

THE
STRIP & FLIP
DISASTER OF
AMERICA'S
STOLEN ELECTIONS

ROBERT J. FITRAKIS & HARVEY WASSERMAN



Five Jim Crows & Electronic Election Theft
Trump Edition of The Strip & Flip Selection of 2016

Prologue

The disaster of America's 2016 election was defined by three basic elements: the stripping of very large numbers of eligible American citizens from the voter rolls; the flipping of electronic vote counts; and the Electoral College.

These poisons have been with us in various manifestations since the birth of our nation. They have undermined our democracy and plunged our country into dire authoritarian straits.

They've determined not just the presidency but the makeup of the US Congress, the Supreme Court and overall judiciary, city, state and local governments, and much more.

They've taken control of our government away from the people and handed it to a cynical band of manipulative corporatists who have stripped our voter rolls and flipped our electronic outcomes, with disastrous results.

This book outlines the historic roots of this disaster, including the systemic disenfranchisement (mostly by race) of large sections of the American electorate through the birth of slavery, the Revolution, the Civil War, birth of Jim Crow segregation and beyond.

It also provides a set of answers: We need to win universal automatic voter registration; transparent voter rolls; a four-day national holiday for voting; ample locations for all citizens to conveniently cast ballots; universal hand-counted paper ballots; automatic recounts free to all candidates; abolition of the Electoral College; an end to gerrymandering; a ban on corporate money in our campaigns.

There's more. But that's a good start.

In 2016, some 29 Republican secretaries of state used a computer program called Crosscheck to strip countless citizens from the voter rolls. Most were black, Hispanic, Asian-American and Muslim non-millionaires.

Hillary Clinton actually won the official national vote count by some 2,800,000 ballots. She also won the exit polls in five key swing states (Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin) that would have given her a victory in the Electoral College.

Democratic candidates for the US Senate also won the exit polls in three key races —Pennsylvania, Missouri and Wisconsin—that would have given them control of the US Senate. They also won three such races in 2014—in Colorado, Alaska and North Carolina. Having lost the Senate seats in those six states, the Democrats lost control of the US Supreme Court.

The Jim Crow stripping of the voter rolls made the difference in those races.

Meanwhile more than 80% of those who survive the stripping process cast their votes on electronic machines or on Scantron ballots, mostly counted by scanners with no verification process.

Finally, where that was not enough, the Electoral College flipped the presidential outcome.

In characteristic fashion, Donald Trump denounced his popular vote defeat by falsely claiming some three million “aliens” had actually voted for Hillary Clinton, denying him a popular majority. He loudly and repeatedly said the election was “rigged.”

Indeed it was, but in exactly the opposite way Trump said. He was in fact put in the White House through the Jim Crow disenfranchisement of countless Americans who were stripped from the voter rolls because of their race and class. Since that was not enough, the outcome was then flipped by electronic voting machines. And finally it was certified by an Electoral College designed to enhance the power of slaveowners.

How did this happen? What are the five Jim Crows? How do we get rid of them? What can we do to make sure this never happens again?

PART ONE: “STRIP”

The foundation of the American corporate power elite is now and always has been based on the manipulation of race as a “divide and conquer” strategy. It has focused on Five Jim Crows.

The First Jim Crow, slavery, has existed in various forms from the dawn of time. But in the colonies of British North America, and then in the United States, it took on a uniquely virulent incarnation.

Chattel slavery was of course a horrific, brutal labor system, designed primarily in the American South to power a network of plantations that produced tobacco, cotton, indigo, rice and other hot weather crops that could be grown in large fields.

But it also had a large, more sinister purpose. Our “peculiar institution” was meant to divide black laborers from white in a caste system that would guarantee they’d never unite in rebellion. As we’ll see, this originated with the infamous Bacon’s Rebellion of 1675 in Virginia, in which indentured servants of both races joined forces. Plantation owners vowed to make sure that never happened again.

When the United States became an independent country, plantation owners also vowed to secure political benefit from their slaves. Thus, they wrote into the Constitution a “3/5ths clause” that gave slave owners additional representation for their slaves, even though those slaves could not vote. That additional vote count guaranteed that every president from Jefferson to Lincoln either owned slaves or his vice president did. And that the Congress was strongly controlled by slave owners right up to the outbreak of the Civil War.

After the Civil War, with formal slavery abolished, a **second “Jim Crow”** system of **racial segregation** overtook the South. Enforced by the Democratic Party and its Ku Klux Klan terror wing, white landowners updated the realities of slavery to again keep blacks and whites apart. The root of racism since 1865 has been the treatment of legally freed African-Americans as something less than human, guaranteeing all whites a sense of superiority and an economic leg up. When the Populist and Socialist movements that campaigned most powerfully from the 1880s to 1930s worked to overcome this separation, they were hammered by the court and electoral systems through a series of stolen elections and twisted, race-based legal

decisions, and the fusion of the Democratic and Republican Parties in the 1917 municipal races in the Northeast.

Confirmed by the Supreme Court in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, this updated Jim Crow caste system again guaranteed that blacks in the South (and parts of the North) would not be allowed to vote, and that they would be carefully divided from whites by caste as well as class.

Since 1970 the primary weapon for suppressing the non-white/non-millionaire vote has been **the third Jim Crow, the Drug War**. In the tradition of Bacon's Rebellion and the Populist/Socialist upheavals, blacks and whites once again began to unite during the Civil Rights and anti-war movements of the 1950s and 1960s.

In response, Richard Nixon's Republican Party invoked the divide- and-conquer "War on Drugs." Confronted with the possible integration and liberalization of the southern Democratic Party, Nixon feared that black votes might remake America's political map.

In GOP eyes there was only one solution: disenfranchise the African- American population, along with young and Latino voters who were leaning strongly to the left.

In 1972 Nixon pointedly ignored a powerful report from his own Blue Ribbon Shafer Commission on drug use and escalated the attack on marijuana and other drugs. In the 45 years since, a staggering 41 million Americans have been arrested for pot and other controlled substances. That's a number of human beings that exceeds the populations of more than 150 other countries worldwide. It has left the United States with the largest prison population in the history of the modern world (while having little or no impact on the actual use of drugs).

As Michelle Alexander has shown in her landmark book *The New Jim Crow*, the majority of those incarcerated have been black and Latino, with a devastating impact on our elections. Millions of these mostly young, mostly male citizens have been stripped of their right to vote, as well as their ability to maintain families, obtain work and meaningfully participate in the political lives of their communities.

All this has been by design. Once again, a new Jim Crow policy has been delegated by a ruling elite to strip our non-white population of its ability to exercise its fair share of power in our electoral process, and to unite with whites in political action.

In the 1890s, rising industrial interests committed the nation to a **fourth Jim Crow**, a course of **race-based global empire**. The US already had a history of foreign intervention, dating to Thomas Jefferson's 1803 use of our fledgling navy to fight pirates along the coast (the “shores of Tripoli”) of what's now Libya. That was followed by the conquest of the North American continent, with genocidal warfare used against the indigenous peoples who'd lived here for millennia.

By the 1890s, with the frontier consumed, America's giant corporations began to expand overseas. They started with Hawaii (a constitutional monarchy dating back many centuries) and then pushed into Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines and beyond. In all cases these interventions involved the white-ruled US interfering with the political systems of non-white nations.

In discussing this fourth Jim Crow we include an extensive (though not complete) list of these interventions. It underscores the reality that our own political system has become an imperial juggernaut, with the inevitable blowback bound to obliterate any residual pretense to real democracy at home.

