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May 5, 2020

Confronting a New Reality: Independents Speak Out Survey Update

The current pandemic has shown the deep inequities of our health and economic systems in a new and more revealing light. Partisanship and corruption has so "infected" the fabric of our government, that the needs of the American people are easily left out. We at Independent Voting wanted to explore political possibilities for moving ahead. We launched our new survey, "**Confronting a New Reality: Independents Speak Out**," so that independents and those who are independent-minded could consider topics such as how the Coronavirus crisis is affecting American



leadership, and what independents want to do to develop our political strength in the years ahead.

To date, close to 2,000 people from every state in the country have taken the survey. Some interesting patterns are beginning to emerge.

Take the Survey here

Close to 80% of respondents are answering affirmatively to the following statement: "Mistakes have been made in handling the crisis, but I'd rather see elected leaders pull together to take the right steps than spend precious time blaming each other." Far from looking for recrimination or someone to blame, independents are looking for a way to move our country forward.

In response to a question concerning how and when they became independent, respondents are divided fairly evenly throughout all the categories, from "I have always been an independent" to, "I've been a member of a major party, but need to make a change," to those who chose to join a party simply to be able to vote in the primary.

Results also point to support for finding a new pathway to winning the White House in 2024 through a national All-Independents Primary. More to come on this.

Check out this video below of Campaign Chairs Tiani Coleman and Randy Miller launching the campaign:



Do Your Part to Share the Survey

The Fulcrum and the *Independent Voter Network* posted pieces promoting the survey, and many local groups and activists are sharing it with their networks. To date, over 1,000 people have agreed to share the survey with others.

The survey can be shared by going to Independent Voting's **Facebook** Page or **Twitter** page.



Allen Cox

A socially-distanced phone team from New York, Ohio, Washington, California, New Jersey and North Carolina have begun calling other independents on the phone and surveying them directly.

Sue Davies, leader of New Jersey Independent Voters has been reaching out to New Jersey independents.

"The people that I've been in touch with have loved doing the survey. One said it was the best survey he had ever taken. The combination of questions about democracy and the Coronavirus crisis allows people to say what they think about the failures of our democratic process AND how it is instantiated in major international crisis."



Sue Davies



Dr. Omar Ali

In a note to 18-29 year old independents who took Independent Voting's groundbreaking 2018 survey when approached on their North Carolina campuses, Dr. Omar Ali, Independent Voting board member and Dean at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro (and also the catalyst of the campus mobilization in 2018) invited students to "take the survey and to begin to rethink what we've been doing culturally and politically in our nation. Can we imagine new ways of being, and explore new ways of engaging the cynicism and hyper-partisanship that dominates our political culture?"

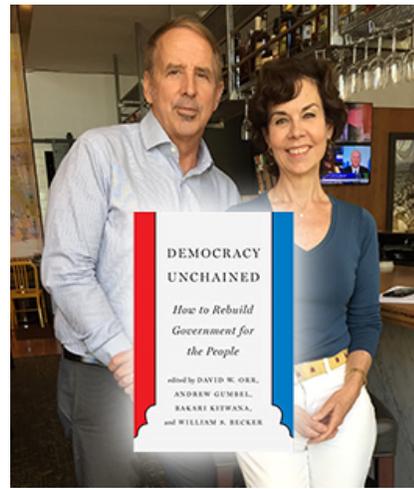
Survey campaign Chairs Tiani Coleman and Randy Miller are convening a **Zoom conference call on Monday, May 11 at 8pm ET to update campaign activists on the latest developments in the campaign** . Independent Voting President Jackie Salit will be providing special commentary. If you are sharing the survey with others, you are welcome to join the call.

[Register here for the call](#) .

[Can Independent Voters Save American Democracy? Virtual Discussion Takes a Look](#)

Open Prim aries is hosting a series of national virtual discussions, and on Wednesday April 29, Independent Voting's President Jackie Salit and Thom Reilly, Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education, were the guests of Open Primaries' President John Opdycke. They spoke about the chapter they co-authored in the recently

published book **Democracy Unchained: How to Rebuild Government for the People**, called "Can Independent Voters Save American Democracy?" You can view the full recorded Zoom session below.



