

America in a New Century

The background of the image is a dense collage of various protest signs and flags. Prominent signs include "SAVE our children", "I AM HUMAN", "PROTECT OUR KIDS OUR GUNS", "SAVE OUR MONUMENTS", "PRESERVE OUR HISTORY", "VOTE", "DACA NOW", "THERE IS NO PLANET B", "NO CLIMATE CHANGE", "MY PRESIDENT", and "FINISH THE WALL". A large American flag is visible at the bottom, with a hand holding a small "I VOTED" sticker. A portion of the US Constitution's Preamble, "We the People", is visible in the lower left. In the lower right, a sign reads "DREAM BIG FIGHT HARD".

We the People
of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union,
Establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the General Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.
Article I

Central Themes

- Domestic & Foreign Policy Shift Under George W. Bush
- Obama Reform Agenda & the Obstacles Faced
- New Social Movements & Media's Influence in Politics
- Significance of the Trump Presidency
- Common Ground in a Divided Nation?

Election of 2000

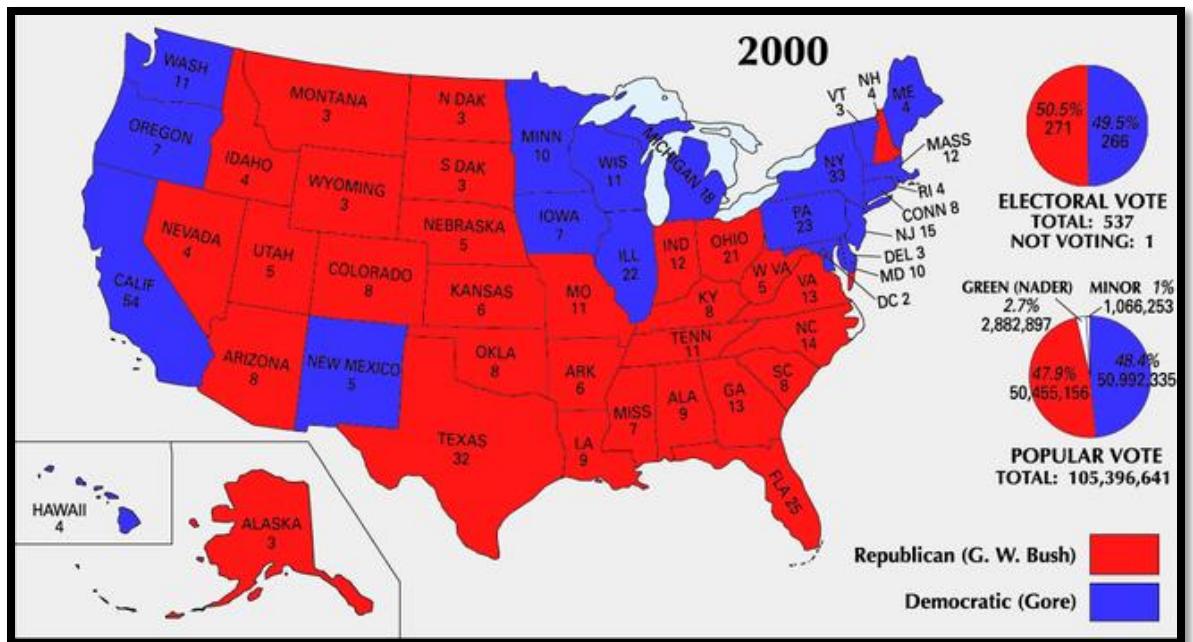
- George W. Bush (R)
- Al Gore (D)
- Predicted:
 - Strong Economy; Gore Victory
- Determining the Presidency:
 - Florida
 - Electoral College vs. Popular Vote

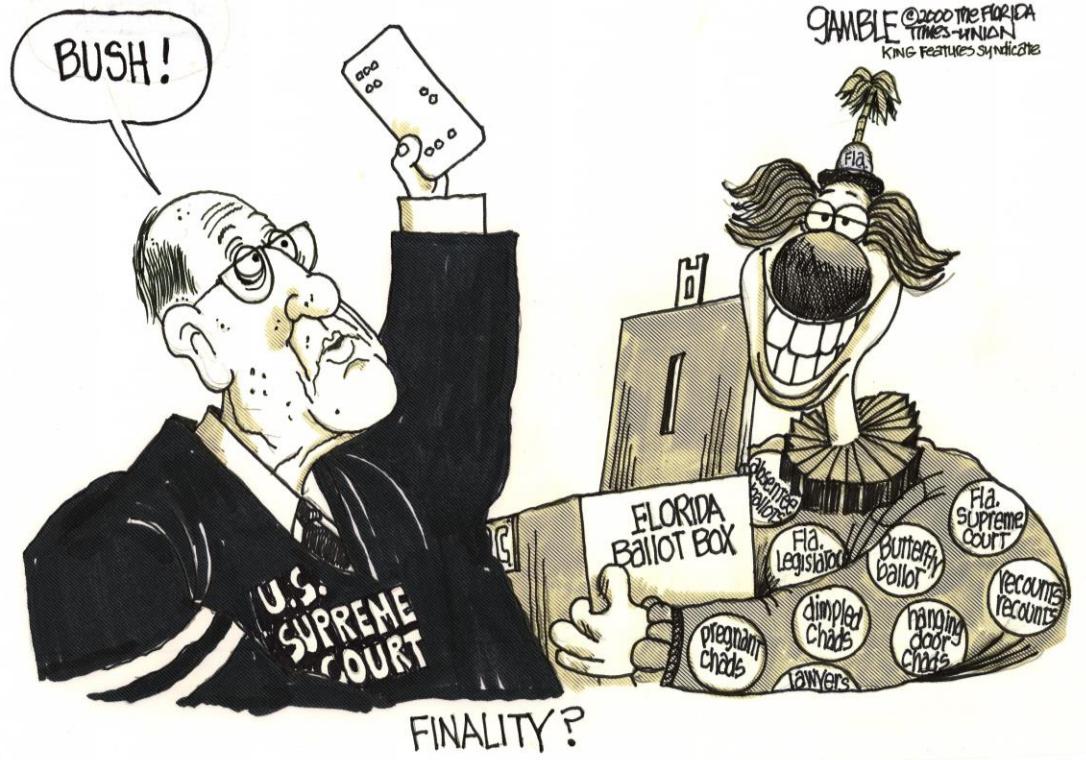


Albert 'Al' Gore Jr. (1948 -)



George W. Bush (1946 -)





Bush v. Gore (2000)

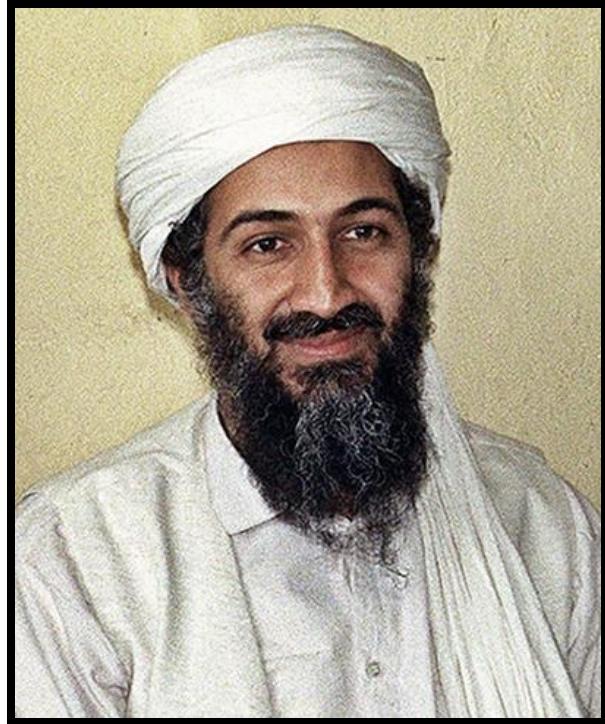
- Bush v. Gore (5-4)
 - No Recounts for Florida
- Supreme Court Flak:
 - Partisan Court
 - Conservative Justices:
 - Abandoned Principle of States' Right over Federal Authority
- New Precedent:
 - Electoral College Determines the Presidency, not the Popular Vote

September 11, 2001

- 19 Terrorists & 4 Planes
 - Two: Twin Towers NYC
 - One: Pentagon in DC
 - One: Crashed in Pennsylvania
 - Target: White House
 - Downtown Manhattan: “War Zone”
 - Toxic Smoke & Ash
- 2018: ~10,000 First Responders Diagnosed with Cancer
 - ~2,000 Deaths Linked to 9/11 Illness
- Attacks: Worst on US Soil Since Pearl Harbor – International Impact
 - “A new insecurity has entered every mind.”