Generally there's been an attempt to portray these interventions as benign, meant to bring "civilization," democracy, progress and the Christian faith to Third World nations. In fact, they've been largely economic in purpose – a “Dollar Diplomacy” meant to grab for our major corporations new frontiers for cheap resources, exploited labor and expanded markets.

Their impact on our own political system has been catastrophic. They've established the US as a corporate-ruled race-based empire, fueling the growth of a military whose intrinsic power overshadows our entire electoral process.

And they've given our intelligence operations, most importantly from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), a long history of overturning elections and stripping mostly non-white nations of their right to self-rule. At the US Senate's landmark Church hearings in the 1970s, the Agency admitted to at least 5,000 such interventions in just the quarter-century since the end of World War II.

This **fifth Jim Crow**, an entrenched tradition of contempt for the democratic process overseas **came home electronically** in 1988, when former CIA chief George Herbert Walker Bush won a statistically impossible New Hampshire primary victory over Bob Dole on newly installed computer voting machines.

Overall, with more than 900 military bases, and troops or military advisors in 175 countries worldwide, the militarization of our own political processes has become entrenched. Perfected covert and overt techniques of stripping our non-white constituencies of their rights have become an integral part of all American elections.

All that has set the stage for the **electronic stripping of our elections**.

In the meantime, each of these five original Jim Crows has devastated America's ability to evolve and thrive. They have stripped our ability to function as an integrated, advanced body of human beings. They need, once and for all, to be stripped from our national election system and replaced with one that truly reflects the will of our people. In the long run, the only cure for authoritarian corruption is democracy, and it's to that process that this book is dedicated.

THE FIRST JIM CROW:

Slavery and the 3/5ths Clause

For 400 years, race and slavery have divided and conquered us.

In 1619, about a score of Africans were brought to Jamestown as indentured servants. Working conditions were harsh, but their basic human rights were assumed. Most achieved freedom. At least one eventually employed other workers.

As historian Lerone Benette, Jr., has put it:

Before Jim Crow, before the invention of the Negro or the white man or the words and concepts to describe them, the Colonial population consisted largely of a great mass of white and black bondsmen, who occupied roughly the same economic category and were treated with equal contempt by the lords of the plantations and

legislatures. Curiously unconcerned about their color, these people worked together and relaxed together.

But then black and white indentured servants united in the 1675 Bacon's Rebellion. They burned Jamestown and forced the governor to flee.

In response, to make sure nothing like that ever happened again, Virginia landowners invented America's "peculiar institution."

It was a technically a labor system. But its more specific function was to separate the races, to make sure black and white never again united in rebellion.

Essentially a "bribe" to the whites, American chattel slavery cast blacks into an abyss of sub-human barbarity. Legally, they (and their children) became mere objects, sub-human slaves for life. White "owners" could sell, torture, rape and murder their black "property" with no legal penalties.

Various theological claptrap was soon invented to make this a "Christian" and "moral" practice, allegedly approved by the Bible. Whites also invented the myth that somehow slaves were "happy" under a system of tyranny that absolutely forbade them the least bit of freedom under penalty of torture and death.

The lie to all that was found in Slave Codes meant to completely degrade African immigrants and their progeny. The Codes gave whites a higher status that would permanently divide the races. No longer would whites and blacks be allowed to work, play, love or rebel together.

Poor whites could now tower (and cower) over a "slave caste." The Jim Crow abyss still gives many the illusion of "superiority" to which they cling with fear and desperation. Those who wonder at the longevity of racism must always remember that this is what gives even the most destitute, desperate and self-hating white person a sense of being better than at least someone else on this Earth.

In 1787, as slavery persisted even after the Revolution, the wealthy white men who drafted the US Constitution were primarily bankers, merchants, lawyers, military men, large farm operators and slave owners. Many had a vested financial and political interest in the continued subjugation of black America.

Mostly again their will, a public suspicious of a strong central government forced the Founders to concede a Bill of Rights. But voting rights and procedures were left largely to the states.

It was clear at the time that few immigrants would come to a region dominated by slave labor. So to protect their interests in a nation where they were being rapidly outnumbered, southerners got an Electoral College that included a “3/5ths clause.” Slaves (who could not vote themselves) were counted for 3/5ths of a vote for president and in establishing Congressional districts.

Thus all presidents from Washington to Lincoln either owned slaves or their vice presidents did. With additional representation, the South dominated the House of Representatives.

The festering sore on which it all rested was the Slave Codes:

- Enslaved African-Americans were stripped of all human rights. “Owners” and other whites were free to sell, rape, torture and kill enslaved black Americans without legal penalties.
- In many colonies and then states, it became illegal for free whites or blacks to socialize with enslaved African-Americans.
- Racial intermarriage was illegal in many states until the 1960s.
- Slaves could not speak to whites (or to free blacks) without permission of their "owners."
- Slaves could not testify in court except against other slaves.
- Slaves could not own property.
- Slaves could not earn their own wages, or buy or sell anything.
- Three slaves could not gather together without white supervision.
- Slaves could not travel outside plantations without a pass from their owners.

- Slaves could not marry and had no rights pertaining to their children, which could be sold away from them without a moment's notice.
- It was a capital crime for even a white "owner" to teach a slave to read, or for one to read even the Bible.
- "The Great Fear" ruling class whites embedded in the Slave Codes still divides black from white, permeates American life, and corrupts our electoral process.
- But during the Revolution, both the British and the Americans offered blacks their freedom in exchange for joining their respective armies.
- During that war, many blacks fought alongside whites.
- After the Revolution, African-Americans in many northern states could vote if they owned enough property to qualify.
(Only Quaker-dominated New Jersey gave women the right to vote, which was rescinded in 1808).
- By most accounts when the US was governed by the Articles of Confederation, the majority of US citizens opposed the proposed new Constitution, which was drafted in secret in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787. The Founders were an elite group of bankers, lawyers, merchants, politicians, military leaders, plantation owners, and the printer/publisher Ben Franklin. There were no small farmers, workers, sailors, women, African-Americans, Indians or other "ordinary citizens" in the deliberations, which were held behind locked and guarded doors. The Convention sought ratification from nine of the twelve states (Vermont had not yet joined the union). Many believed the process would fail. By the time it came for New York to vote, nine states had ratified. But New York's approval was still critical. A strong majority of the convention was opposed, then somehow shifted to a 30-27 vote for ratification, which was essential to the Constitution's success. Had all electors voted as they were instructed by the populace, New York's ratification convention would have failed. At least some

of those who switched their votes to negate the wishes of their constituents apparently received substantial material rewards later on.

- In 1800, the 3/5ths clause allowed Thomas Jefferson to win 74-65 in an Electoral College that otherwise would have gone 65-62 for John Adams. Jefferson owned (and fathered) some of the slaves that counted toward his victory even though they couldn't vote.
- In 1800, 1824, 1876, 1888, 2000 and 2016, the candidate who came in second in the official popular vote has won the Electoral College.
- Until 1860 many states used property qualifications to exclude both whites and blacks from voting.
- When Elbridge Gerry rigged representational districts to favor his party in the 1790s, critics said they looked like salamanders. This “gerrymandering” creates a situation where politicians choose their voters, instead of voters choosing their preferred candidate, resulting in extremists from both sides holding safe congressional seats, and resulting in severe gridlock. Gerrymandering has disenfranchised non-millionaire voters (both black and white) ever since.

THE SECOND JIM CROW: Racial Segregation (American Apartheid)

Some 200,000 black soldiers (60,000 of whom died) empowered the Union victory over the Confederacy. By contrast, some 200,000 poor white draftees deserted the Confederate army, running from what they called “a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight.”

In 1869 President U.S. Grant sent federal troops into the South to guarantee black rights. This “Radical Reconstruction” joined freed African-Americans with poor whites in bi-racial governments, terrifying former slave owners.

