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November 24, 2020

And Now What?

A Post-Election Briefing for Independents and Friends

Independent Voting held its post-election briefing via Zoom on Sunday, November 15 attended by 250 independents and friends from 37 states. Independent Voting President Jackie Salit provided a snapshot of the election results, the current political landscape and an appeal for independents driving a new agenda.



Independents broke for the Biden/Harris ticket by 54% to 41%, a margin of 13 points. Describing the political meaning of this swing to the Democratic ticket, Salit observed:

"Independents are troublemakers and peacemakers. When they believe it's time to shake up the system and challenge the political establishment, they make that happen. And when they see the kind of instability that's dangerous like the kind we're seeing with the COVID pandemic and a serious economic crisis, they will step up and say 'let's make a move that calms things down a little bit.' But independents are not done."

Salit spoke about transitions - in the government and the country.

"Demonization rules the political game. I would propose that, ultimately, we're going to have to find ways to understand and respond to the ways in which we are being deliberately divided from one another. How do we do that? That's at the core of what it means to build an independent movement. This may not have been a mandate for the Democratic or Republican Parties, but the election results show us a mandate for addressing and reorganizing this fundamental dynamic of how politics is done in this country. That's the transition I'm most interested in. It's much more difficult than what they're handling in Washington."

[Click here or below to view the full discussion .](#)

And Now What? A Post-Election Review for Independents and Friends

 independentvoting.org

In *The Fulcrum's* "**Independents vital to Biden win, boon to a good-governance cause**," Tristiana Hinton writes:

 **THE FULCRUM**
November 14, 2020

"And despite the fact that they're treated like the ugly step-children of democracy, anyone looking forward to a Joe Biden presidency can thank unaffiliated voters."

- Tristiana Hinton

Independent Voting's election analysis was covered by a number of media outlets. Check out "In the News" below for more.

Reform Measures on the ballot

While the war going on at the top of the ticket took most of the media's attention, there were some key fights for political reform and for expanding voters' rights.

- **Amendment 3**, Florida's top two nonpartisan primary measure, missed victory by a hair, garnering 57% of the needed 60% of the vote. The impressive showing made it clear that the majority of voters want open primaries despite pushback from both parties (See Brenda Carr's important editorial below for more on that). **In his oped**, Steve Hough, Director of Florida Fair and Open Primaries, provides a short recap of the history of the fight to let All Voters Vote in Florida.
- **Alaskans for Better Elections** Measure 2 squeaked out a victory by about 4,000 votes (1%). Alaska will become the fourth state in the US to adopt open nonpartisan primaries and the first to approve "top 4 with ranked choice voting." **Read more here.**
- Ranked choice voting measures passed in a number of jurisdictions: Boulder, Colorado; Minnetonka and Bloomington, Minnesota; and Albany and Eureka, California.

Of special note, is the underreported but critical story of the passage of **Prop D**, which enacted a top two nonpartisan open primary system with approval voting in St. Louis, Missouri. The initiative was propelled by the events in Ferguson and the murder of Michael Brown in 2014. 68% of the voters said "Yes" even as the official party apparatus in the state opposed it. The campaign was led by a diverse group of leaders, including a number of key African American activists who spearheaded efforts on behalf of Black Lives Matter.

Rev. Darryl Gray, one of the protagonists in this fight, co-authored an opinion piece with Dr. Jessie Fields that appeared in the *The Fulcrum* (click on the image below). The piece addresses the importance of the intersection between the democracy reform agenda and the longstanding fight for civil rights in the Black community.



Rev. Darryl Gray



The democracy reform and Black political agendas must become aligned

By Darryl Gray and Jessie Fields
Nov. 2



Dr. Jessie Fields

Standing up for the Voters of Florida

In Op-eds in *The Miami Herald* and *The Orlando Sentinel*, former **League of Women Voters of Florida** leader Brenda Carr points a finger at the abandonment by the Florida League's decision to undemocratically withdraw their support for Amendment 3.

"The decision by the League to reverse course on Amendment 3 has damaged the credibility of an institution I have always held in high esteem and, worst of all, has seriously let down the voters of Florida, who continue to support open primaries. Floridians deserve better."



Brenda Carr

Kudos to Carr for standing up for Florida voters and for the right of African American voters to put their interests ahead of protecting the Democratic Party.


Politics for the People - A Review and Look Ahead

On Sunday, October 18th, Politics for the People Host Cathy Stewart was joined by author Katherine Gehl for a conversation about Gehl's book, *The Politics Industry*. **Watch this video** for a sneak-peak of their discussion. If you'd like to watch the whole conversation, head over to www.politics4thepeople.com.



Katherine Gehl

In the Balance of Power: Independent Black Politics and Third-Party Movements in the United States



P4P Conversation with Author Omar H. Ali
Sunday, February 21st, 2021
Registration opens early January

The club announced its next selection, *In the Balance of Power: Independent Black Politics and Third-Party Movements in the United States* by Dr. Omar Ali. Ali is the Dean of Lloyd International Honors College and professor of African American political history at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is also an Independent Voting Board member. Cathy Stewart, founder of the club will host a discussion with Dr. Ali on Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 7pm ET.