Perpetrators of 9/11



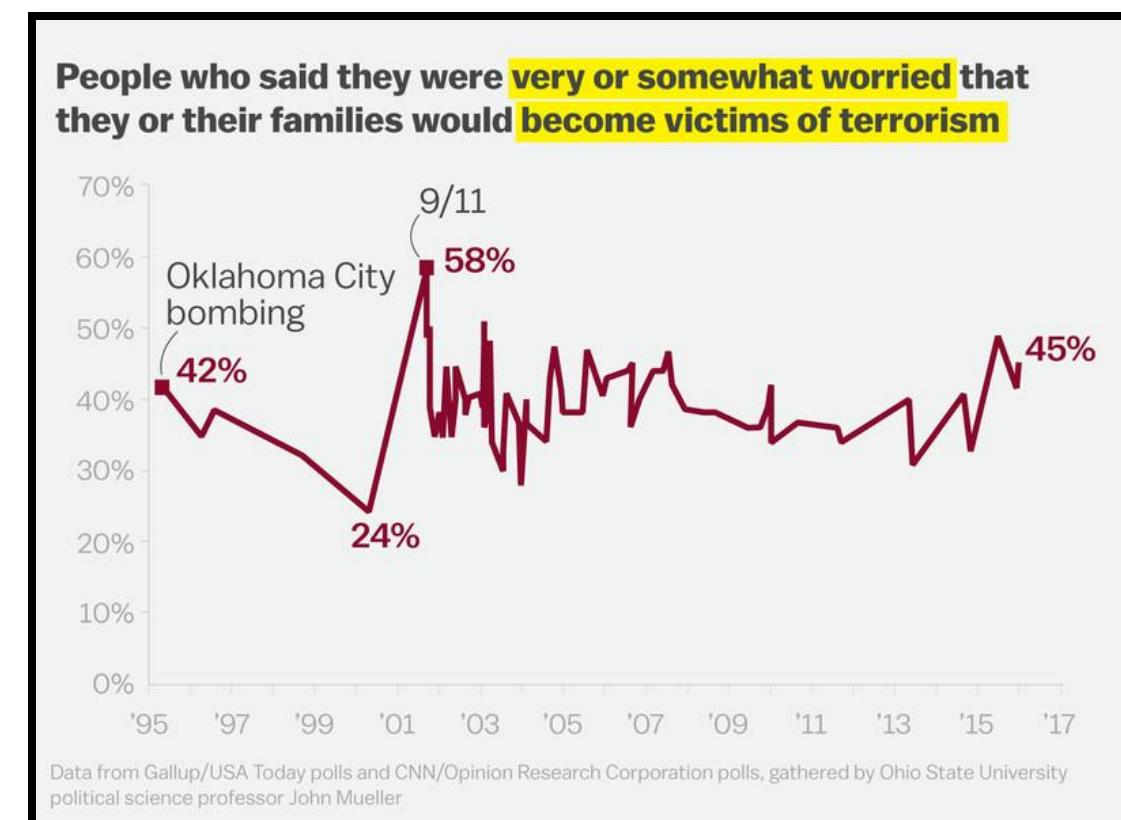
Osama bin Laden (1957 – 2011)

- Al Qaeda & Osama bin Laden
 - Opposition to Western Values in Middle East
 - Opposition to Persian Gulf War (1991)
 - Subsequent Troops in Saudi Arabia
 - Support for Israel
- Response: International Alliance
 - Bush & NATO Bomb Afghanistan
 - Aid Opposition to Radical Muslim Taliban Govt
- Dec 2001: Taliban Govt Destroyed
 - Bin Laden in Hiding
 - Afghans – New Govt
 - Taliban Fought On



Actions Post 9/11

- Rise in Anti-Immigrant & Islamophobia in the US
 - Surveillance on Mosques
 - “Voluntary Interviews”
 - Arrested 1,000+ Arabs & Muslims
- Justice Dept Study:
 - No Terrorist Connection
 - Denied Rights; Racial Profiling
 - Rise in Hate Crimes (1,600% Spike)
- Guantanamo, Cuba
 - Detention of 700+ Prisoners from Afghanistan
 - Detainees Had No Rights, Originally
 - Torture Led to Condemnation



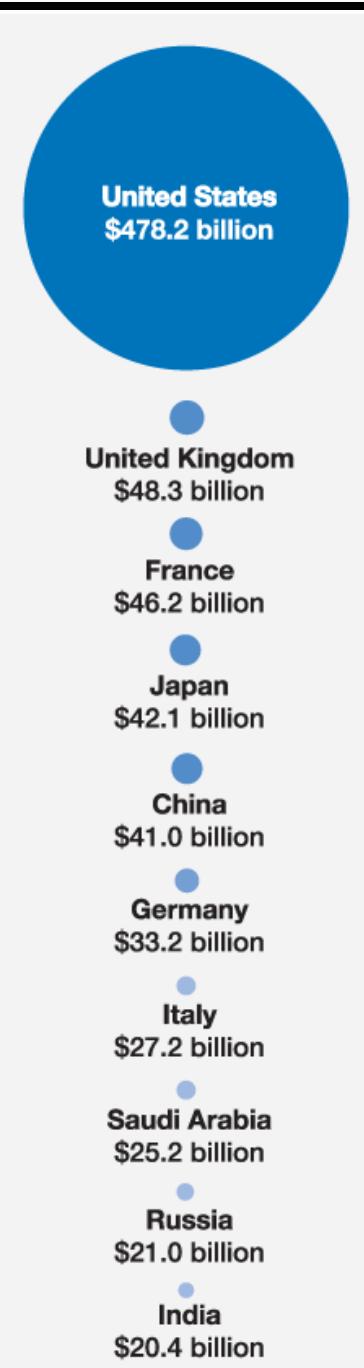
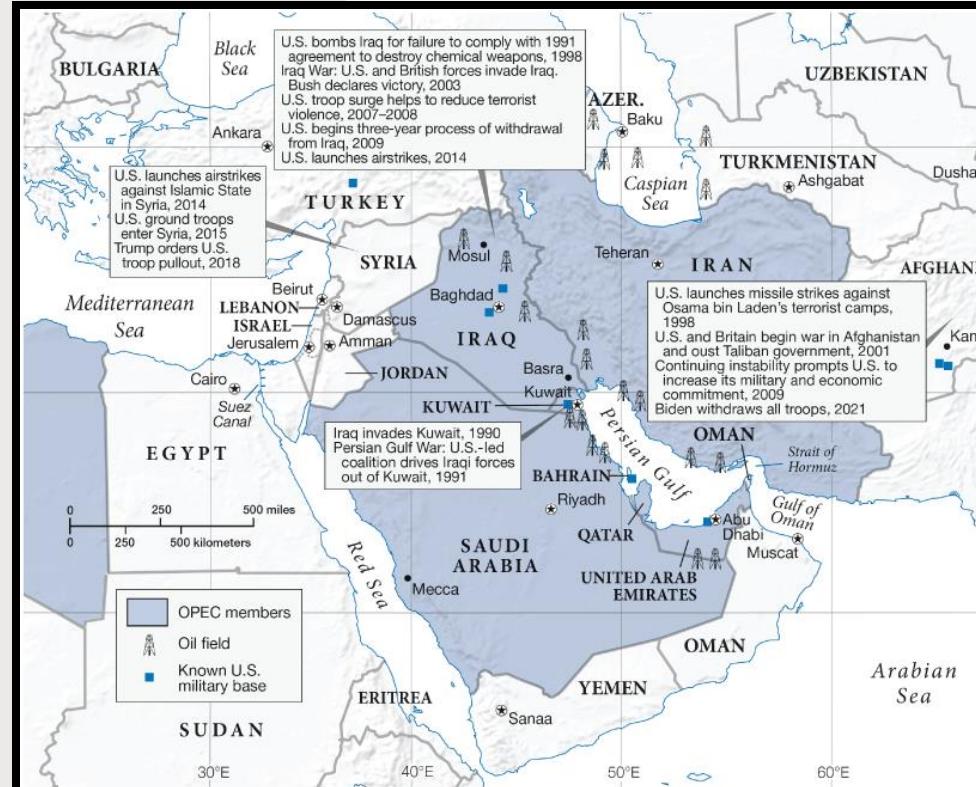
Legislative Actions Post 9/11