The 1870 ratification of the 15th Amendment gave freed black men the right to vote. Many southern states were 40-50% black. With just a few white votes, the party of Lincoln could control much of the former Confederacy.

Under Grant, newly elected former slaves and poor white southerners established some of the world’s first bi-racial governments and began a “Second American Revolution.”

But the Democratic Party was founded by Andrew Jackson after the 1824 election, in which he won the popular vote but was denied the presidency through a corrupt deal in the Electoral College engineered by John Quincy Adams.

A violent racist, Jackson meant to enshrine white rule. The new Democratic Party functioned as the “Party of Race and Slavery,” and after the Civil War became the party of Jim Crow apartheid.

- The Civil War erupted in large part from the intense multi-decade campaigns of Abolitionists, both black and white, who demanded an end to slavery. Hatred of the "peculiar institution" spread throughout the entire American society, energizing men and women of all races and creeds, culminating in the 1859 raid by the white preacher John Brown at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. Brown hoped to distribute guns to black slaves, prompting a revolutionary multi-racial uprising. The power of this black-white movement against the slave system was a principle reason for the secession of the South that led to war. The Union Army could not have succeeded without the 200,000 blacks who fought (60,000 died) in Lincoln's Army alongside white northerners.
- After the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, the Ku Klux Klan worked as the terror wing of the Democratic Party (in the 1970s it shifted its services to Richard Nixon’s GOP).
- In 1876, stolen electoral votes were used to give the presidency to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes, who lost the popular balloting by some 250,000 votes.

In a corrupt deal with the Democrats, Hayes became the third losing candidate to use the Electoral College to take the White House. In exchange he ended Reconstruction and stripped away federal protection of freed former slaves, terminating a program that had begun to pave the way for long-term cooperation between the races.

- From 1865 through the 1980s, more than 4,000 lynchings (more than 300 per year) have been used to terrorize the black community throughout the South, stripping its ability to organize or function as an effective political entity.
- The former Confederacy has since maintained a system of virtual slavery imposed on blacks wrongly imprisoned and then worked for years in hard unpaid contract labor. As shown by the documentary film “13th,” a system of prison-based involuntary servitude has replaced formal slavery, gutting the southern black community's rights and powers.
- These former slaves and their progeny have been systematically stripped of their right to vote for 150 years.
- Until the 1964 ratification of the 24th Amendment, the poll tax was used to strip southern blacks of the right to vote. Other methods of disenfranchisement, including demands for photo ID and the use of computerized stripping of registration rolls, are now being used to do the same thing.
- So-called “literacy tests” with impossible demands were used extensively to strip southern blacks of the right to vote.
- Whites were exempted from these requirements through the “Grandfather clause” granting the right to vote to all (i.e., whites) whose grandfathers could vote.
- After Reconstruction, a Jim Crow system of apartheid separation carried on the tradition of separating blacks and whites for political purposes.

- In 1888, Republican Benjamin Harrison lost the popular vote to incumbent President Grover Cleveland, but won the presidency in the Electoral College, becoming the fourth candidate to lose the popular vote while taking the White House.
- In the 1886 Santa Rosa railroad case, a clerk enshrined corporations with the right to “personhood” even though Supreme Court’s actual decision made no mention of it. This deliberate recording error ultimately led to the disastrous Citizens United decision in 2010 allowing corporations to spend massive amounts of money in political campaigns.
- The post-Civil War grassroots agrarian Populist movement attempted to unite black southern farmers with white farmers from the south and west in a movement for social justice and economic equality. The term "Populist" became identified with the grassroots leftist semi-socialist movement for social and economic equality meant to revive the multi-racial alliances that have moved America's "arc of history" toward justice.
- The multi-racial coalition, organized through the People's Party, threatened the corporate domination of the new industrial Robber Baron elite. It was shattered during the 1896 national election. The Populists advanced their broad-based coalition through the elections of the early 1890s. But in 1896 the Democratic nomination was won by William Jennings Bryan, a young (36) Nebraska Congressman who mouthed Populist slogans but shunned their hard reforms. His Vice Presidential nominee was a Maine banker.
- Bryan solicited and got the People's Party nomination, then scorned the party and its platform, shattering the Populist black-white, south-west coalition.
- Tragically, the left wing of the Populist Party wanted to nominate the legendary labor leader Eugene V. Debs, thus linking the radical farm and labor movements. But Debs supported Bryan at the time.

- Bryan ran a legendary whistlestop campaign in which he might have spoken to as many as five million Americans. William McKinley, the uncharismatic corporate Republican, campaigned from his front porch in Canton, Ohio.
- But the GOP campaign was coordinated by Mark Hanna, a steel magnate and the Karl Rove of the day. Hanna levied a "tax" on corporations that yielded at least \$15 million in campaign funds, a gargantuan sum for the time.
- Hanna made it explicitly clear he would not allow Bryan to win, and that he would have the Nebraskan assassinated before letting him into the White House.
- Throughout the 1896 campaign Populist and Democrat organizers, black and white, were assaulted and killed. As many as three dozen died in the south alone.
- Throughout the country suspected Populist and Democrats were systematically deprived of their votes. Republican election officials solemnly reported that farm animals had eaten the ballots in key precincts. Thousands of ballots miraculously disappeared in Bryan districts and materialized in those for McKinley.
- McKinley's official victory by some 6 million votes remains highly dubious. But it shattered the grassroots movement. In years to come, many southern Populists blamed blacks for the defeat. Cynical commentators began using the term "populist" to describe poor whites who reverted to racism and later, in the Age of Trump, to outright fascism.
- In the wake of the disaster of 1896, violent assaults crushed remnant bi-racial southern governments that had survived since Reconstruction. In Wilmington, North Carolina, 500 armed whites killed at least 14 citizens. Similar violent counter-revolutionary assaults threw the entire south back under the thumb of Jim Crow segregation.
- The Supreme Court's 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision (the vote was 8-1) enshrined Jim Crow "separate but equal" segregation. In the racist, divisive

spirit of the founding of slavery after Bacon's Rebellion, this post-Populist assault on racial integration stripped the ability of African-American and mixed race citizens to fully participate in national life.

- The Supreme Court's unanimous 1898 *Williams v. Mississippi* decision upheld the ability of states to strip blacks of their right to vote through the literacy test and poll tax, while upholding the grandfather clause that allowed whites to vote if their grandfathers had voted. The decision approved the hanging of a black man convicted of murder by an all-white Mississippi jury.
- After large corporate donations fueled Theodore Roosevelt's victorious 1904 presidential campaign, as they had McKinley's in 1896 and 1900, TR supported the 1907 Tillman Act limiting corporate donations to political campaigns. Those restrictions were mostly overturned in the 2010 *Citizens United* case.
- The disaster of the 1896 campaign helped persuade Eugene V. Debs to become a Socialist. The hugely popular labor leader fought for decades to win peace, economic justice and an end to Jim Crow segregation.
- Drawing enormous crowds wherever he went, the much-loved crusader ran for president in 1900, 1904, 1908, 1912 and 1920. In 1916 he ran for Congress from his home town of Terre Haute, Indiana.
- Despite unparalleled popularity and name recognition, Debs's official vote count never exceeded one million, a highly unlikely real outcome. When he ran for Congress in his home town of Terre Haute, surrounded by devoted family, friends and fellow socialists, his official vote count was recorded as precisely zero.
- Debs's 1912 opponent was the Virginia-born Democrat Woodrow Wilson, a Jacksonian racist and an outspoken admirer of the Ku Klux Klan and Jim Crow apartheid. As president, Wilson re-segregated much of the federal government by stripping thousands of African-Americans of their jobs.