Independent Spokespeople Have Their Say

In the course of the 2020 campaign, over **100 independent activists** stepped up to the plate to eloquently share their experiences as independents. Some of these spokespeople appeared on TV - on MSNBC, CNN, ABC's *George Stephanopoulos*, Voice of America or other outlets. Often, Independent Voting would receive inquiries from frantic producers in search of independent voters to share their thoughts about the election. Some of these inquiries resulted in pre-interviews. In one instance, after searching for "undecided voters," and finding out that most independents were hardly undecided (and usually very clear about what their values were), one producer remarked, "maybe we'll have to rethink that story." Regardless of whether they appeared on TV or saw their quotes in print, all used the opportunity to tell their stories and make their statement about the values and vision of the emerging independent movement. Below are profiles of two young independent spokespeople. Ron Dumas appeared as a guest on MSNBC Ali Velshi's "*Voters Across America*" series. Devon Martinez penned an article for the University of Colorado's publication, *The Scribe*, about being an independent.

Profiles in Independence

Ron Dumas • Asheville, North Carolina

My name is Ron Dumas, I study Ethics at the University of North Carolina, and am a registered independent voter.

My favorite people to discuss politics with are Roger, a conservative Navy veteran, and an older couple, Gerald and Tammy, who have never let the activist spirit of the 60's die. They may not represent similar ideologies, but they represent something I find profoundly important in society -- discourse.

As an independent voter, I believe that we are not a country divided but a country of discourse, a country that works best when all people,



Ron Dumas

especially those who disagree, come together and work on a solution to take our nation forward.

Today's political polarization has turned conscientious conversation into bitter debate and has crippled the community's ability to live in harmony. We, the independent voters, must resolve this crisis of communication by using our power as a swing electorate to hold our officials accountable. Laws and lawmakers should reflect the will of the people rather than be determined by party choice. For too long, votes have been taken for granted and gerrymandered, while discussion is stifled for purposes of party power.

The people of the United States are dignified, caring, well-rounded people who care for their communities. Each one deserves a government led by leaders empowered to lead by voters, not stagnated by partisan politics. A government by, of, and for the people.

Devon Martinez • Colorado Springs, Colorado



Devon Martinez

My name is Devon Martinez, and I'm an independent voter in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I am a college student at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, where I am majoring in digital filmmaking in media and minoring in creative writing. I am also a reporter at my school's newspaper, and a freelance writer.

I first became politically active in high school, when despite not being old enough to vote in 2012, I followed and supported Congressman Ron Paul's presidential campaign. In 2016, I worked on the Lilly Tang Williams Libertarian senate campaign in Colorado. The experience was fun, and I learned a lot, but I also learned that this party was not for me. The Libertarian party, just like all political parties, is an echo chamber.

Today, I feel free; I can pick and choose my beliefs like a buffet menu. When I was in a political party, I felt like I had no choice over my beliefs like eating at a school

lunchroom. I now read political philosophy literature that represents all points of view, and I actively find and talk to people with different perspectives than mine. In my opinion, most people are not extremists, but they end up in the echo chambers of their political parties, which leads to extreme tribalism. My goal is to encourage discourse because if we can't talk to each other without fighting, then how can we expect to solve anything?

Independents Want Art

National talk show host and abstract artist Rob Redding engaged independents in an art project addressing the highly partisan atmosphere in the run-up to the election.

He teamed with [IndependentVoting.org](https://independentvoting.org) to give independents reprints of news articles as their "canvas" lending visibility to both art and the movement.

"This was an opportunity for Independents all over the country to directly address stereotypes often associated with living outside the political binary," Redding said.



Rob Redding

Redding said he initiated the art project to ask dozens of Independents:

1. How does this make you feel?
2. Is this true for you?
3. What would you change about what you see?

They then created artwork on top of the provided news articles. Wow!

Founder and Host of "Politics for the People" and Vice President for National Development at Independent Voting Cathy Stewart said that Redding has been "such an important voice, really talking about the growth of a movement of unaffiliated voters."

Anita of Florida, a key state in the election, said that it was a "great project."

A New York-based participant named Gail agreed. She called the exercise "very creative."

In the News

Read " **There Wasn't a Red or Blue Wave in 2020; There Was An Independent Wave** " (*Independent Voter Network*)

Jackie Salit is quoted in " **Tens of thousands left the president option blank, though 'undervotes' were down from 2016** " (*USA Today*)

Listen to the " **Interview with Jacqueline Salit on the independent voter perspective** " (*KSRO*)

Dr. Omar Ali's " **A Black, Latinx and Independent Alliance** " was part of a collection of 91 contributions from over 115 leading US and international academics to capture immediate thoughts, reflections and early research insights into the 2020 US presidential election (Election Analysis.ws) .

Ali and Gwen Mandell were interviewed for " **Independent Voters Look to Change the Political Process for more on the question of who are independents** ," which targets millennials. (*InClub Magazine*)

Gwen Mandell
Director of National Outreach
IndependentVoting.org
800-288-3201

Give us a call today!

gmandell@independentvoting.org

