

- 35 Senate: Republican Senate control (53-45-2 independents) at risk. 23 Republican seats are contested, and 12 Democratic seats.
- 435 House of Representatives seats (now 235 D; 197 R; 4 vacant), plus 5 territorial delegates and 1 resident commissioner.
- Governors in 11 states, plus 5 or more executive offices in each.
- State legislatures in 43 states. Crucial in drawing revised maps for election districts for next 10 years, based on new census data.

Money in Politics

- **Mike Bloomberg to spend at least \$100 million in Florida to benefit Joe Biden** Washington Post 19/09/2020

- **New pro-Trump super PAC backed by GOP megadonors launches \$30 million ad blitz in battleground states**

Preserve America formed as Biden outspending Trump on ads.

ABC News 1/09/20

Black Lives Matter

- Police killings of black citizens
- BLM multi-ethnic protests spread
- Protests/violence increase as examples of police violence rise



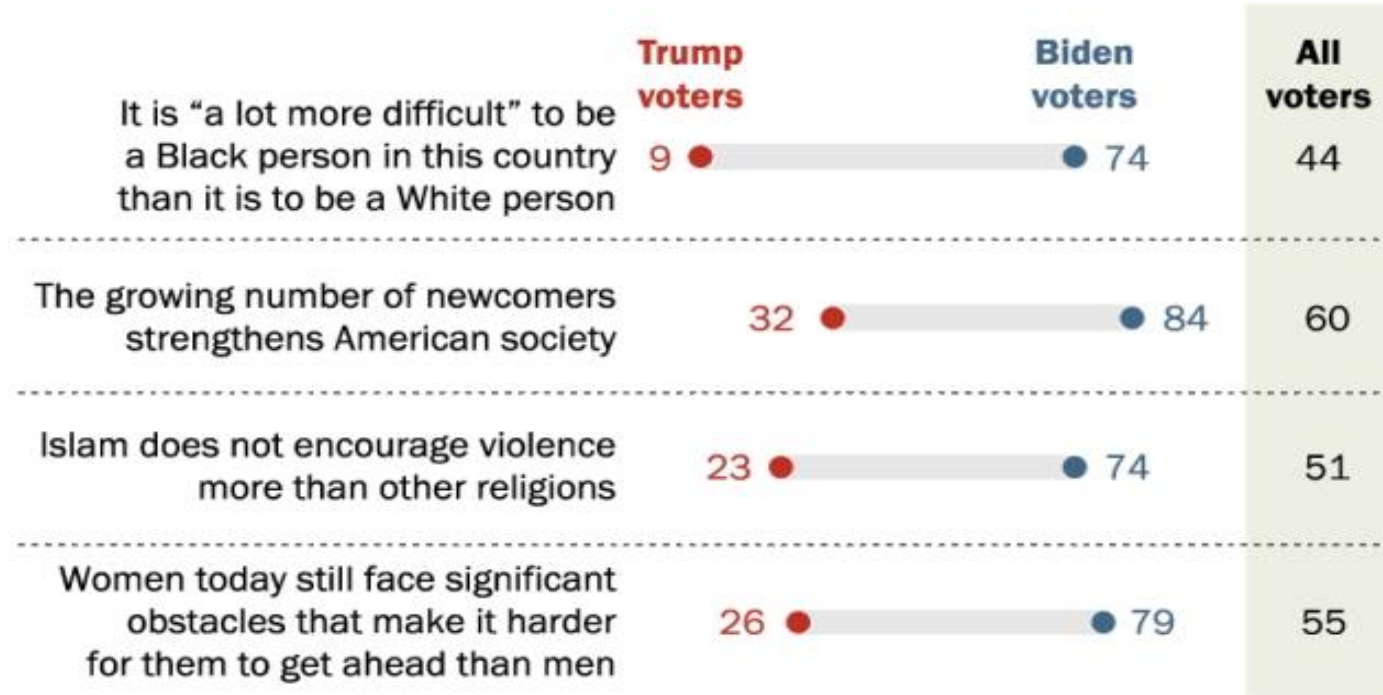
Trump: I'm the Law & Order President

Biden: I support black rights but not
violent protests

Pew Research:

Stark divides between Trump, Biden voters over race, immigration, gender

% of registered voters who say ...



Note: Based on registered voters.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 27-Aug. 2, 2020.