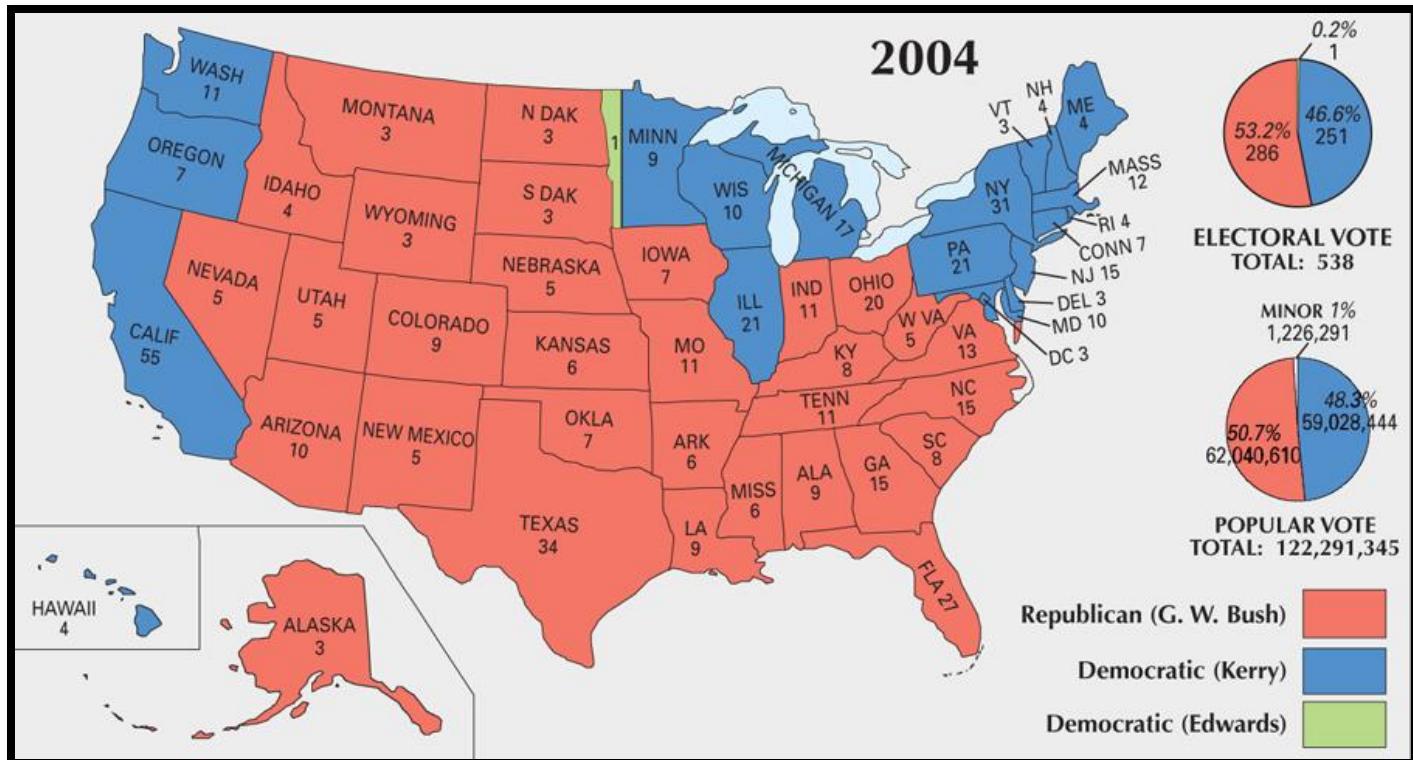
- USA Patriot Act:
 - Power to Monitor Suspected Terrorists
 - Detain Immigrant Indefinitely
 - Spying
 - Condemned by All
- 2003: Total Information Awareness (TIA)
 - Surveillance via Web Browsing Histories, Phone Data, Purchases, Subscriptions, Medical Records, etc.
 - Public Criticism Halts Program Funding
 - Moves to National Security Agency (NSA)
- Creation of Department of Homeland Security (2002)
 - Combined 170,000 Federal Employees from 22 Agencies
 - Domestic Security & Intelligence Analysis
 - Immigration & Border Security
 - Chemical, Biological, Nuclear Countermeasures
 - Emergency Preparedness & Response

US ‘War on Terror’ & Preemption Strategy

- US: Right to Start War Rather than Attacked First
 - Defied International Law & American Ideals
 - Distressed Allies
- Bush: Worried Hussein Violating UN Restrictions on Weapon Development
- 2002: UN Security Council Resolution for Iran to Disarm
 - Ignored
 - Response: Bush Admin Decides War
 - Against UN & Allies Beliefs
 - Claims: Hussein Linked to Al Qaeda
 - Response: Antiwar Demonstrations Globally
 - 10-15 Million People Worldwide



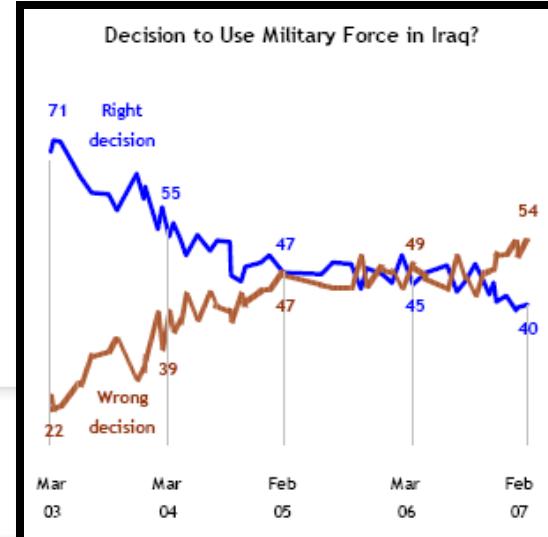
Presidential Election of 2004



- Key Issue: War
- George W. Bush (R)
- John Kerry (D)
- Results: Slim Victory
 - Entrusted Him with American Security

Iraq War – Popular Opinion

- 2006: Majority of Americans Think Iraq War a Mistake
 - Includes Dems, Reps, Military
 - Dictator – Gone
 - Unprepared for the Aftermath
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction?
 - None to be Found
- Cost?
 - \$750 Billion
 - US & Allies Relations Altered
 - 2006 Elections: Democrats Take Control of Congress (Since 1994)
 - Peace Eluded Iraq





Bush's Domestic Successes & Failures - Fiscal

- “Compassionate Conservative”
 - Embraced Nation’s Diversity
 - Appointed Different Ethnic Groups to Cabinet
 - Fiscal Policies?
 - Compassionate to the Rich
 - 2001 Taxes Cuts
 - Reduces Taxes over 10 Years by \$1.35 Trillion
 - 2003 Tax Law: Another \$320 Billion
 - Favored the Wealthy: Estate Taxes & Tax Cuts on Capital Gains & Dividends
 - Benefits to Married Couples & Families with Children (Deduction for College Costs)
 - Surplus to a Deficit (Highest in US History)
 - 2009: Deficit over \$1 Trillion
 - Increasingly Dependent on China

Bush's Domestic Successes & Failures — Environment

- Weakened Protections
 - Millions of Acres to Mining, Oil, Timber Industries
 - Relaxed Clear Air & Clean Water Acts
- Criticized Human-Made Causes of Climate Change



No Child Left Behind Act (2002)



- Started in Texas as Governor
- Expansion of Federal Govt in Public Education
 - Creation of National Standards
 - Penalties for Failing Schools
 - Never Adequately Funded*
 - One-Size-Fits-All
 - Does Not Work
 - Did Not Tackle Poverty as Source of Deficiencies

