



68 days

MAGA's war against our Constitution & rule of law

Oakland Corps
August 28, 2024



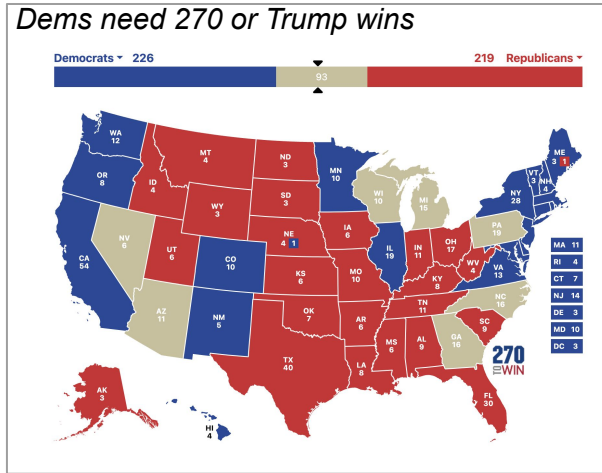
The state of “normal politics” 68 days out

2024 is still a jump ball

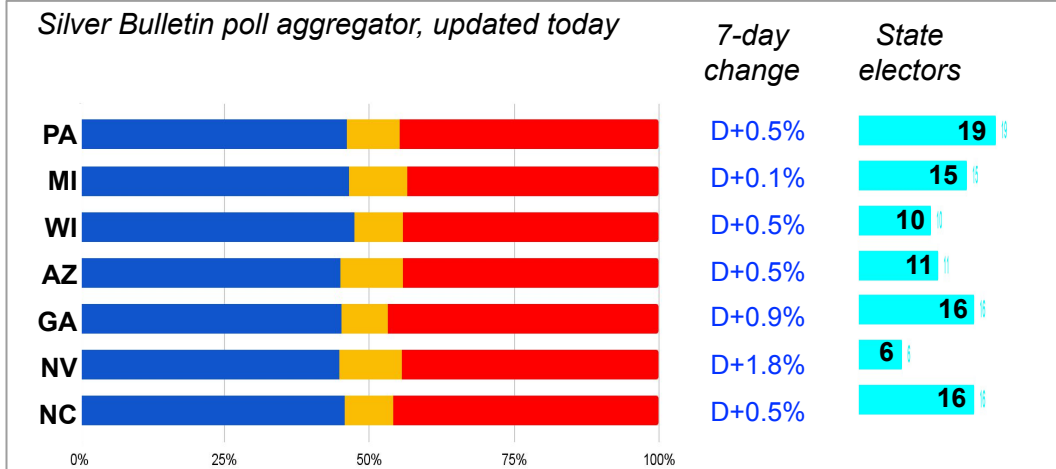
After Democrats' fantastic month, we have a tie 68 days out



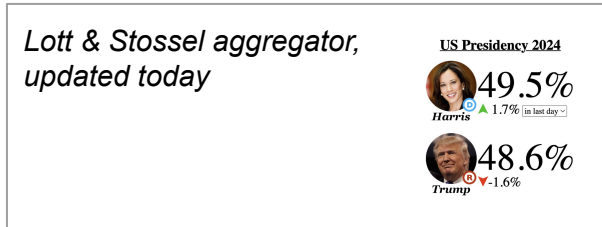
1. Most states are locked



2. Dems need 44 electors from the states still in play



3. Betting markets are even



4. The seven closest states have been tied for at least 2 cycles

- 42 million eligible voters
- 93 electoral college electors
- **31 million** votes in '20
 - Biden won 6 of 7, 15.4m to 15.2m
- **27 million** votes in '16
 - Trump won 5 of 7, 12.9 to 12.3

Marginal voters decide as late as possible

For years, marginal voters have made final decisions at the last minute



1988

Mike Dukakis

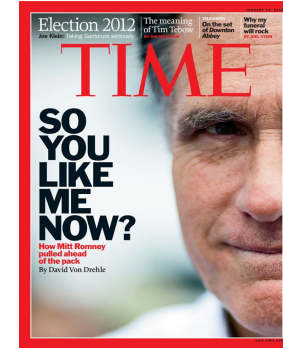
- Voters moved **25 points in 4 months**