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Cultural Divide

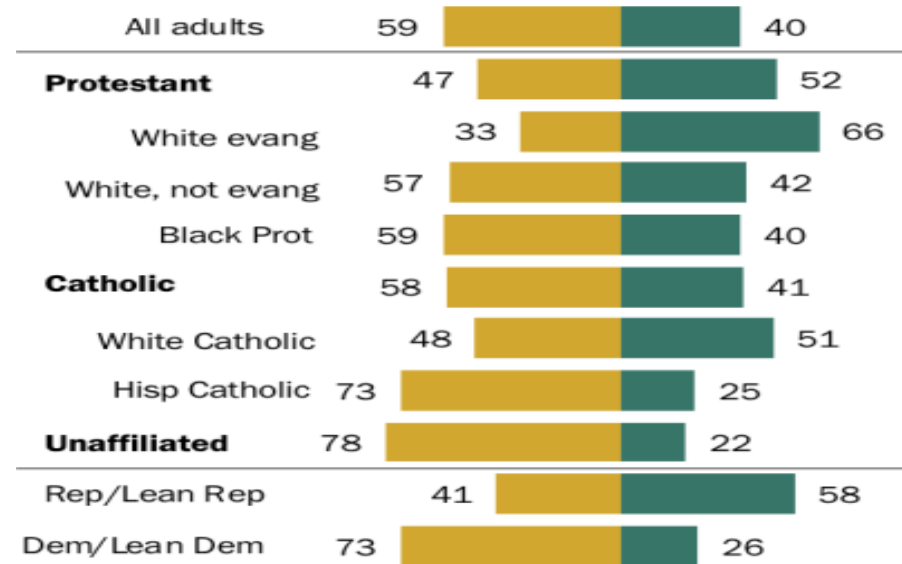
Conservative-Liberal divisions on social issues very strong and are characteristic of voting patterns.

Census Bureau added question on 1970 census which sought to identify “Persons of Opposite Sex Sharing Living Quarters.” Adding this question was intensely controversial.

About six-in-ten say cohabiting couples can raise children just as well as married couples

% saying ...

- Couples who are living together but not married can raise children just as well as married couples
- Married couples do a better job raising children than couples who are living together but not married



Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown. Whites and blacks include those who report being only one race and are non-Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 25-July 8, 2019. "Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S."

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“Americans Have Negative Views on Aspects of Political System: Especially Democrats”

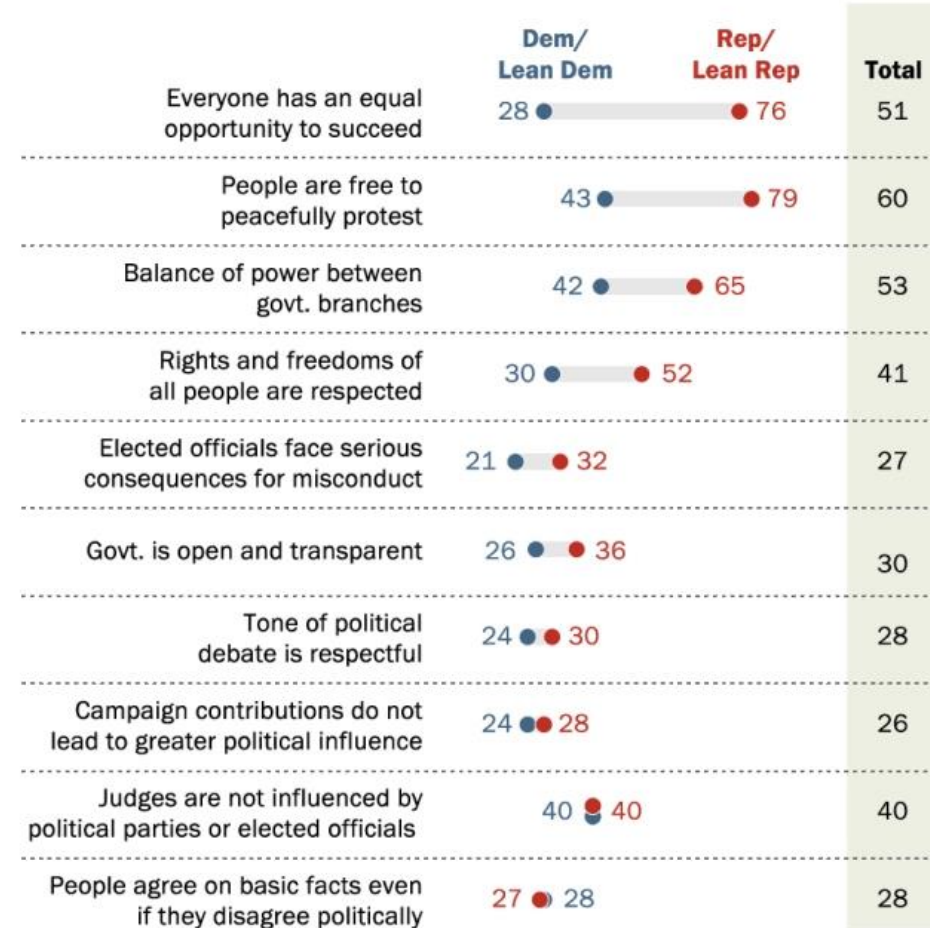
Clear example of divide over right to protest versus right to protection of property.