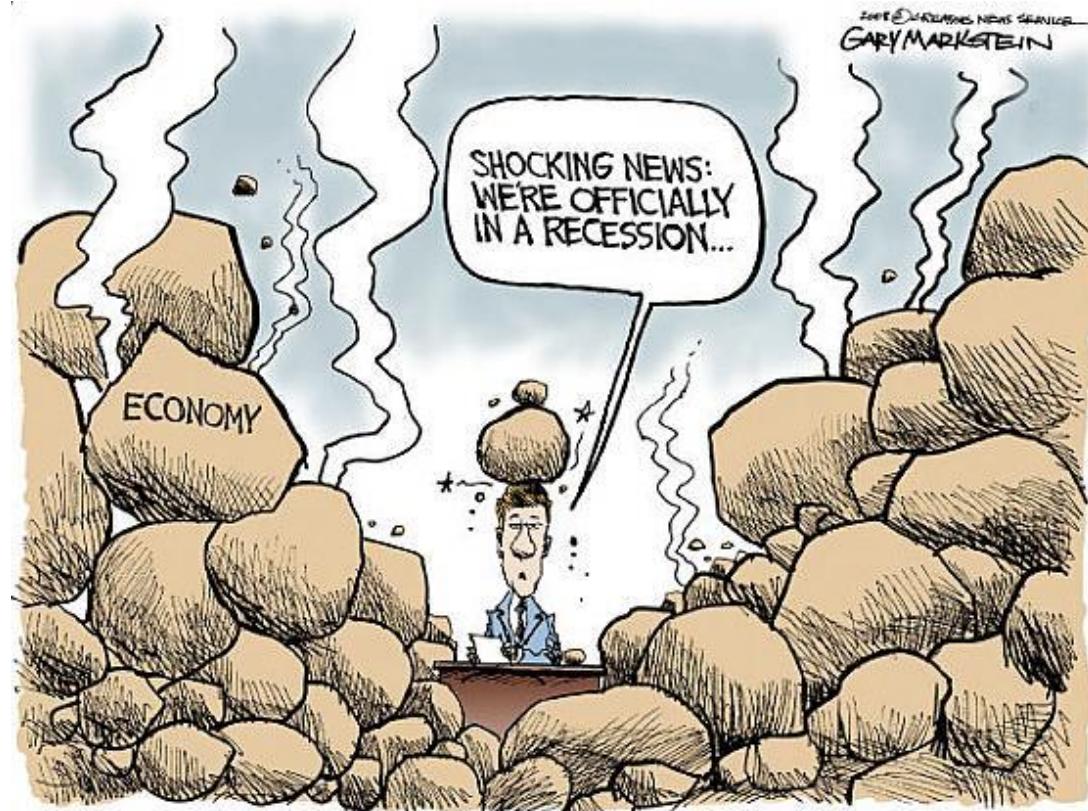
Hurricane Katrina (2005)

- Response to Natural Disaster: Lacking
- Katrina: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi; ~1,800 Deaths
 - New Orleans' Levees Broke
 - Citizens: Old, Poor, Sick
 - Rooftops Waiting for Days
- Federal Emergency Management Agency & Dept of Homeland Security Response: Failure
 - “How can we save the world if we can’t save our own people?”
- 1,000,000+ Displaced People
 - Hardest Hit: Poor & Black Victims



Mark Wilson/Getty Images.

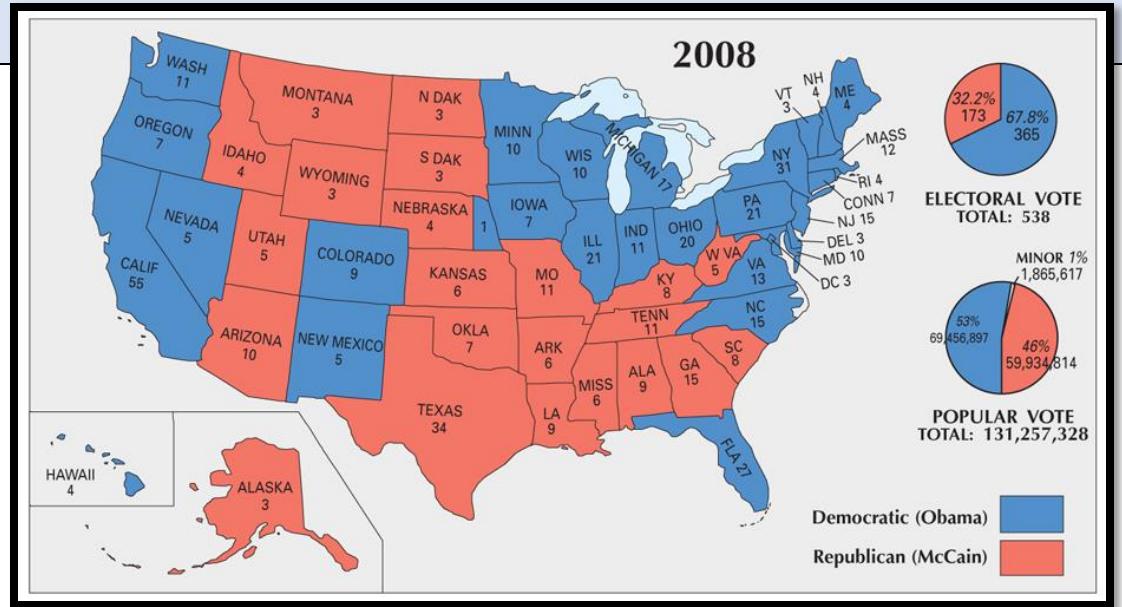
Economic Recession of 2007-2008



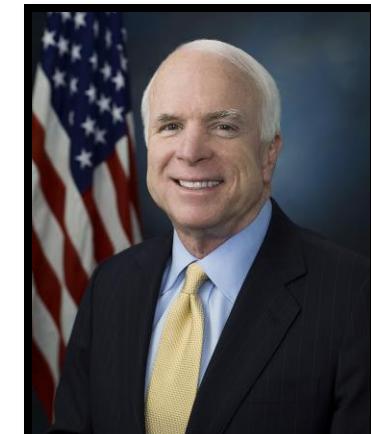
- Loosened Financial Regulations Under Clinton & Furthered Under Bush
- Housing Market Crashed
 - 1+ Million Foreclosures (2008)
- Great Recession
 - \$700 Billion to Bail Out Banks & Other Businesses

Presidential Election of 2008

- Barack Hussein Obama (D)
 - White Mother; Black Father
 - Hawai'i & Indonesia
 - First African American to Lead Harvard Law Review
 - 47 Years Old as Democratic Nomination
- John McCain (R)
 - Vietnam War Hero
 - Running Mate: Sarah Palin
- Birth of the ‘Birther’ Movement
 - Utilized by Trump in 2016



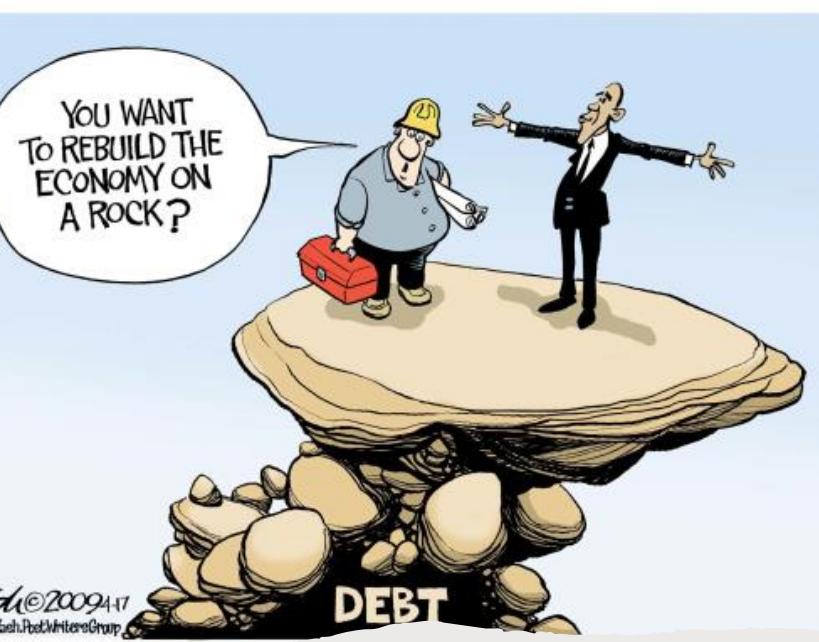
Barack Obama (1961 -)



John McCain (1936-2018)

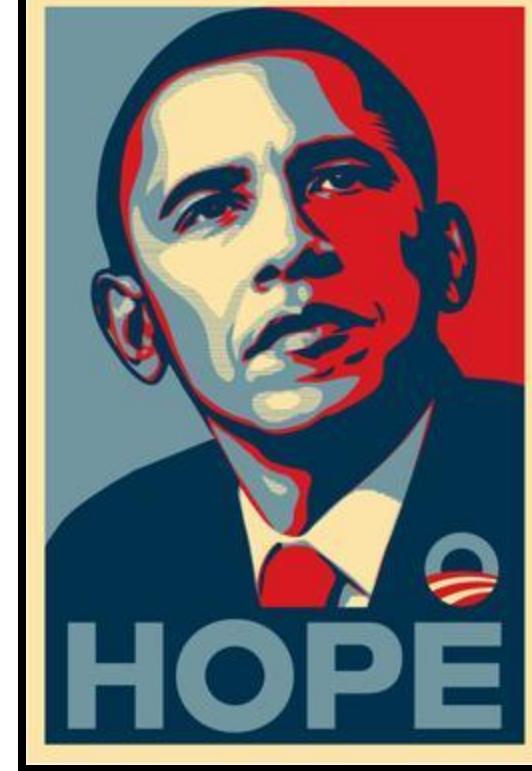
Addressing Economic Crisis

- Unemployment in 2010: 9.8%
- American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009
 - \$787 Billion of Spending & Tax Cuts
 - Stimulate Growth & Relieve Unemployment
 - Biggest in History; Not Enough
- Wall Street Reform & Consumer Protection Act (2010)
 - Expanded Federal Regulation
- Bailout of General Motors & Chrysler
 - Saved 1 Million Jobs