2004

John Kerry

- Voters moved **6 points in 4 months**



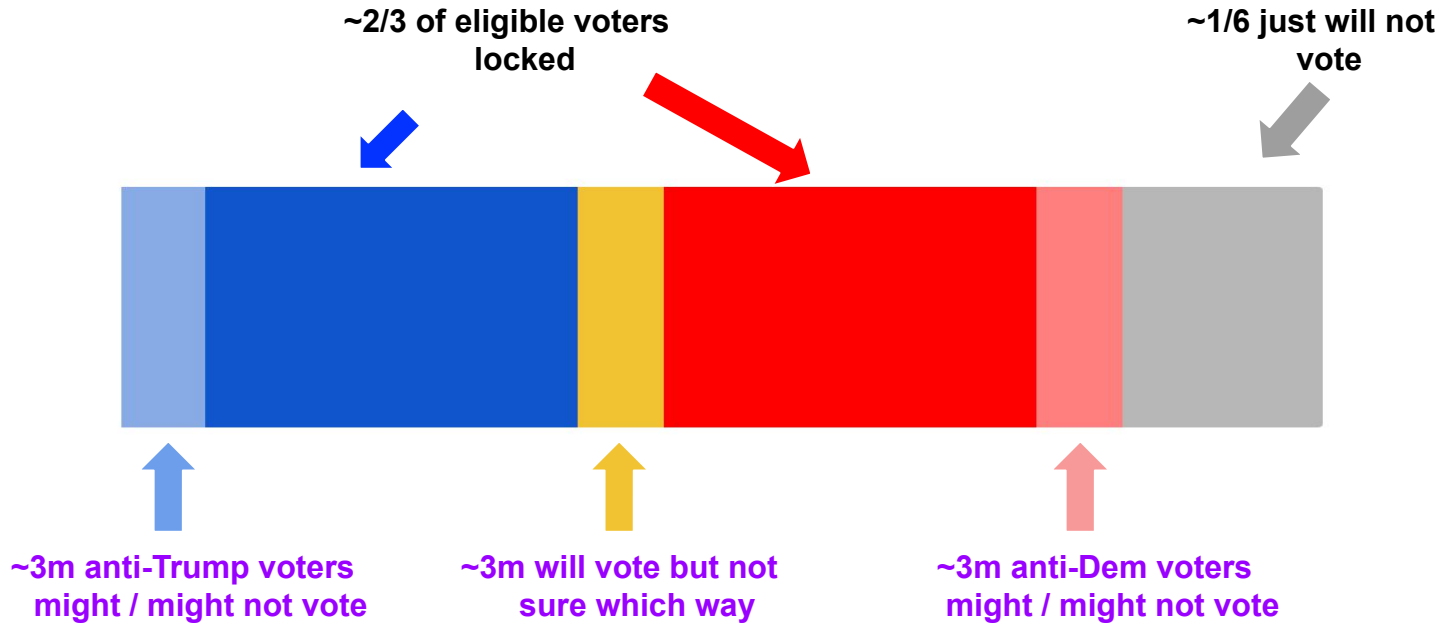
2012

Mitt Romney

- Voters moved **5 points in 3 weeks**

In 2024, marginal voters are unusual

America is polarized; only ~1 in 5 of ~42m eligible are available to be influenced