- Wilson's forced entry into World War I was opposed by the vast majority of Americans, led primarily by Debs. Wilson had Debs and thousands more imprisoned in 1917 for daring to speak publicly against the war.
- The southern Democrat Wilson used war and the concocted Red Scare that followed as pretext to shred the Constitution, smash the Socialist Party and purge the labor movement of activists committed to social justice. Though socialism had been widely accepted as a legitimate mainstream ideology in American politics, until the Bernie Sanders campaign of 2016, no candidate running for president as a socialist was credited with more than a million votes.
- During the 1936 presidential campaign, many northern blacks who had traditionally voted Republican were attracted to the social programs of Democrat Franklin Roosevelt. Their votes had little influence on FDR, whose power in Congress depended on racist southern Democrats. Despite the liberal policies of his wife Eleanor, Franklin did little to support civil right legislation, including a high profile anti-lynch law which was never passed under his regime.
- During the World War II, however, facing a massive march organized by labor leader A. Philip Randolph, FDR did sign an executive order aimed at de-segregating defense factories.
- Not until 1937 did a black musician, pianist Teddy Wilson, perform in public with white musicians, in this case Jewish clarinetist Benny Goodman ("the King of Swing") and the Italian-American drummer Gene Krupa (who was later imprisoned for possessing marijuana).
- The American Revolution was won by a bi-racial army, but blacks were stripped of the right to serve in integrated units until 1947 (the same year Jackie Robinson integrated Major League Baseball).

- In 1947, as segregation in the military and Major League Baseball were legally ended, black veterans returning from World War II were far less willing to endure racial segregation than any previous generation.
- The unanimous 1954 Supreme Court *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision opened the legal door for an all-out war against Jim Crow. Throughout the late 1950s, the Civil Rights Movement moved effectively to enhance the power of the African-American community, aiming especially to spread the right to vote.
- Beginning with Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955, the Montgomery bus boycott demonstrated the power of an organized activist community to defeat Jim Crow laws and customs.
- With lunch counter sit-ins, freedom rides and more, the spread of black activism (often sparked by returning black war veterans) began to re-shape the South.
- During the 1960 presidential election, the family of Martin Luther King asked the Nixon campaign to help get him out of jail, where he was being held for a non-violent protest, and where his survival was in danger. Nixon asked the Eisenhower White House, which declined.
- But Democrat John Kennedy, whose previous record on civil rights was spotty at best, did help get King released. The gesture sparked a decade-long shift in the Democratic Party from its historical bedrock in southern racism to an attempt to ally with the southern black community. That move in turn prompted a counter-attack from Richard Nixon's Republicans, formerly the party of Lincoln.
- The Republican counter-attack soon focused on persuading southern white racists to join the GOP while stripping southern blacks of their right to vote.
- Dr. King's 1963 March for Jobs and Freedom in Washington DC attracted a crowd of 250,000 to the Lincoln Memorial, including about 60,000 whites. Less than three months later, JFK was assassinated.

- In 1964, the reborn vision of a black-white rebellion took shape during Mississippi Freedom Summer, when thousands of white college students poured into the South to work for voter rights. Tragically, Michael Goodman, James Cheney and Andrew Schwerner were murdered outside Philadelphia, Mississippi. Cheney was black; Goodman and Schwerner were both white. So was Viola Liuzzo, a Detroit housewife working for civil rights who was shot dead by Klansmen in a car that also carried an FBI informant, Gary Thomas Rowe.
- In the wake of JFK's murder, Lyndon Johnson pushed a powerful pro-integration agenda, including a Civil Rights Act, a Voting Rights Act and the 24th Amendment, banning the poll tax. He publicly worried that the Democrats may now have "lost the South." But blacks comprised 40% or more of many southern states, meaning if they were able to vote along with a relatively small percentage of liberal whites they could carry the "newly reconstructed" South for a newly progressive Democratic Party.
- In 1968 Republican strategists launched their "Southern Strategy" aiming to switch southern whites from the Democrats to the GOP while trying to avoid appearing overtly racist. As Republican strategist Lee Atwater put it: *You start out in 1954 by saying, "Nigger, nigger, nigger." By 1968 you can't say "nigger"—that hurts you. Back fires. So you say stuff like forced busing, states' rights and all that stuff. You're getting so abstract now [that] you're talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you're talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is [that] blacks get hurt worse than whites. And subconsciously maybe that is part of it. I'm not saying that. But I'm saying that if it is getting that abstract, and that coded, that we are doing away with the racial problem one way or the other. You follow me—because obviously sitting around saying, "We want to cut this," is much more abstract than even the busing thing, and a hell of a lot more abstract than "Nigger, nigger."*
- In 1968 Alabama Governor George Wallace staged an independent run for the White House. Chanting "segregation forever," Wallace demonstrated the power of the race card to attract working class white voters throughout the

South and in some northern blue-collar areas. In 1972 on the eve of his victory in the Michigan primary, Wallace was shot and paralyzed, forcing him into a wheelchair and ending his presidential run. Wallace later recanted his racism and in the 1970s became governor of Alabama as an integrationist.

- The GOP Southern Strategy couldn't carry the South with white votes alone. Many states of the former Confederacy were 40% or more black. If allowed to vote, black Democrats could win political control in alliance with just a small percentage of liberal white voters, as had happened during Reconstruction after the Civil War, and in some places during the 1890s Populist Movement.
- The Civil Rights Movement succeeded in raising black voter participation. African-American registration rates soared in Georgia from 19.3% to 60.4%; in Alabama from 19.3% to 61.3%; in Mississippi from 6.7% to 66.5%; in Louisiana from 31.6% to 60.8%. With African-Americans now voting heavily for the Democrats, the Republicans would need to disenfranchise them if they're to take the South.
- After narrowly winning the White House in 1968 in large part by secretly subverting Vietnam peace talks, Nixon prolonged the war for seven years and courted a "Silent Majority" essentially portrayed as angry reactionaries. Nixon attacked the hippie/integrationist counter-culture while welcoming southern white racists into the Republican Party. But the next Jim Crow, the Drug War, would be his ultimate assault weapon.
- In the 2000 election, George W. Bush became the fifth presidential candidate to lose the popular vote nationwide while winning in the Electoral College. His margin of victory came by 537 votes in the state of Florida, where his brother Jeb was governor.
- The Florida victory was organized by Secretary of State Katherine Harris, who used rigged computer lists and an old Jim Crow law (barring ex-felons from voting) to disenfranchise more than 90,000 African-Americans and Latinos on the false pretense that they were former convicts and thus could

not vote. But as primarily reported by investigator Greg Palast, virtually none of those disenfranchised were in fact ex-felons.

- The list was supplied by Choicepoint, an IT company that worked for the FBI and the US Justice Department. Harris was mandated by the citizens of Florida to run a fair non-partisan election. But she worked as Co-Chair of the Bush-Cheney Election Committee in Florida while simultaneously supervising the election and the vote count.
- Jim Crow segregation stripped effective black participation in most southern elections through the entire 20th century, preventing passage of numerous proposed anti-lynching laws (finally prompting a Congressional apology in 2005) still without a formal anti-lynching law having been entered into the books.
- Millions of Americans, mostly black and Latino, are now being disenfranchised through apartheid-based photo ID requirements that mirror the old Jim Crow poll taxes.

THE THIRD JIM CROW:

The Drug War

“The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I’m saying? We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.”