Achievements Under Obama

- Limited: Congress
- Judicial: Elena Kagan & Sonia Sotomayor
 - Sotomayor – First Latina Woman
- Women's Rights:
 - Strengthened Equal Pay
- Taxes:
 - Rolled Back Those Favoring the Wealthy
- Gay Rights:
 - Legislation Ending Discrimination in the Military
 - Slowly Ending Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation
 - *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015)
- Healthcare*

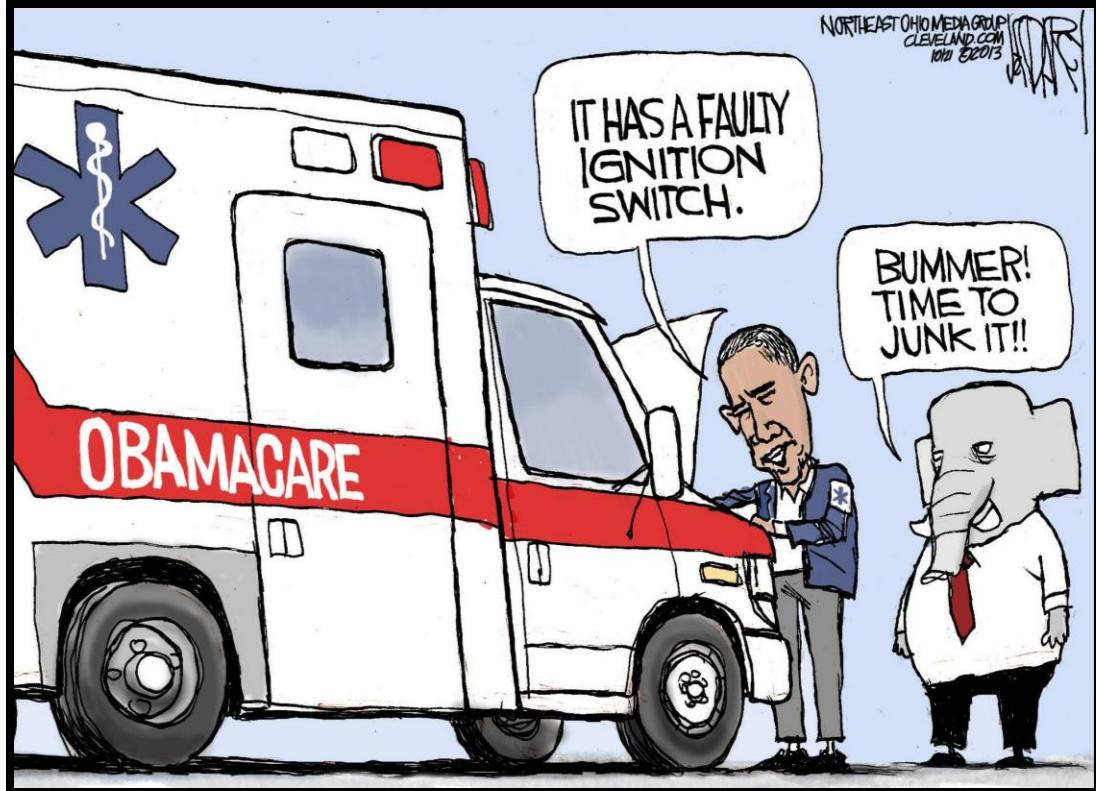


Sonia Sotomayor
(1954 -)



Elena Kagan
(1960 -)

Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act (ACA): 2010



- Idea Formed in the 1960s
- ACA:
 - Required Most to Carry Health Insurance
 - Federal Subsidies & Compelled Large Businesses to Cover Employees
 - Protects Healthcare Consumers & Limited Medical Costs
- Similar to Program Created by Republican Mitt Romney
 - Not Republican Voted for It
 - Republican Governors Make it Difficult to Implement

Tea Party Movement

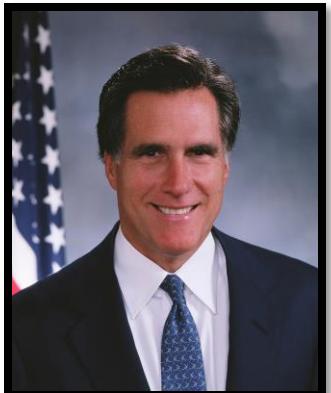
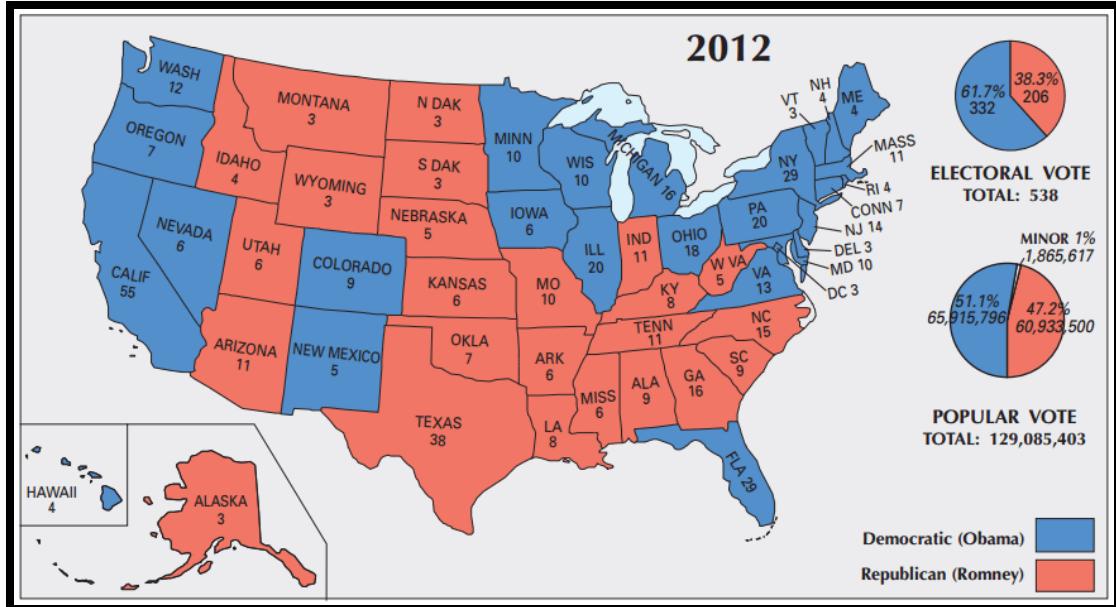
- Grassroots Movement:
 - White, Middle-Class, Older Voters
- Tea Party Origins:
 - Funded by Billionaire Conservatives
 - Supported by Right-Wing Media
 - Fox News
- Ideas:
 - Overreaching Govt & Displaced Values
 - Defended Social Security & Medicare
 - Resisted New Federal Programs



Ted Cruz (1970-)



Presidential Election of 2012



Mitt Romney
(1947 -)



Barack Obama
(1961 -)

- Barack Obama (D)
- Mitt Romney (R)
- Context of 2012:
 - 8% Unemployment
 - American Public:
 - Divided on Role of Federal Govt
 - Win: Obama
- 2014: Republicans Control Congress
 - Obama's Agenda Dead Except Executive Order

Executive Orders Under Obama

- Executive Orders to:
 - Raise Minimum Wage for Federal Workers
 - Address Racial Injustices in Criminal Justice System
 - Protection of Immigrant Youth from Deportation (DREAM Act)
 - Stalled in Congress
 - Curbed Motor Vehicle & Power Plant Emissions
 - Encouraged Alternative Energy
- 2015: Signed the Paris Climate Agreement



Antonin Scalia
(1936-2016)



Merrick Garland
(1952 -)



Ruth Bader Ginsburg
(1933-2020)



Amy Coney Barrett
(1972-)