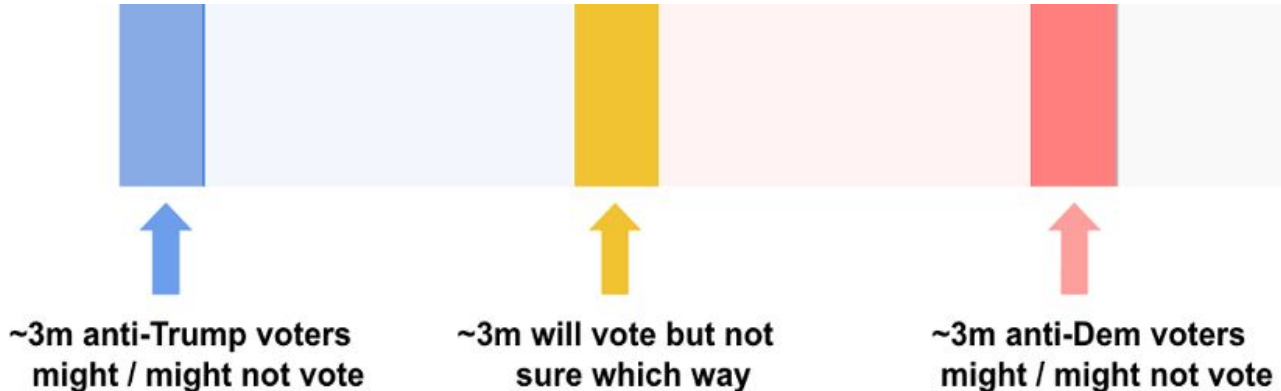


Marginal voters resist typical tactics



Ignore locked-in votes and therefore polls, and the landscape becomes more clear


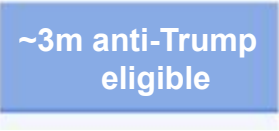

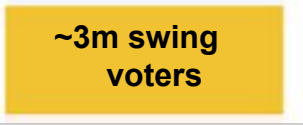


- They move in murmurations
 - They live within networks that will start paying attention in a few weeks
 - Network tipping points will be shaped by influencers based on identity, social trust, norms, current events, and other factors unpredictably.
- Campaigns can reach them, but not they way they used to
 - We still have a few weeks to shape the information environment marginal voters will face
 - Rationality in general, and policy in particular, will play a limited and indirect role



Today's marginal groups hostile to politics



Hatred and fear of the other party can trigger surges in behavior

	Key subgroups	Key attributes
  ~3m anti-Trump eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urban under-45 nonvoters• Black nonvoters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hostile to MAGA & “woke,” & politics, & voting• Limited mainstream (vs. social) news• Much more enthusiasm for Harris than Biden
  ~3m swing voters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Center-right, college educated• Non-college cultural conservative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overwhelmingly dislike both parties from a social media / Fox media environment• Trust Trump on the economy, border, crime,• Trust Harris on abortion, empathy
  ~3m anti-Dem eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• White Evangelical Christians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire and brimstone; Democrats are Satanic• Much more enthusiasm for voting against Harris than for voting against Biden




