

The 2020 Election and the Biden Presidency
January 28, 2021

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I. Introduction

A. Themes

1. It is a very divided nation
2. Presidential Prediction Machines and the Polls
3. Social Media
4. The election unfolded in ways that was entirely predictable
5. Legal Challenges and Voter Fraud
6. The problem with presidential transitions
7. The Biden Presidency

II. It is a very divided nation

- A. Entering the Race in terms of how polarized and divided (and exit the same way)

III. Presidential Prediction Machines and the Polls

A. Where the polls wrong again as in 2016?

1. Polls in 2016
2. Polls in 2020

B. The problem with polling

1. Polls are not predictors
2. Good and bad polls
3. Samples and sizes
4. Errors
5. Wording
6. Who answers a phone?

C. Prediction Machines

1. 538, Nate Silver, Real Clear Politics
2. Using polls to predict
3. Faulty assumptions in blending polls

D. Social Media

1. Knowledge bubbles
2. Alternative and fake facts
3. The problem of election porn

- IV. The Race unfolded in ways that were entirely predictable
 - A. Last January
 - B. The Race for 270 (electoral votes) in a polarized political world.
 - 1. Based on recent elections, voting patterns, and polling, a Democratic Party candidate for president is nearly certain to win California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, (overall state) Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington. This is a total of 19 states plus the District of Columbia. In the case of Maine, Democrats probably will overall win the state and three of its four electoral votes. The other electoral vote, which is for the Second Congressional district, goes to the Republican. **Democrats start with 222 electoral votes.**
 - 2. A Republican Party candidate will win 24 states plus part of Maine. These states are Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, (Second Congressional District), Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming. **Republicans start with 205 electoral votes.**
 - 3. Yet there are seven remaining states—Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin—totaling 111 electoral votes, which are too close to call and they are the swing states that will decide the presidency
 - C. Largely these seven states began the starting point for the election
 - D. Rapidly reduced to three states—Michigan, PA, and WI, the three that decided the election last time.
 - 1. AZ added to the list
 - 2. GA and maybe Ohio added
 - E. Closing week a few states
 - F. The Swing counties within the swing states
 - 1. Originally 10/11/7/270

- V. Not predicted...but did they matter?
 - A. Intervening Variables
 - 1. Economy
 - 2. George Floyd Law and Order
 - 3. Pandemic

- VI. Legal Challenges and Voter Fraud
 - A. Voter intent and recounts for accuracy
 - B. What Trump meant by Fraud
 - C. Recounts
 - D. Trump's record
 - 1. 1-62

- VII. How divided still?
 - A. House and senate divided
 - B. Senate is still divided
 - C. State legislatures
 - 1. Minnesota unique and a microcosm

- VIII. The Problem with Presidential Transitions
 - A. What power should outgoing and incoming presidents have?
 - B. Uniqueness of the US

- IX. Biden Administration
 - A. Three books
 - 1. Richard Neustadt's *Presidential Power*
 - 2. James McGregor Burns' *Leadership*
 - 3. James David Barber *Presidential Character*
 - B. The context of Biden's opportunity
 - 1. Biden himself and his personality
 - 2. Narrow House and Senate majorities
 - 3. Filibuster rule
 - C. Three options
 - 1. Legislation
 - 2. Executive Orders
 - 3. Appointments
 - D. Agenda
 - 1. Domestic
 - a. Pandemic
 - b. Economy
 - c. Tax
 - d. Immigration
 - e. Race
 - f. Infrastructure
 - 2. International
 - a. WHO
 - b. Paris Accords
 - c. World standing
 - d. Russia
 - e. China
 - f. Climate change

- X. Conclusions
 - A. What do we learn from this election
 - 1. Divided nation and power
 - 2. Limits to reform under Biden
 - 3. Trump and the future of the Republican Party
 - 4. The Future of the Democratic Party