--John Ehrlichman, Richard Nixon’s chief domestic policy advisor

The Drug War's primary impact on our society has been to create the fundamental reality of a police state – and to prevent young, African-American and Latino citizens from voting. Its chief function has been to facilitate racial profiling by law enforcement, exalt mass incarceration and promote the systematic disenfranchisement and disempowerment of America's citizens of color and non-millionaires.

Along the way it has created a multi-billion-dollar industry for private investors, created history's second-largest prison gulag (behind Stalin's Soviet Union) and established the current United States as the world's worst jailer, with a prison population exceeding that of China, a dictatorship with a population five times as large.

The Drug War continues to lynch the political and cultural well-being of communities of color and to establish a multi-billion-dollar for-profit prison industry in which incarcerated Americans serve essentially as terrorized cash cows, regardless of the impact of their imprisonment on society as a whole.

Perhaps most importantly for those who own America, the Drug War has helped repress the possibility of another black/white alliance like the ones that erupted with Bacon's Rebellion in 1675 and the Abolitionist, Populist/Socialist and Civil Rights movements.

By making illegal something so widely practiced as drug use, the Drug War has allowed the government to establish a de facto police state in which virtually anyone can be arrested at any time. The particular focus on the black community has composed an organized assault not unlike what the US has been doing to Third World countries around the world.

So for the African-American community, since 1970, the Drug Enforcement Agency and its allied police forces have become the modern equivalent of a heavily armed, official empowered Ku Klux Klan.

Mass arrests and prison time are the legal lynchings used to neutralize young men of color. Today about one-third of all African-American men have been to prison and are thus disenfranchised.

The Drug War's companion mandate has been to provide a constant supply of new prisoners to sustain the cash flow for America's multi-billion-dollar corporate prison-industrial complex. To do that, it has provided more than 41,000,000 drug arrests from 1970 to 2015 – about 1,000,000 per a year. Around 60% of those arrested have been black or Latino. They continue to serve as the cash cow for the modern for-profit prison-industrial complex.

Overall the Drug War is widely estimated to have cost American taxpayers more than \$1,000,000,000,000. It would have been cheaper to send every arrestee to college.

Instead the Drug War has negated the rights of more than 20,000,000 black and Latino citizens since 1971, and has drained America's communities of color of immeasurable wealth and self-sufficiency.

The net effect has been to repress the political power of the African-American and Latino communities, and to render them even more vulnerable to the stripping of poll books and the power of electronic voting machines to flip elections.

At the core of the counter-culture was marijuana. Its cousin, industrial hemp, was grown by Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, and used for paper by Benjamin Franklin. Behind tobacco, hemp was the second-largest cash crop in early America. During World War II, the military commandeered much of Kansas to grow it for rope and other products critical to the war effort. Hemp has no psychotropic qualities and was never banned by any nation. Because of its similar appearance to marijuana, the growing of hemp was restricted by federal law, even though the military grew a whole state of it during World War II.

Cannabis for smoking has been illegal under federal law since 1935. Its prohibition was pushed primarily by Harry J. Anslinger, who formerly worked to enforce the prohibition of alcohol. By the early 1970s, more than half the nation's high school and college students had tried marijuana. About 10% used it somewhat regularly.

Marijuana's public health impacts have long been a subject for debate. In the late 1960s, Harvard Medical Professor Lester Grinspoon set out to warn the younger generation of marijuana's alleged health dangers. But his research prompted him to reverse his opinion. Grinspoon soon endorsed marijuana's beneficial medical

powers and became an outspoken advocate. His *Marihuana Revisited* essentially said that putting people in prison for possession of pot had far more negative health impacts than smoking it.

In part as a response to Grinspoon's findings, the movement to legalize cannabis and other controlled substances escalated throughout the late 1960s, with widespread expectations of an early end to prohibition. In 1970 the National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) was founded.

Making such a widely used substance illegal had the effect of introducing a police state, where a substantial percentage of the population is always at risk of arrest and incarceration. The negative impacts on public life have been enormous. As a result of their arrests, millions of young citizens have been stripped of the ability to find jobs and to vote.

- In 1969, the Nixon Administration “warmed up” the roll-out of the Drug War with Operation Intercept, as its Customs Department stopped every vehicle crossing the Mexican border. Massive traffic jams lasted for days.
- On June 17, 1971, Nixon proclaimed drug use to be “public enemy number one.” In a nation wracked by war, poverty, racial tensions and environmental degradation, it seemed an odd choice, until political calculations were taken into account.
- On March 22, 1972, the “National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse” reported that “Looking only at the effects on the individual, there is little proven danger of physical or psychological harm from the experimental or intermittent use of the natural preparations of cannabis.” It called for “a social control policy seeking to discourage marijuana use” without prosecution. Nixon ignored the report and proceeded to put marijuana prohibition on a military footing, launching an all-out assault on the black and counter-cultural communities.
- According to some specialists in the drug rehabilitation field, Nixon’s early programs did contain significant elements of meaningful treatment and health care. But they gradually diminished in the shadow of a massive, heavily

armed assault on ubiquitous substances with a special focus on mass incarceration.

- The impacts have been devastating. As Michelle Alexander shows in her monumental *The New Jim Crow* (much of the research in this section stems from Professor Alexander's book), overall the US prison population in 1970 was around 300,000; in 2000 it was more than 2,000,000. As we write this in 2017, it is around 2,200,000, more than seven times what it was in 1970.
- By our estimates, between 1970 and 2015, more than 41,000,000 Americans have been arrested in the Drug War, nearly a million every year. About half are for simple possession of marijuana. About 60% of those arrested are black or Latino.
- The 41,000,000 Drug War arrests exceed the entire populations of more than 150 of the countries in the world today.
- In July, 1973, Nixon created the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) consolidating a number of federal agencies with local task forces to escalate the arrest levels at the street level.
- As conceived by Nixon and GOP strategists, the Drug War became what Alexander describes as “a stunningly comprehensive and well- disguised system of racialized social control that functions in a manner strikingly similar to Jim Crow.” Its aim, she says, is to disrupt and disenfranchise the African-American community, “decimating networks of mutual support and intensifying the shame and self-hate experienced by the current pariah caste.”
- In essence, the Drug War represented within the US an assault on the black community running in tandem with armed “global Jim Crow” interventions and electoral manipulations in foreign, mostly non-white nations.
- As of 2016, some 500,000 Americans are behind bars for drug offenses, as opposed to an estimated 41,000 in 1980, says Alexander.

- According to Prof. Bruce Western of Princeton University, in 1980, 143,000 American black men were in prison, as opposed to 463,700 in college; in 2000 there were 791,600 black men in prison, as opposed to 603,032 in college.
- In 1983 Ronald and Nancy Reagan announced a new escalation of the Drug War. Ms. Reagan advised young people to “Just Say No.” But, the Reagan administration took profits from the illegal sale of arms to Iran and illegally shifted them to Nicaragua’s cocaine-dealing Contras. They poured much of that cocaine into US cities like Los Angeles and Miami, where it was turned into crack, decimating the black and Hispanic communities.
- In turn, the escalated Reagan Drug War imposed prison sentences far harsher on crack cocaine, used primarily in the black and Hispanic communities, than on equal quantities of powdered cocaine, used primarily in the white communities. Huge sentencing disparities have heightened the Drug War’s disproportionate (and intended) political impact on communities of color.
- From 1985 to 2000, drug offenses alone accounted for two-thirds of the rise in the American prison population, says Alexander.
- From 1960 to 1990, official crime rates in Finland, Germany and the US were nearly the same. But the US rate of incarceration quadrupled. In Finland it dropped 60% while remaining stable in Germany.
- Due largely to the Drug War, and defined largely by race, the US penal system has become the second largest in the history of the world (behind Stalin's gulag), both by numbers of inmates and by percentage of the general public incarcerated.
- With the rise of the Drug War and the Nixon/Reagan/Bush/Bush (and now Trump) packing of the US Supreme Court with corporatist judges hostile to civil rights and liberties, the justice system has been decimated by the rapid erosion of the Bill of Rights. Actual adherence to the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Amendments has been vastly compromised.