Harris can win by calmly, firmly resisting Trump



While persuading the middle, we need to calm theirs and fire up ours

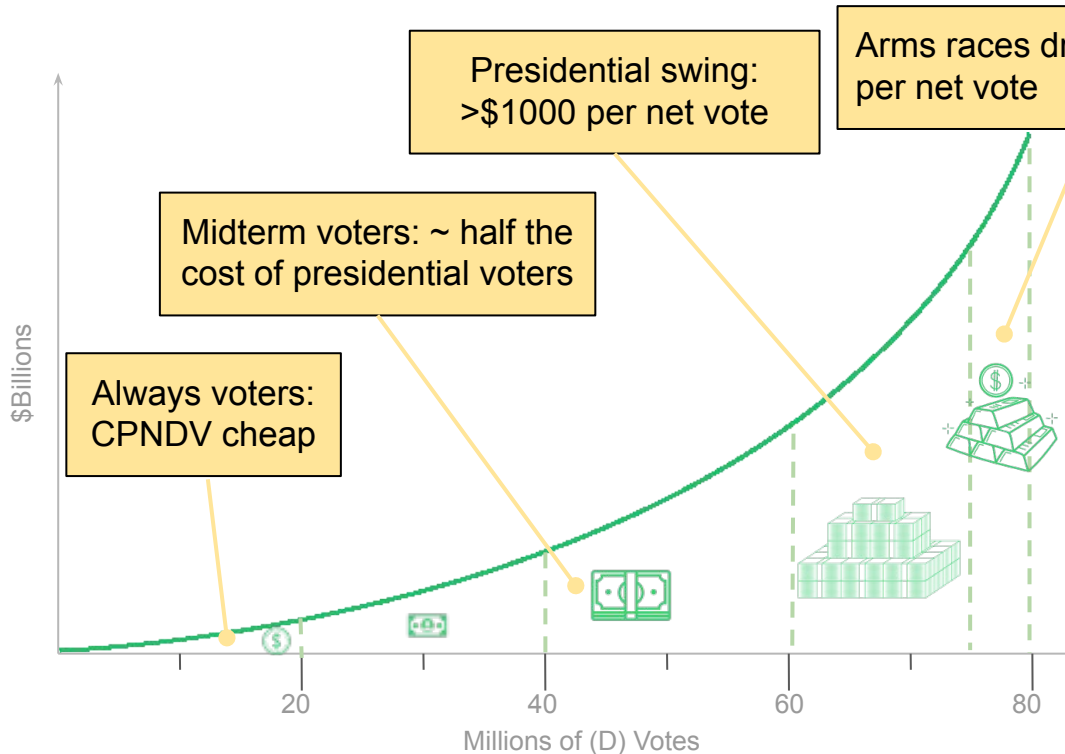
Our imperatives

Their imperatives

 ~3m anti-Trump eligible	Mobilize: get Trump-haters fired up in community	Dissuade: reassure re Trump; get influencers to criticize Harris
 ~3m swing voters	Persuade: deliver messages that don't interfere with turnout objectives	Persuade: deliver messages that don't interfere with turnout objectives
 ~3m anti-Dem eligible	Dissuade: reassure re Harris; get influencers to criticize Trump	Mobilize: get Harris-haters fired up in community

Dem innovators shifted the campaign cost curve

Rapidly rising marginal costs in voter outreach require smart tactics; we have them



- In 2016, Dem cost curve way worse than GOP's
- 2017-2023, innovators rigorously tested alternative approaches & scaled the best ones
- **In 2024, we still have affordable votes to go get**



MAGA's information war against the rule of law

Rural backlash helps undermine trust in law



Blood & soil nationalism opposes the liberal democracy of “cosmopolitan elites” [from 2023]

Generalissimo Franco rode a military-rural movement to power



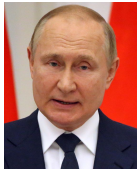
In 1928, in Europe’s most scientifically & culturally advanced country, a fringe party began organizing around rural grievances

Rural leaders attacked “Westernized” cities and rural youth brigades put Khomeini in power.



At school, students bullied Mao for his rural accent. As Chairman, he supervised a machine that killed millions of urban elites.

Putin used rural support to win elections after having previously been an apparatchik



Rural voters gave Hugo Chavez election wins from 1998-2012 despite growing urban opposition.



Etc.

The GOP has fully adopted rural grievance

Self-sorting by attitude, education, and ethnicity has created revanchist hatred [from 2023]



NISKANEN
C E N T E R

Research Paper

“America’s major parties
have now split relatively
cleanly...”

The Density Divide: Urbanization, Polarization, and Populist Backlash

Will Wilkinson
Vice President for Research
Niskanen Center

June 2019

“Self-selected migration ... has produced ... a zero-sum, ethnocentric mindset receptive to scapegoating populist rhetoric about the threat of ‘un-American’ immigrants, minorities, and liberal elites who dwell in relatively prosperous multicultural cities.”



MAGA inflamed violent white nationalism



White grievance politics have great purchase in America [from 2018]



Social intolerance of immigrants ... and those from a different race leads to increased support for strongman rule in the U.S., potential rule of U.S. government by the army, and decreases support for even having a democracy in the U.S.

Outgroup Intolerance and Support for Democracy, 2017

UVA Center for Politics, with Reuters/Ipsos, survey of 5000+ adults, published 2017, applied to 250 million total adults in America

- **98 million agree “white people are currently under attack in this country”**
- 40 million adults agree “marriage should only be allowed between two people of the same race”
- 20 million explicitly support white nationalism



Trump has been attacking the rule of law for years



Trump & Putin seek to destroy America's rule of law [from 2018]

“There is an authoritarian playbook, used (with some variations) in Hungary, Turkey, Venezuela and Russia. Dismantle checks on executive power. Control the criminal-justice system. Scapegoat minority groups. Co-opt mainstream parties. Discredit the independent media. Call for opponents to be jailed. Question the legitimacy of elections.”