Thom Reilly and Jackie Salt

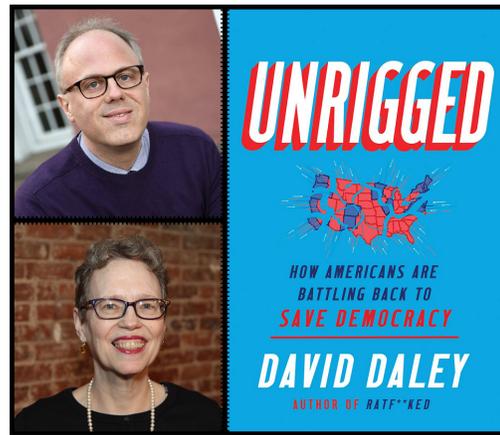


Politics For the People Announces New Reading Selection

The Politics for the People Book Club has revealed its spring reading selection, **UNRIGGED: How Americans Are Battling Back to Save Democracy** by David Daley.

Cathy Stewart, Independent Voting's Vice President for National Development who has joined The People as National Field

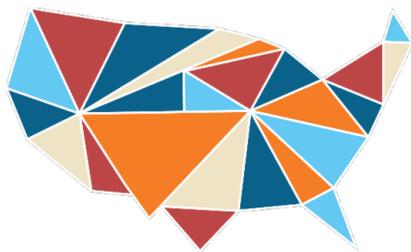
Director, said, "I am excited to be bringing Politics For the People to The People as part of the ongoing collaboration between Independent Voting and The People. I hope people will join me in reading our new selection and sharing their thoughts."



The book is a vibrant topography of the growing movement for political reform. Daley takes the reader to the key battlefronts that emerged in 2018 from Maine, to Florida; from Michigan to Utah.

David Daley will be joining Politics for the People on Sunday, May 31st at 7 pm EST for a conversation about the book and the ongoing movement for reforms to put more power in the hands of ordinary Americans. You can join the book club by [visiting the Politics for the People blog](#).

Nonpartisan Reformers Issue Statement on Voter Mobility and Reforms to Protect Our Democracy



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
NONPARTISAN
REFORMERS

The National Association of Nonpartisan Reformers issued a joint statement in early April on voter mobility. The statement was signed by a wide array of reform organizations, including Independent Voting and urged lawmakers to "move swiftly and decisively on voter mobility legislation for 2020."

[Read the full proclamation here.](#)

Missouri Update - Defending and Expanding the Right to Vote

Open Primaries and The People are waging a campaign to stop the passage of HB 1639, a bill that would transform Missouri's open primary system into a locked system that requires Missouri voters to register with a party 23 weeks before the primaries and denies independents the right to vote in primaries.

A team of nine veteran independent activists from four states joined the effort to keep Missouri's primaries open by reaching out and connecting with voters across Missouri one on one.

Check out this video message by Eric Bronner, a Navy veteran and independent, about why HB 1639 is bad for the state. In the video, Eric points out, "Here we are in the middle of a national crisis and some politicians think what we need more of is partisanship. Unbelievable! HB 1639 is unnecessary and a step in the wrong direction."



Congratulations to **St. Louis Approves**, the committee that launched Proposition D for making it on the November ballot and giving St. Louis voters the opportunity to reform the way they vote. Prop D combines approval voting with top two. Organizers of the petition drive were able to collect over 20,000 signatures, more than double the number required to get on the ballot. Given the current Coronavirus pandemic, the initiative is



likely to be one of only a few political reform measures that will make it on the November ballot.

State Rep. Rasheen Aldridge

The committee held a press conference announcing the certification, which was moderated by Kathleen Ferrell of the League of Women Voters.

At the conference, State Rep. Rasheen Aldridge declared: "Prop D restores democracy in our election process....voters are upset with our election process being taken advantage of. I think this is another way we can restore integrity in our elections and allow voters to feel as if their voice really matters."



David Cherry

David Cherry, Independent Voting board member, Chicago's City Leader of the All Stars Project, and President of the Leaders Network, a body of prominent faith and community leaders working together for social justice in Greater Chicago, said, "I'm proud to see leaders in the Black community join with other St. Louis voters to support this pro-democracy initiative. Passage of Proposition D would enable Black voters, independent voters and all St. Louis voters to move away from the current divisive partisan politics and into a new era of new coalitions and new possibilities with this innovative reform."