- Though African-Americans use drugs in about the same proportion as whites, the incarceration rate for drug-related crimes among blacks is 20 to 50 times higher than for whites in some states.
- As a result of the Drug War, as much as 80% of young black males nationwide have been branded with criminal records, in many cases eliminating their ability to vote, and to get good jobs, sustain a family or participate in the political life of their communities.
- As of 2016, roughly one in every three young African-American men is under control of the criminal justice system, i.e. in prison, in jail, or on probation or parole. Millions have lost their right to vote, skewing the electorate strongly toward the GOP.
- Huffington Post reports that isolating for race as a factor, young black male incarceration in the US is ten times higher than it was in South Africa under apartheid.
- High-profile drug busts sometimes take on the surreal dimension of an open, all-out war on the black community. In 1999, for example, a drug bust in Tulia, Texas, jailed almost 15% of the entire town's black population. The charges were cooked up with uncorroborated false testimony of an individual informant who had been hired by the sheriff.
- Beyond its function in disenfranchising the black population, the Drug War has spawned a hugely profitable private prison system with a multi-billion-dollar stake in convicting as many bodies as possible to fill prison beds (or cots), insuring cash flow. Judges, lawyers, prison guards, prison construction and service businesses and other related enterprises share in the bonanza.
- The Drug War's financial incentives have been extended to local police departments with the 1978 Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention Act, allowing law enforcement to confiscate cash and "other things of value" related to alleged drug violations even in the absence of evidence, warrants or formal charges. Thus, police departments are enriched without accountability.

Victims are often informed they can sue to get their property back, but that legal fees will likely exceed the value of what's been taken. Billions of dollars have been transferred from innocent private citizens into police department coffers through this nationwide scam, with virtually no accountability.

- From 1980 to 1984 massive increases in drug law enforcement money flowed into the FBI, DOD and DEA. Funding for drug use prevention, education and treatment was slashed.
- The 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act authorized public officials to deny student loans and enforce evictions from public housing against anyone convicted of a drug crime. The primary targets were African-Americans, who were again stripped of the right to vote.
- The Anti-Drug Abuse Act also expanded the use of the death penalty and required five-year minimum sentences for drug offenses, ensuring the destruction of innumerable lives, white and black.
- In 1990 the Ku Klux Klan officially announced its embrace of the Drug War, promising to "join the battle against illegal drugs" and become the "eyes and ears of the police," ensuring continuity with the Klan's historic function in denying blacks their right to vote.
- As a "new corporate Democrat," Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton revived the racist roots of the Party of Jackson and vowed to "never to be out-done" as a crime-fighter.
- When President Clinton escalated the Drug War, he disenfranchised still more African-Americans and further weakened the civil rights community. Clinton's "triangulation" on drugs and race heralded the Democrats' hostile refusal to say or do anything about the electronic voting machines used to steal elections from them.
- In 1992, amidst his first campaign for president, Clinton rushed back to Arkansas to oversee the execution of a mentally impaired black man named Ricky Ray Rector. Rector was so unaware of his situation he asked prison

guards to preserve the dessert from his last meal until after he would be killed. After the execution, Clinton bragged that “no one can say I’m soft on crime.”

- In his 1994 State of the Union address, Clinton endorsed a “three strikes and you’re out” policy imposing life sentences on citizens convicted of three crimes, no matter how minor. Thousands of lives were destroyed for petty misdeeds, much to the dismay of many outspoken judges. Clinton pardoned none of the victims. Decades later, he expressed limited, self-serving public regret.
- Clinton marked another Drug War escalation by signing a \$30 billion crime bill in August, 1994, along with other massive increases in police funding.
- According to the Justice Policy Institute, Clinton’s “tough on crime” policies caused “the largest increases in federal and state prison inmates of any president in American history.” Massive disenfranchisement accompanied the assault, meaning corporate Clinton Democrats enhanced the Republican strategy of curbing black votes and helping the GOP take control of Congress.
- With the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act Clinton “ended welfare as we know it,” gutting welfare and food stamp assistance for anyone convicted of a drug violation, including simple possession of small quantities of marijuana, which Clinton admits to having smoked himself (allegedly without inhaling).
- Clinton inaugurated a “one strike and you’re out” policy allowing public housing authorities to evict tenants based on a single marijuana conviction that might even have involved friends and relatives rather than the evictees themselves, further crippling the African-American community.
- During the 2000 presidential election, as reported by Greg Palast, Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris used Choicepoint, a computer service to strip more than 90,000 voters from the state’s registration rolls in an election decided by less than 600 votes. Mostly black and Hispanic voters were stripped of their ballots for having allegedly

committed felonies, presumably many of them offenses imposed by the prosecution of the Drug War.

- George W. Bush never directly admitted to or denied having used marijuana amidst wide-spread reports that he smoked pot with great frequency.
- Under George W. Bush and the 2002 Help America Vote Act, electronic poll books and voting machines spread throughout the US without opposition from Democrats, who also ignored the impact of the Drug War on electoral outcomes.
- In 2002, the ACLU reported that 1/3 of the nation's crack users were black, but 80% of those sentenced for it were black.
- In 2009, 4.7% of all black American males were incarcerated, as were 1.8% of Latinos and 0.7% of whites.
- In 2009, according to the Department of Justice, African-Americans made up 12% of the general US population but 60% of the prison population. Most inmates in the prison system are not allowed to vote.
- According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), blacks and whites still smoke marijuana in about the same ratio to population, but blacks are 3.73 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana use as whites, even though they comprise less than 20% of the general population.
- Barack Obama wrote explicitly about having used cocaine and marijuana, but as president did not de-escalate an anti-drug campaign that disenfranchised thousands of black citizens all through his time in office.
- Despite explicit promises, Obama's federal police continued to arrest users of medical marijuana in some 20 states where it was made legal.
- In 2013, there were nearly 7,000,000 Americans in prison, local jails, on probation or parole.

- At 716 per 100,000 citizens, the US has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Russia locks up 455 per 100,000. Germany imprisons 76 per 100,000, Italy 85 per 100,000 and Sweden 60 per 100,000.
- According to the Center for Prison Studies, more black males are now incarcerated in the US than the combined total prison populations of Argentina, Canada, Germany, India, Japan, Finland, United Kingdom and Lebanon.
- With 4% of the world's population, the US now has 25% of its prison population.
- According to the ACLU, five times as many whites use drugs as blacks, but a black man is 10 times as likely to be arrested for using them.
- Blacks represent 12% of the total population of drug users (corresponding to the percentage of African-Americans in the US) but 38% of the people arrested for drugs are black, and 59% of those imprisoned for drugs are black.
- According to a 2009 report given to Congress by the Center for American Progress, 13% of American black men are currently denied the right to vote, a rate seven times the national average for all citizens.
- According to the Sentencing Project, 23% of African-Americans in Florida are denied the right to vote; 22% in Kentucky; 20% in Virginia.
- According to the Sentencing Project, 48 states (Maine and Vermont are the exceptions) prohibit voting while imprisoned for a felony; 35 states ban citizens on felony parole from voting; 31 states don't allow people on probation to vote; 4 states deny felons the right to vote even after completing sentences; 8 states have other restrictions. Some 2.6 million Americans who have completed prison sentences cannot vote.
- Amidst a rising tide of marijuana decriminalization, Colorado and Washington state made it legal in 2014. Oregon, Alaska and the District of Columbia have

joined them, as have California, Massachusetts, Arizona and Maine. Yet, federal prosecutions continue.