Michael Gerson, 2018



“Chávez, who died in 2013, ruined the economy and gutted institutions, but he won election after election and is still revered by millions. ... A third of the population adored [Chávez], a third loathed him; and, come election time, he courted the floating middle ... by baiting his opponents, and they fell for it. They bellowed and marched, feeling powerful. Yet their tone and rhetoric alienated people. The floaters sided with the guy who spoke their language.”

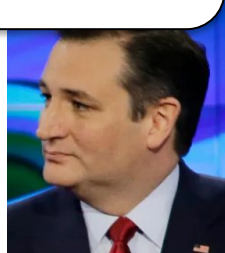
“What Donald Trump learned from Hugo Chávez,” The New Statesman, 2017

Trump established raw fabulism early on



The attack on social epistemology and societal trust was immediate [from 2017]

This man is a pathological liar. He doesn't know the difference between truth and lies. He lies practically every word that comes out of his mouth.



Ted Cruz, 2016

If you take President Trump's words literally, you have no choice but to conclude that he is psychotic.

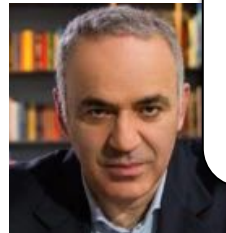


John Gartner, 2017



Brooke Gladstone, 2017

It is not the lies that pose the existential danger to democracy. It's the lying, the kind of thoroughgoing lying that gives rise to a whole new reality or, better still, to no reality at all.



Garry Kasparov, 2017

Autocrats when caught:

- 1: Deny, lie, slander accusers.
- 2: Say it was a misunderstanding.
3. Boast & say "What are you going to do about it?"

False flag violence is their trademark



When they incite actual violence – Jan 6, Paul Pelosi – they claim that the violence is false

In 2017, they faked a cop beating

Viral photo of Antifa member 'beating up police officer in Charlottesville' is fake



INDEPENDENT

Eric Metaxas 
@ericmetaxas 

Today's @NYTimes front-page portrays the violent Antifa thugs as noble, & willing to "defend" themselves. THAT is #Fakenews. And despicable.

5:30 AM - Aug 18, 2017

In 2020, they actually killed cops


THE OAKLANDSIDE

A far-right militia came to Oakland to attack police last year

INDEPENDENT

News • World • America • US politics


Republicans falsely claim that killer of Oakland police officer was involved in racial justice protests



"Hate More Than Anything": How an Active Airman Tried to Start a Civil War

In partnership with: **PROPUBLICA** Berkeley Journalism

APRIL 13, 2021
by · Gisela Pérez de Acha · Kathryn Hurd · Ellie Lightfoot



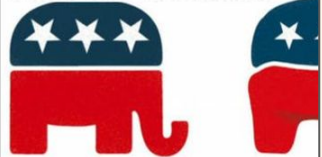
Trump laid waste to our truth safeguards



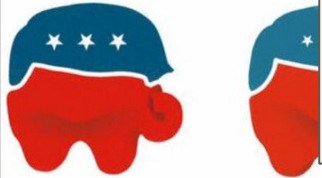
The attack on social epistemology and societal trust was intentional [from 2017]

**The
Economist**

APRIL 21ST-27TH 2018



What's h



the Republican Party?



At the heart of Trump's system of power is his contempt for the truth. ... Mr Trump does not—perhaps cannot—distinguish between facts and falsehoods. ... Mr Trump surely believes that his power means he can get away with a great deal. ... Critics cannot appeal to neutral facts and remain loyal, because facts are not neutral. As Hannah Arendt wrote of the 1920s and 1930s ...

The result of a consistent and total substitution of lies for factual truth is not that the lies will now be accepted as truth...but that the sense by which we take our bearings in the real world...is being destroyed.