Nomination of New Supreme Court Justice

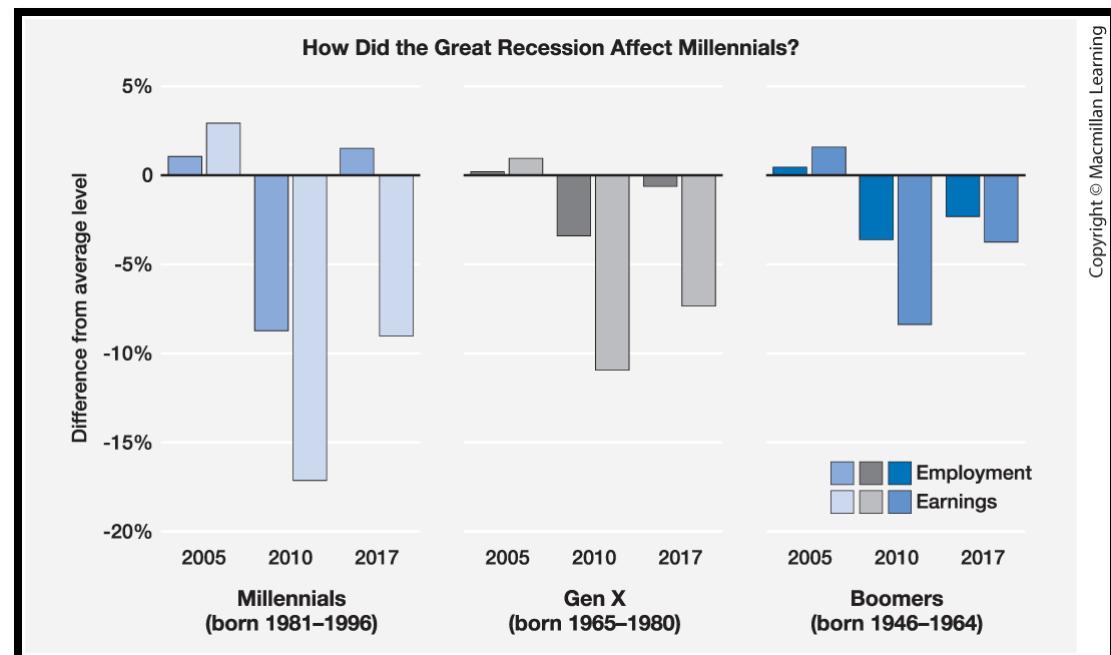
- Feb 2016: Death of Antonin Scalia
 - Election Year
- Obama Nomination:
 - Merrick Garland
 - Moderate; Praised by Republicans
 - Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, Blocked Garland's Nomination
- Argument: Next President Should Decide
 - Obama: 1 Year Left
- Sept 2020: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Dies
- Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell Pushed Trump's Nominee Through
 - Election Year



Mitch McConnell (1942-)

Growth of Grassroots Organizing

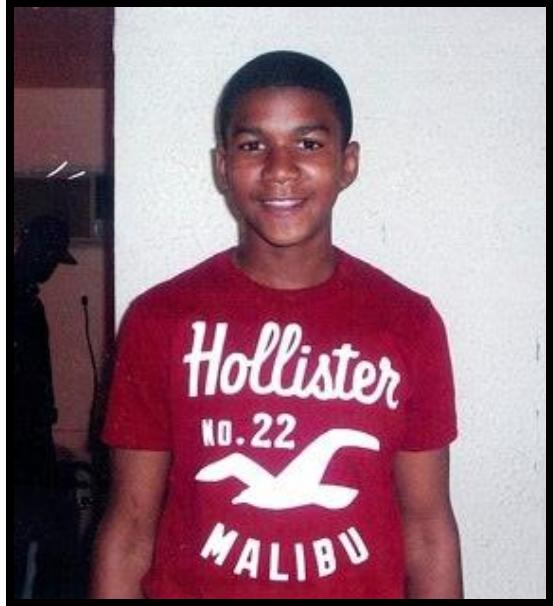
- 2011: Occupy Wall Street
- The 99% over the 1%
- Acknowledgement of:
 - Declining Fortunes of Working-Class
 - Stagnating Wages
 - Union Positions Replaced with Low-Paid & Insecure Jobs
 - Minimum Wage: \$7.25 (Since 2009)
 - ~4.5 Million Earned That or Less
 - Concentration of Wealth in the Stock Market & Hands of the Rich
 - Average Income for Top 1%: \$1.2 Million





Growth of Grassroots Organizing

- LGBT Growth
- Transgender Community
 - Advocates for Fluid or Nonbinary
 - Conservative Backlash:
 - “Bathroom Bills”
 - Trans Women Competing in Sports
- “Day Without Immigrants” (2006)
 - Support of Undocumented Immigrants & DREAMers
 - Response to Republican Bill Seeking to Criminalize Aiding Undocumented Residents
- Protests Pushed Congress to Explore Path to Legal Residency



Trayvon Martin
1995-2012)



Michael Brown
(1996 – 2014)



Black Lives Matter Movement

- 2012: Murder of Trayvon Martin
 - 17-Year- Old in Florida Shot by ‘Neighborhood Watch’ Member
 - Acquitted
- 2014: Michael Brown
 - Ferguson, Missouri
 - Unarmed 18-Year-Old Shot & Killed by Police
 - Weeks of Protest
- National Movement Post Michael Brown:
 - Accountability for Police
 - Racism in Policing
 - Political & Economic Empowerment of Black People
 - Protests Across the Country
 - Black Americans Interactions with Police
- Reaction: Blue Lives Matter

Social Media Used as a Form of Activism

- BLM
 - Black Lives Matter
- #MeToo
 - Against Sexual Harassment & Assault
 - Hollywood, Corporate America, Restaurant Industry
- #NeverAgain
 - Response to Parkland High School Shooting (17 Killed)
 - Subsequent Shootings
 - Coordination of School Walkouts
 - Results: 67 Gun Safety Laws in 26 States & DC
- Worries of Social Media:
 - Filtering of News, Polarizing Views, Spread of Disinformation

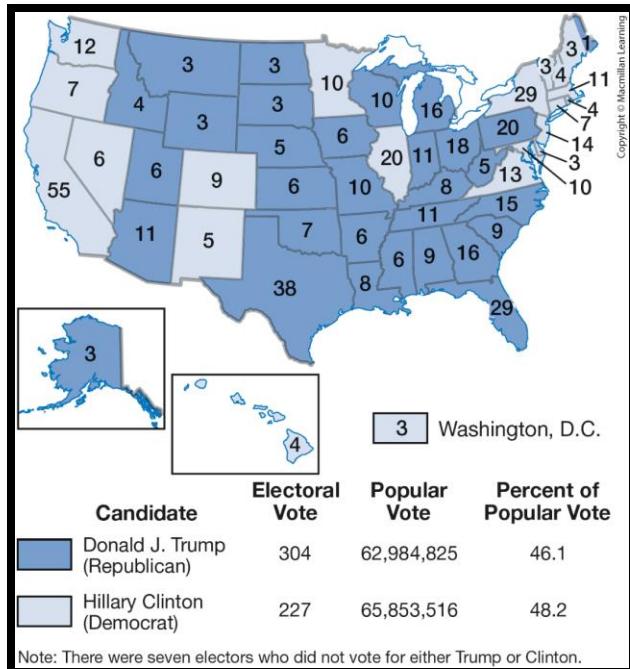


Significance of the Trump Presidency

- Trump Presidency:
 - Huge Corporate Tax Cuts
 - Rolled Back Environmental Protections
 - Withdrawn from International Agreements
 - Trade War with China
 - Conservative Judiciary
- Difference from Previous Presidents:
 - Decorum of Past Presidents Gone
 - Attacking of Opponents
 - Less Unifying Tone than Previous Presidents
 - Refused to Denounce White Supremacy
 - Fanned Racial Tensions
 - Approval Ratings: Never Higher than 50%
 - Investigations into Corruption
 - Resignations & Arrests of Aids
 - COVID
 - Refusal to Accept Election Results of 2020
 - Sexual Harassment Charges



Hillary Clinton (1947 -)



Donald Trump (1946 -)



“Make America Great Again”



- Origins:
 - Populist & Nationalist Appeal
 - Against Immigration
 - Unfair Trade Policies
 - Loss of American Jobs
- Supporters:
 - Evangelicals
 - White Conservatives
 - Those Frustrated with Govt
- “Make America Great Again”
 - Harked Back to Era Before Progressive Movements

Rise of Right-Wing Populism & White Nationalism

Broad International Swing Towards the Right

- Trump: Wealthiest US President
- Spoke to Signature Issues of the Lower Classes:
 - Lowering Taxes
 - Better Trade Deals
 - Halting Illegal Immigration
 - Surge in Immigration from Central America
 - 2014: 42.2 Million Immigrants (13.2%)
 - Latinos: 55 Million (17%)
 - Post 2010: Immigrants from Asia than Latin America
 - Undocumented by 2016: ~10.7 Million
 - Ease to Economic Concerns for Some