Similar diverse views on equal opportunity to succeed, and respect for rights and freedoms of all people.

Republicans and Democrats both doubt that crooked officials are punished, that government is open, that debate is polite, that judges are free from political influence. And, people can't agree on basic facts if they differ politically.

Americans have negative views of many aspects of the political system; Democrats are particularly skeptical

% who say each describes the country *very/somewhat well*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 27-Aug. 2, 2020.

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D or R: Who's Better?

GOP holds edge on economy; Democrats lead on climate change, coronavirus

% of registered voters who say ____ could do a better job dealing with ...

	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Both/ neither/ DK	D-R Gap
Climate change	58	27	15	D+31
Abortion and contraception policies	51	36	14	D+15
Health care	51	37	12	D+14
Public health impact of COVID-19	47	35	18	D+12
Issues involving race and ethnicity	49	37	15	D+12
Immigration	48	41	11	D+7
Foreign policy	42	44	14	R+2
Federal budget deficit	39	42	19	R+3
Law enforcement and criminal justice	42	46	12	R+4
Gun policy	43	48	9	R+5
Economy	40	49	11	R+9
Terrorism	37	46	17	R+9

Note: Based on registered voters.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 23-Aug. 4, 2020.

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The Virus: Political Issues

6,597,286 cases/196,487 deaths (as of 11/09/20)

- Who is to blame: President, federal government people, state governments, nobody?
- Why are the tests so difficult to get, and whose decision made it so?
- Why are N-95 masks so hard to find?
- How many survivors of the virus have long-term health problems?
- Most schools and universities are closed or doing virtual classes--- what's is the personal, economic and political cost?

Economy

What's Happened?

- Fast loss of jobs: March-April
- Quick/uneven employment recovery starts in mid-May
- Government wage support ends: more likely to lose jobs in September and October. House and Senate fail to agree on more, but reduced, support.