- In the early 2010s, in part due to a state-by-state de-escalation of the Drug War, the US prison population has begun to drop. Nonetheless, the Drug War has shifted America's balance of power in Congress and in many state and local governments from the Democrats with their large base in the African-American community to the Republicans. Gutting the political power of southern blacks has helped the GOP take both Houses of Congress and has vastly enhanced its nationwide power, thanks in large part to the continued prosecution of the Drug War by Democrats Clinton and Obama.
- With more than 20,000,000 arrests of mostly young black men, the Drug War has gutted the African-American community as thoroughly as the Klan lynchings and Jim Crow apartheid that followed the Civil War.
- Over 45 years the Drug War's mass incarceration and communal vote denial have matched many US overseas interventions in their impact on targeted nations...in this case the African-American community. Overall the Drug War remains one of the most thoroughly anti-democratic campaigns in all of US history.
- America's racist, politically motivated Drug War mirrored an even more brutal assault on the developing world. For two centuries, the US has used its military to strip more nations of their democratic rights than any other powerful nation. Those nations have been predominantly non-white.

PART TWO: “FLIP”

THE FOURTH JIM CROW:

Race-Based Election Theft Goes Global

In their final addresses, George Washington warned against entangling alliances, and Dwight Eisenhower against the military-industrial complex.

William Blum's *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions since World War II* lists 57 instances of the United States overthrowing, or attempting to overthrow, a foreign government since the Second World War.

Throughout US history—with the notable exception of the New Deal 1930s—our military and intelligence agencies have regularly interfered in elections, overthrown or killed the rightful victors and installed regimes friendly to the financial interests of American corporations.

The blowback has reshaped our own political system.

With Donald Trump, the art and science of subverting foreign governments has come home to roost.

General Smedley Butler, once America's top-ranking Marine, winner of two Congressional Medals of Honor, put it this way:

I served in all commissioned ranks from second lieutenant to Major General. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism. I suspected I was just part of the racket all the time. Now I am sure of it.

In 1933 General Butler was recruited by American corporate leaders to lead an army against the US government and to assassinate newly-elected President Franklin Roosevelt. But Butler refused, and confirmed the conspiracy in Congressional testimony. None of the corporate conspirators were sent to prison.

The "racket" of anti-democratic intervention has been perpetrated primarily against people of color. The US now maintains at least 900 bases in 175 countries throughout the world at a cost of hundreds of billions of dollars annually. Common practice is to "allow" smaller nations to elect their own leaders. If those leaders threaten American corporate interests, they are stripped of power (and often their

lives) and their nations are called “rogue” or part of the “axis of evil.” The locals are told to try again.

But the habit of trashing inconvenient governments can rebound. It can make people think such behavior is acceptable, even on our home shores. And it can make the agencies involved with pulling off those overthrows extremely effective at doing it at home:

- In 1804 Haitian slaves overthrew their French masters, but no US president would recognize the new nation until Abraham Lincoln did it in 1863. The US has since invaded Haiti and overthrown numerous elected governments there, stripping the nation of its democratic rights while propping up heinous dictators like “Papa Doc” Duvalier and his son “Baby Doc.”
- In 1805, Thomas Jefferson approved a treaty with “Barbary Coast” rulers who’d been pirating American shipping. Skirmishes with what are now Libya, Tunisia and Algeria (along the “shores of Tripoli”) were America’s first on behalf of corporate commerce.
- In 1824, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams drafted the “Monroe Doctrine” proclaiming US hegemony over the entire western hemisphere.
- In 1832, Andrew Jackson sent a military expedition to Sumatra, a large Indonesian island, in retaliation for native attacks on an American ship involved in the pepper trade. As many as a thousand unarmed civilians died. A later second expedition repeated much of the carnage in 1839.
- In the 1830s, American settlers re-introduced slavery to Texas, where Mexico had abolished it in 1821. In 1836 Texas became a slave republic. It became a slave state in 1845. It joined the Confederacy in 1861. Today its prison system incarcerates more than 170,000 citizens, a majority of them black or Latino, and at various times (as under former Governor George W. Bush, who killed 152 people) has executed more humans than any other state.
- Texas statehood led to the 1846-48 US invasion of Mexico and its capital (the “Halls of Montezuma”) by President James K. Polk. Polk then annexed much

of what is now New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and Oklahoma. Latinos returning to these lands are now often called “illegal immigrants.”

- In 1854, Commodore Matthew Perry used “gunboat diplomacy” as US warships sailed into Edo (Tokyo) harbor to strip unwilling Japanese rulers of their ability to keep their archipelago closed to American commerce.
- In December 1890, US troops used machine guns to slaughter more than 300 starving, freezing Lakota, ending resistance of duly constituted tribal peoples in the west at Wounded Knee. In a matter of minutes they stripped America’s tribal peoples of their final major independent presence in the west.
- In 1893, American sugar and pineapple barons staged a “revolution” to strip Hawaii of its centuries-old constitutional monarchy. Grover Cleveland refused to annex the archipelago, but in 1898 William McKinley said God gave him the green light.
- In 1898, the battleship Maine blew up in Havana Harbor (286 sailors died) where it was anchored in alleged support of Cubans rebelling against the Spanish Empire. American media and government blamed Spain. But the US Navy has since found the boat and confirmed the Maine blew up from the inside. Based on hands-on examinations by US divers, the US Navy has conceded that the Maine was not sunk by Spain. It most likely blew up due to mishandling of the coal-burning power plant aboard the ship. Thus the entire Spanish-American war was based on a lie.
- Nonetheless, the war lasted until 1903, with thousands of civilians killed. The US stripped Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines of their ability to self-govern. Our imperial armies ruled the Philippines until 1947, then supported the brutal dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. We still hold Puerto Rico and Guam, and have since invaded Cuba a number of times.
- In 1899-1900, several thousand US troops helped suppress China’s Boxer Rebellion and maintain “spheres of influence” through which the US and

other industrial powers stripped China of its independence and much of its resources.

- In 1915, Woodrow Wilson invaded Mexico, again sending troops into the capital city, stripping what he called “our little brown brothers” of their independence.
- In 1917, despite overwhelming opposition among the American public, Wilson entered World War I to “make the world safe for democracy.” Some 116,000 Americans died in the fighting. Meanwhile Wilson trashed the Constitution to imprison thousands of citizens who spoke out against the slaughter. Scores of peace advocates were stripped of their rights to free speech and were incarcerated until long after the war ended.
- Wilson used the war and the Red Scare after it to illegally crush Debs’s Socialist Party. The Socialists enjoyed full constitutional status as a legitimate, long-standing political organization supported by millions of Americans who accepted it as a viable alternative to corporate domination. Wilson's unconstitutional assault embedded the two-party capitalist system while eradicating a democratic alternative embraced by a substantial percentage of the American working class.
- The 1915 sinking of the Lusitania by Germany was a key “provocation” used by Woodrow Wilson as a pretext to declare war on Germany. Deep sea divers have long since confirmed that the Lusitania was in fact carrying munitions to the British in defiance of international law. The ship sank extremely fast because one or both of the torpedoes that hit it set off the explosives it was carrying illegally.
- In 1918, Wilson sent 7,000 US troops (70 died) to support White Russian Tsarist aristocrats in their war against revolutionary “Reds.”
- In the 1920s the US invaded and overthrew the duly elected governments of numerous Latino nations in the corporate service of what Smedley Butler called a “Wall Street racket.”