Immigration as Highlight of Trump Presidency



- Separation of Children from Families at Detention Camps
- Ban on Travel to US from Muslim-Majority Countries
- Supreme Court Upholds Modified Version (2018)
- FBI Under Trump:
 - Targeted Muslims & Immigrants over White Supremacists & Domestic Terrorists
 - Latter More Responsible for Death & Violence



George Floyd (1973- 2020)



Breonna Taylor (1993 – 2020)

Racial Tension Under Trump Presidency

- White Nationalist Rally, Charlottesville, VA (2017)
 - White Protestor Killed
 - Trump: Refused to Condemn them
 - “Very fine people on both sides”
- Murder of George Floyd (2019)
- Death of Breonna Taylor (2020)
- Skepticism of Police Reform



Trump's Record in Office

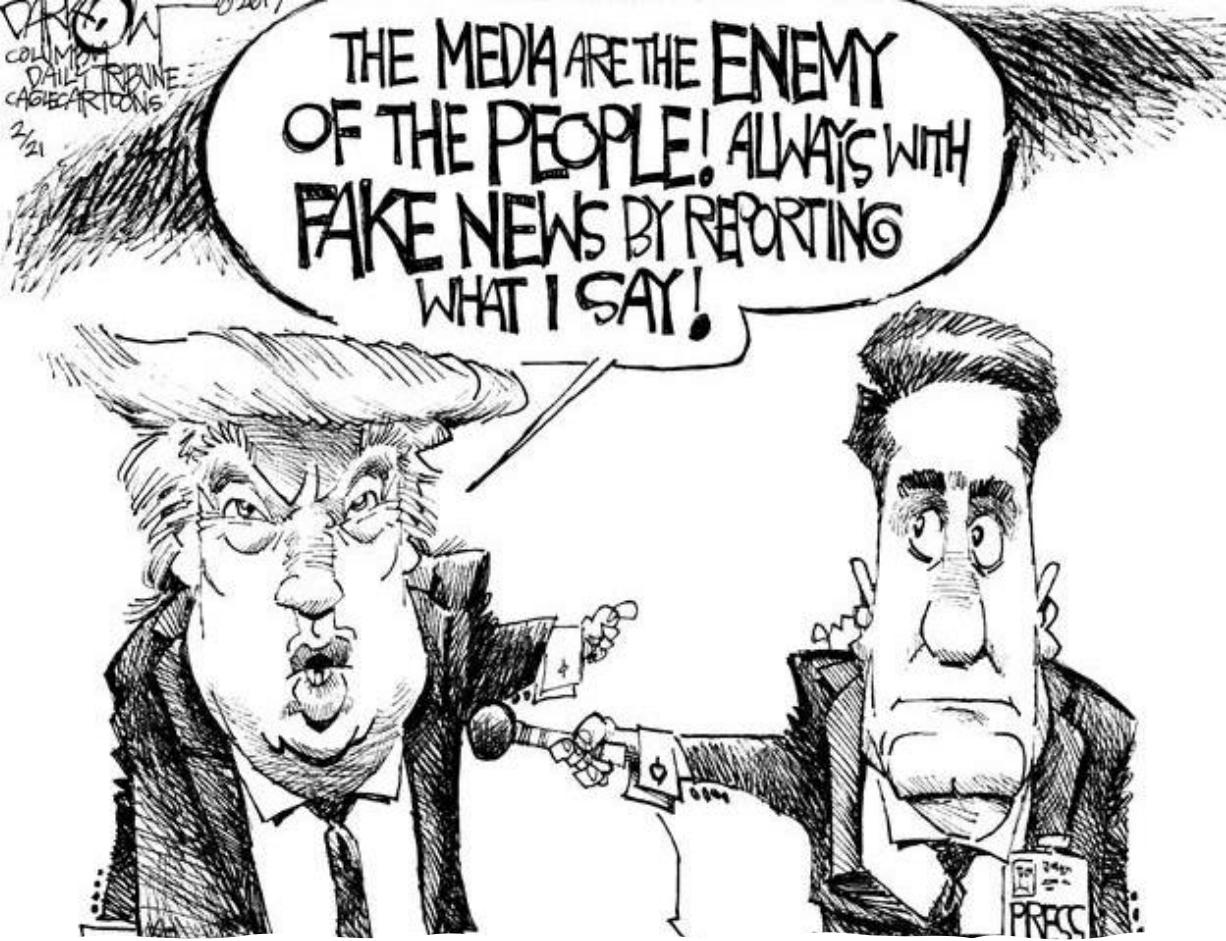
- Anti-Establishment & Distrust of Experts = Inexperienced Staff
- Resignations
 - National Security Advisor
 - Secretary of State
 - Head of EPA
 - Attorney General
 - Secretary of Defense
- Arrests of Advisors & Lawyer
- Dissolved Office for Global Health Security & Biodefense (2018)
 - COVID-19 (2019)





Trump as a Polarizing Figure

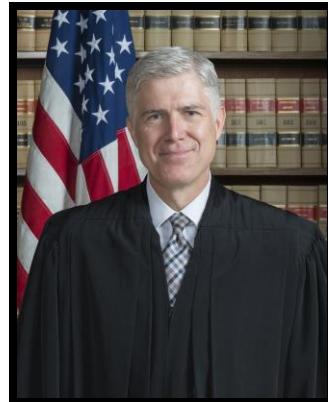
- Media:
 - “Enemy of the People”
- Democrats vs. Republicans
 - Disagreements Every Issue
 - Approval Ratings:
 - Republicans: 86%
 - Democrats: 6%



Trump's Record in Office

- Traditional Agenda:
 - Corporate Tax Cuts
 - Reversing Environmental Protections
 - Created United States Space Force Act
 - Ban on Transgender Individuals in the Navy
- Conservative Supreme Court Justices:
 - Neil Gorsuch
 - Brett Kavanaugh
 - Amy Coney Barrett
 - 6-3 Conservative Majority
 - Likely a Lasting Legacy

Neil Gorsuch
(1967-)

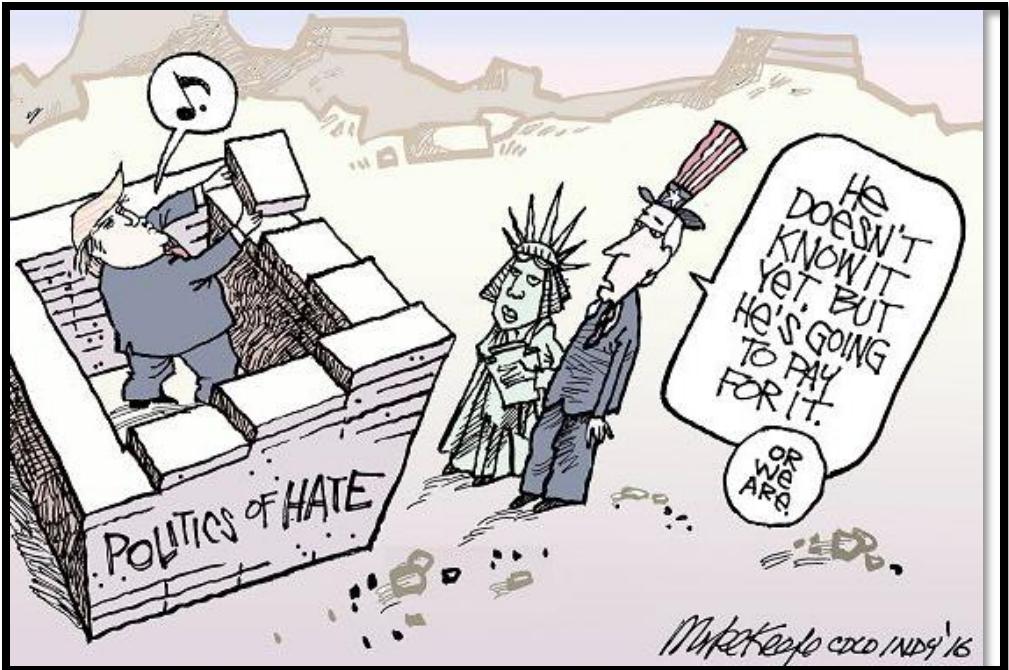


Amy Coney Barrett
(1972-)