Changes in Monthly Unemployment since Start of Pandemic

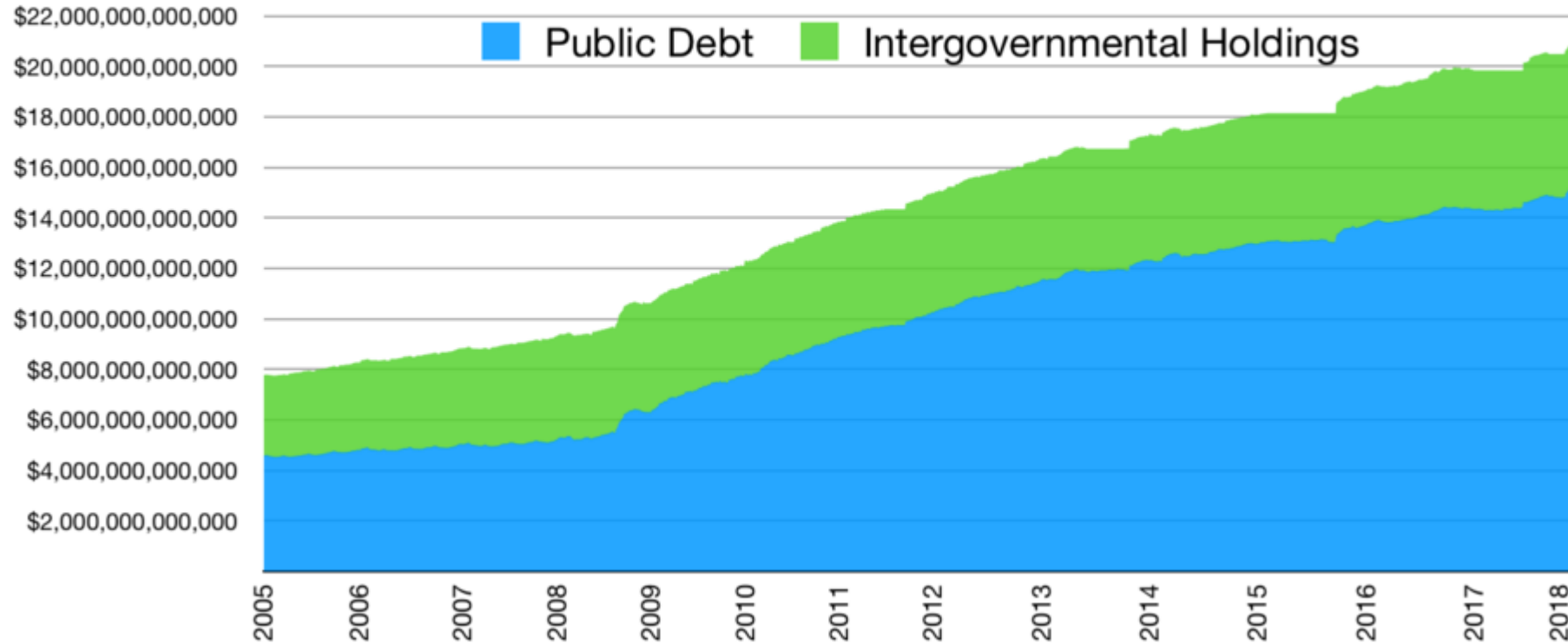
(Bureau of Labor Statistics data)

Month 2020	Aggregate	White	Black	Asian	Hisp
Feb	3.5%	3.1%	5.8	2.5	4.4
Mar	4.4	4.0	6.7	4.1	4.4
Apr	14.7	14.2	16.7	14.5	18.9
May	13.3	12.4	16.8	15.0	17.6
June	11.1	10.1	15.4	13.8	14.5
July	10.2	9.0	14.6	12	12.9
Aug	8.4	7.3	13.0	10.7	10.5

Government Debt in US: Is It Too High

Data from Federal Reserve

National Debt



US-German/US-NATO

- Trump: Bilateral international policies
 - Will seek 2-nation trade agreements
 - Push for defense spending hikes in NATO countries
 - Trump seek UK bilateral trade, but Congress now against
- Biden: More Multinational
 - Generally supports multilateral deals, but wants more attention to labor rights and environment goals
 - Seek to restore relations among NATO states. Less vocal on cost sharing.
 - Not clear what will do re: Iran.
 - Biden a “transitional figure” ---who would come after him?

US-China-Russia-Europe: Security---What to Do?

- If China makes most basic industrial items, is any other economy truly free if the supply is cut off?
- Are there guarantees that ocean traffic remains free in South China Sea? When Arctic sea route open will Russia be a friendly landlord?
- Until all energy is solar or hydro or otherwise green, from where does oil and gas come---and are we sure it will be there?
- Should democracies support democracies? Or do countries only look out for their own interests?
- Are economic sanctions the only things that can be done as a modern- day disciplinary action?

Some Things to Read On-Line

- <https://www.voanews.com/episode/trump-and-biden-campaign-contrast-4414676> recent VOA story comparing campaigns
- <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43824> report from congressional think tank on possible reform to Electoral College
- www.realclearpolitics.com Website for polls and political articles
- <https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/2020-president/> Election results?
- <https://projects.economist.com/us-2020-forecast/president> Election results?
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Keys_to_the_White_House Election results?
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/prepare-for-election-month-not-election-night/2020/09/10/c8ae8c16-f3a1-11ea-bc45-e5d48ab44b9f_story.html
- <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/sep/6/editorial-trump-trails-biden-but-hillarys-lead-was/>
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/09/pandemics-assault-latino-political-power/615979/>

Social divisions in US Widespread: “Fans boo moment of silence to acknowledge inequality in NFL opener”



- “The NFL season on Thursday night got off to a dismal start, and exposed the pernicious sentiments of many in America, when some fans jeered what the league described as “a moment of silence dedicated to the ongoing fight for equality in our country”.
- The Guardian (UK), 11 Sept. 2020