[Check out the full press conference here.](#)

Independent Party of Oregon Holds Primary; Open to All Indies

The Independent Party of Oregon is using STAR Voting in its May 2020 primary election, which opened April 28 and will close May 12, and is open to all independents - including the close to one million non-affiliated voters. It's the first time in history that voters will have the opportunity to use STAR Voting. STAR Voting stands for "Score Then Automatic Runoff ." The ballot features nominations for statewide offices as well as a presidential preference. Read more [here](#) in *The Oregonian*.

Independents were not permitted to vote in Oregon's Democratic Primary. David Ellis is one of over a million independent Oregon voters who are shut out of primary elections despite paying for them with their tax dollars. Check out his video below. If you're in Oregon, you can [join the fight to open the primaries](#) .



Voices in our Movement

The National Election Reform Committee, a group of Independent Voting activists penned a new Declaration of Independence.

The National Election Reform Committee (Catana Barnes from Nevada, Joe Pickering from Maine, Randy Fricke from Colorado and Rick Robol from Ohio) submitted this Declaration to *The Hub* . It begins:

"We, The People, activists, leaders and organizers of the independent voter movement, together with independent-minded Americans, do solemnly declare independence from the two major political parties, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party.



These two parties have spent the last several decades deconstructing and destroying the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. They have subverted the American dream of building a real working representative democracy. They have hijacked and rigged the American election process by creating a Party Voter Prison System whereby only Democrats and Republicans can be elected, from the Primaries through the

Presidential elections. Their actions have been aided and abetted by their allies in the mainstream media."

[Click here to read the full declaration.](#)

For more information on the Declaration, contact Catana Barnes at catanalbarnes@gmail.com

Dr. Jessie Fields: On the Coronavirus Pandemic:

Dr. Jessie Fields, a Harlem-based physician and board member of IndependentVoting.org, and Open Primaries, shared her thoughts about the Coronavirus pandemic in a special communication to *The Hub*.



Dr. Jessie Fields

In it, she says:

... To me, the disproportionate impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the black community is a tragic and painful demonstration of the poor health, economic and social conditions we face.

For me, these circumstances underscore a painful political reality, namely that the black community's decades long allegiance to the existing political system, especially to the Democratic Party, has left us in a state of dependency that has allowed our health and well-being to deteriorate in dangerous ways. This is not an argument that we would be better off with the Republicans. Far from it. It is an argument that we, as a community, must rethink our political alliances and assert our independence. As we know, power concedes nothing without a demand. And we have given away any capacity to make any demands.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Dr. Fields can be contacted at jessie_fields@hotmail.com.

California activist starts an online discussion forum and invites you to participate.

Mike Pierson, Independent Voting activist in Leggett, California has started an online discussion forum for independents.

Said Mike, "A lot of us want to be able to connect with other independents, so I'm building an online forum for those of us to be able to converse with one another. We can share ideas for projects, find volunteers to help one another, spread the word about websites, books, or YouTube video geared towards independents and get to know one another."



Mike Pierson

If you are interested in participating in the forum, [you can register for it here](#).

Profiles in Independence

Darian Darby, Clinton, Mississippi

I am Darien Darby, an independent from Jackson, Mississippi who holds a Bachelors in Management and is pursuing a Masters in Adult Education. For over 15 years, I have worked with local youth as a coach and mentor, taught them morals, skills, and values to carry them throughout their lives.

Through my community service work, people are fed and we organize volunteers to help clean the Jackson Metropolitan Area from debris.



Darian Darby

My vision of leading Mississippi Independent Voters (MIV) is to provide equality and opportunity for improvement and success for all genders, race, and businesses. I've been an independent since I've been able to vote. The reason I'm an independent is to ensure that our democracy and republic stands for all people with a voice that betters our government on local, federal, and state levels. The flexibility of choosing the best individual candidate for the job also plays a huge role in me being an Independent.

Eradication of poverty, higher minimum wage for workers, free education for local college students, women's rights, free healthcare for seniors, legalized marijuana, and secure borders are just some of the things I'm passionate about.

In the News

Read " **Independents Say: 'Vote for Person Not Party'** " (*Moultrie Observer*)

"Vote at Home" and "Mail in Voting" are two reforms now being seriously considered due to the pandemic, though they have been posited as critical reforms for expanding democracy for quite awhile This article, " **New Study Concludes Neutral Partisan Effects of Vote at Home** " documents a study that posits that neither party is advantaged by this important reform in voting. (*Independent Voter News*)

Read " **All Voters Vote Sues to Challenge Fiscal Estimate for Amendment 3** " (*Florida Politics*)

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