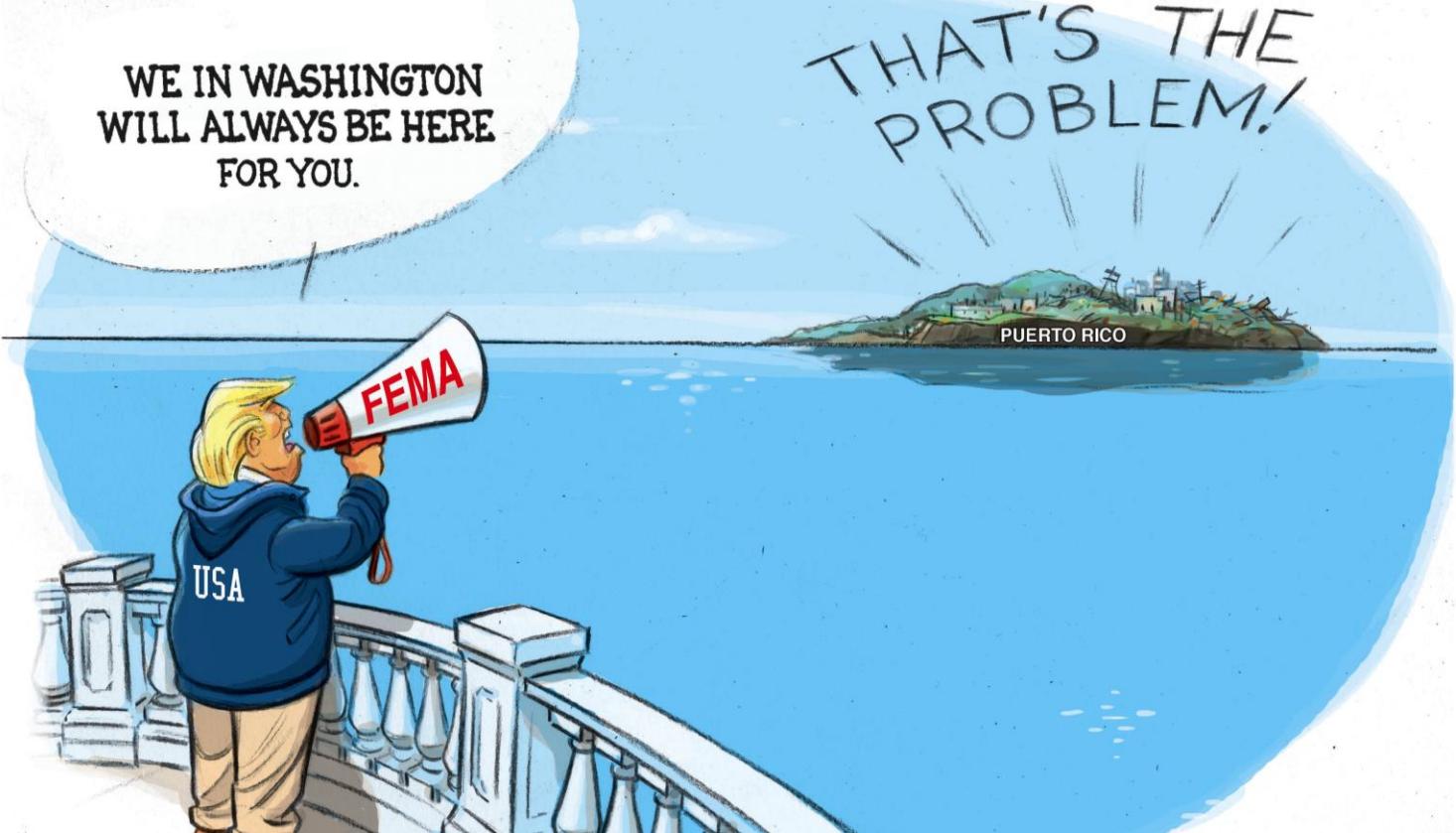
Brett Kavanaugh
(1965-)





Two Promises Never Achieved

- 1. Pledged to Repeal Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)
- 2. Construction of a Wall Between US & Mexico
- 2018: Democratic Majority in the House of Representatives
 - Refused to Fund Border Wall
 - Longest Govt Shutdown in US History (35 Days)
 - Attempted Declaring a National Emergency to Seize Funds



Trump Presidency Response to Crisis

- Humanitarian Functions Forgotten
- Puerto Rico (2 Hurricanes, 2017)
- Slow Response; Ineffective Response
- California (Huge Wildfires)
- Begrudging Aid

Legacy of Trump

- First President to Be Impeached Twice
 - As of 2024: First to be a convicted felon
- Political Crisis: January 6, 2020
 - Fears Over the Future of Democracy
- Peaceful Transfer of Power?
 - Transition to Joe Biden
- Biden's Message:
 - National Unity
 - Elusive



Joseph "Joe" Biden
(1942-)



Common Ground in a Divided Nation?





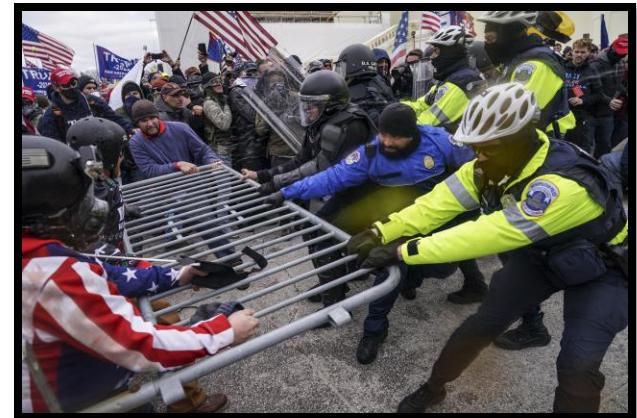
Joseph Biden
(1942 -)



Kamala Harris
(1964 -)

2020 Presidential Election

- Record Turnout
 - 160 Million Americans
- Electoral College:
 - Biden: 306 ; Trump: 232
 - 7 Million More in Popular Vote
- January 6, 2021
 - “Stop the Steal”
- Impeachment #2
 - “an unconstitutional attempt led by the president of the United States to overturn an American election and reinstall himself in power illegitimately.”
 - “inciting insurrection”
 - Left the White House with 29% Approval



Biden Administration

- Entered into COVID Damaged Economy
- COVID-19 Response:
 - Mask Mandate
 - National Vaccine Campaign
 - COVID Relief Package:
 - \$1.9 Trillion
 - Stimulus Checks Round 2



Biden Administration on Domestic Front



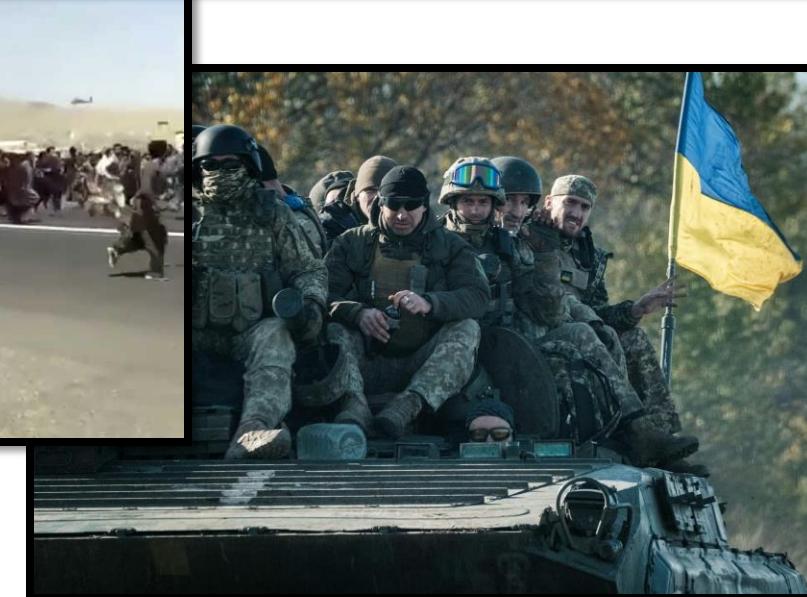
Ketanji Brown Jackson
(1970 -)



- Infrastructure Bill: Investment & Jobs Act
 - Investments in Clean Energy
- Attempts to Tackle:
 - Housing Discrimination
 - Criminal Justice
 - Voting Rights
- Protects Same-Sex Marriage
 - Respect for Marriage Act (2022)
- Supreme Court:
 - Chief Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson
 - First Black Female Justice (2022)
 - Dobbs v. Jackson (2022)

Biden Administration on Foreign Affairs

- Campaign Fledge to Withdraw from Afghanistan Met
- Mounting Issues with Russia & China
 - Efforts to Ramp up Cybersecurity
 - Economic Competition
- War in Ukraine
 - NATO Allies & US Aid to Ukraine
 - Fighting Continues



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- Obama Reform Agenda & the Obstacles Faced
- New Social Movements & Media's Influence in Politics
- Significance of the Trump Presidency
- Common Ground in a Divided Nation?