HANNAH ARENDT

The Origins of Totalitarianism

MAGA uses the language of violent civil war

[from 2017] NRA Recruiting Video “The Violence of Lies”



They use their media to **assassinate** real news. ... All to make them march. Make them protest. Make them scream racism and sexism and xenophobia and homophobia. To smash windows, burn cars, shut down interstates and airports, bully and terrorize the law-abiding — until the only option left is for the police to do their jobs and stop the madness. And when that happens, they'll use it as an excuse for their outrage. **The only way we stop this, the only way we save our country and our freedom, is to fight this violence of lies with the clenched fist of truth.**



MAGA pumps violent falsehoods into the USA



[from 2018] They want to replace law enforcement with mob violence

From the faked “rape Melania” ...

... to state-supported campaigns to discredit law enforcement



Buzzfeed News,
January 2017:

“... the "Rape Melania" sign was.. the brainchild of a group of Trump supporters led by Jack Posobiec, ... a prominent figure in the pro-Trump internet. ... the sign was the culmination of a disinformation campaign by Posobiec and others intended to paint the anti-Trump rallies as violent and out of control. ...”



Russian bots and their American allies gamed social media to put a flawed intelligence document atop the political agenda. ...

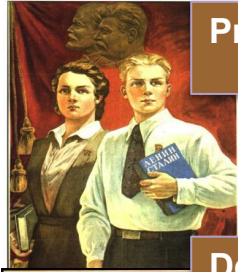


Politico, February 2018

Trump has worked through Putin's grim playbook



Since “birtherism,” Trump has been shredding our society’s safeguards [from 2017]



Project strength

Distribute power to loyalists

- \$ to cronies, family

Maintain brand of success

- Worship wealth, youth

Use military actions

- Syria, MOAB, threats



Demonize enemies

Incite hatred

- **Hype, fake, or stage** violence from leftists, immigrants

Eliminate rivals

- Humiliate & attack both parties' leaders

Attack elites

- **Blame “elites”** esp. Jews (Soros) & women (HRC)



Crush civil society

Dismantle checks

- Discredit experts
- Loyalty oaths

Amass firepower

- Personal security
- More weapons

Delegitimize truth

- **Lie & demand lies**
- Attack the press

A convict needs to establish 3 specific lies

Swing voters will reject the convicted felon unless the GOP uses this specific lane



MAGA's message against the rule of law

1. Trump = prosperity and strength
2. Harris works for dark, corrupt forces
3. Corrupt system that fears Trump = lawfare

Unfortunately, MAGA is succeeding



They have to defend three outrageous lies, but thus far they are doing so

Trump = prosperity and strength

Harris works for dark, corrupt forces

Corrupt system that fears Trump = lawfare

- Trump is the celebrity tycoon
- Voters evaluate him for 2017-2019
- They are way ahead on the economy

- Electorate susceptible to fascist appeals & Harris is uniquely susceptible due to her bio
- Trump/Vance has “strongman” appeal on the border, crime, international affairs, etc.

- Half of America blames Democrats for the fact that Trump is a convicted felon
- Indeed, elites are using “lawfare” as a reason to vote ****for**** Trump

If we disrupt these lies, we win



American swing voters will not throw away the Constitution unless they believe all three

Their lies

Trump = prosperity and strength

Harris works for dark, corrupt forces

Corrupt system that fears Trump = lawfare



America's winning truths

- Bankruptcy Don **caused** inflation w/ deficits
- We got it under control it w/ IRA, energy production
- His trade war will bring it back

- Trump will sell out anyone for his selfish goals
- Just ask his vice president, cabinet secretaries, wives, business partners, etc.

- Trump is a rapist and convicted felon
- Trust juries (4-0 unanimous juries) and electorates (7m more people voted Biden/Harris)



Comments? Questions? Reach out.

Lucy Caldwell: lucy@oaklandcorps.org

Jenny Kay: jenny@oaklandcorps.org

Chibundu Nnake: chibundu@oaklandcorps.org

Dmitri Mehlhorn: dmitri@oaklandcorps.org