- From 1912-32, in a series of both overt and covert “Banana War” interventions, US troops may have killed as much as 10% of Nicaragua’s entire population while stripping its independence.
- In El Salvador, as many as 40,000 people died in a 1932 grassroots uprising crushed by US troops.
- From 1933-45 Franklin Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy refrained from overthrowing Latin American governments. FDR refrained from an otherwise predictable invasion of Mexico as it nationalized its oil reserves into PEMEX (Petroleos Mexicanos) in 1938.
- From 1946-49 the US-backed Greek Army installed a fascist dictatorship to crush popular-supported rebels who had fought the Nazis in World War II. At a critical moment, Stalin refused to support the Communist rebels, dooming them. Meanwhile, the Truman Doctrine claimed the US right to intervene anywhere and strip the independence of any country in which America’s military claimed Communism might expand.
- A 1949 CIA-backed coup stripped Syria’s civilian government of power and installed Housni el-Za’im, an army chief of staff who supported American oil interests.
- In 1952, the US supported the return of dictator Fulgencio Batista, who overthrew Cuba’s democratically elected government.
- Working with the United Kingdom, the US in 1953 stripped Iran’s duly elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh from power, installing the dictatorial Shah whose infamous CIA-supported Savak secret police begin a 25-year reign of torture and terror. The coup was coordinated by Kermit Roosevelt, Jr., grandson of Theodore Roosevelt.
- The CIA in 1954 overthrew the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz and installed Castillo Armas, a military dictator. Some 250,000 disenfranchised Guatemalan peasants then died in a 25-year civil war.

- In 1956, Dwight Eisenhower stopped elections (sanctioned by the United Nations) for Vietnamese unification, stripping from power Ho Chi Minh, who was expected to win with as much as 80% of the popular vote. Two decades of ensuing civil war and US intervention killed millions of Vietnamese and 58,000 Americans.
- In 1959, the US installed “Papa Doc” Duvalier, whose dictatorship, carried on by his son, stripped Haitians of all rights until 1986.
- In 1961, the CIA launched the Bay of Pigs invasion meant to overthrow Cuba’s revolutionary regime, but incoming President John F. Kennedy withheld air support and an expected public uprising did not materialize. In response, Cuba asked the USSR to install missiles, prompting a global confrontation in 1962 that nearly brought on an atomic holocaust. The USSR removed the missiles after JFK promised not to invade Cuba and to remove US missiles from Turkey.
- In 1961, renegade elements linked to the CIA assassinated the democratically elected Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba, a former postal worker. By 1965 the US had installed the brutal dictator Joseph Mobutu who, along with Western interests, stripped the country of billions of dollars which he deposited in overseas bank accounts.
- In 1961, the CIA may have helped assassinate Dominican leader Rafael Trujillo, stripping the Republic of its democracy. In April, 1965, after years of turmoil, President Johnson sent in the 82nd Airborne to install the dictator Joaquin Balaguer.
- In 1961, CIA-led forces replaced Peru’s popular elected President Juan Velasco Alvarado with Vice President Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy, who was replaced two years later with a military junta after he somehow insulted the US ambassador.
- In 1963, the CIA stripped from power the duly elected Iraqi government of President Qasim, replacing it with the Ba’ath Party. Saddam Hussein took

control of the Ba-ath Party and became Iraq's dictator in 1979, and lasted through 2003. A well-financed ally of the United States in the 1980s, Saddam waged war against Iran for nearly a decade.

- In early November 1963, the CIA orchestrated the kidnapping and murder of South Vietnamese Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother, replacing the Prime Minister with a long line of pro-US dictators. Many were involved in the opium trade in Laos, which was centered around the CIA-run Air America.
- On November 22, 1963, 20 days after Diem's murder, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in what a majority of Americans believe was a conspiracy. In the wake of Kennedy's murder, efforts to end the Cold War, outreach to Cuba and the Soviet Union, and JFK'S determination to remove troops from Vietnam all came to a crashing halt. Our nation has never really recovered.
- The official "Warren Commission" that blamed the assassination on the Lee Harvey Oswald included Allen Dulles, former head of the CIA, whom JFK had fired after the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Numerous students of the assassination now believe Dulles himself was its chief coordinator.
- Brazil's democratically elected Joao Goulart government was overthrown in 1964, followed by a series of CIA-supported military dictatorships lasting on-and-off through much of the next two decades.
- A CIA-coordinated 1965 coup stripped Indonesian nationalist Sukarno from power, replacing him with the brutal kleptocrat Suharto, who looted the country. At least 800,000 people died in the slaughter, which the CIA called "a model operation."
- A CIA-led 1967 coup stripped from Greece its democratically elected Prime Minister Papandreu and flipped into power the murderous, torture-loving "rule of the colonels," lasting through 1974.

- On April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Nobel Prize-winning non-violent leader of the US Civil Rights movement, was murdered in Memphis. Accused assassin James Earl Ray denied killing him and King's family eventually agreed. King's murder crippled the grassroots movement aimed at ending Jim Crow segregation (see next section) and sparked nationwide rioting that killed scores of Americans. Millions of Americans still believe King was killed by a yet another arm of the US government, most likely the FBI.
- On June 5, 1968, Democratic presidential front-runner Robert F. Kennedy died in a shooting blamed on another lone gunman. Bobby was following his slain brother's commitments to end Jim Crow segregation, bring peace to Vietnam and stop the Cold War. His death gave the nomination to Vice President Hubert Humphrey, who then narrowly lost to Richard Nixon under the darkest of circumstances. At least one RFK associate, Paul Schrade, also shot that day, believes accused assassin Sirhan Sirhan was innocent, and that the shots that stripped Kennedy from us all were fired by someone still unknown. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., has asked that Sirhan be released from prison and a new investigation be opened into his father's death.
- To win the 1968 election, Nixon illegally sabotaged US-Vietnam peace talks just days before the presidential balloting. In wiretapped phone conversations Nixon's liaison, Anna Chennault, illegally asked the South Vietnamese to nix a truce so Nixon could be elected president. "Hold on," she told South Vietnamese diplomat Bui Diem, "we are gonna win." Nixon then lied to President Lyndon Johnson when asked about it in the Oval Office. Johnson referred to Nixon's actions as "treason" in a phone conversation with Senate Republican Everett Dirksen. But he never made a public disclosure. The war dragged on another seven years with hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese and more than 20,000 additional Americans being killed beyond the 38,000 already dead by 1968. The illegal Nixon / Chennault sabotage of the 1968 peace talks stripped the US public of an election outcome that might have ended the war earlier and saved countless lives.
- In 1970, Nixon's CIA overthrew Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia, which Nixon illegally bombed. When the bombing became public, protests erupted at

scores of US campuses. On May 4, four unarmed students were shot dead at Kent State, Ohio, by National Guardsmen using live ammunition. Audio tapes indicate the Guard was verbally ordered to open fire despite the fact that the students posed no threat. Two days later two more unarmed students were shot dead at Jackson State, Mississippi. Stripping Cambodia of its popular ruler led to a coup by Pol Pot, embraced by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Pol Pot was a criminal psychopath who killed as many as 3,000,000 Cambodians.

- In 1973, Salvador Allende, Chile's duly elected socialist prime minister, was assassinated in a CIA-coordinated coup. Chile had been the western hemisphere's third-oldest republic, dating back to 1810. Having been stripped of its democracy by US intervention, the country was flipped to the brutal dictator Augusto Pinochet, who used torture and assassination to rule for the next 17 years.
- On April 30, 1975, two decades of US Vietnam intervention ended with a panicked retreat from the rooftop of the Saigon embassy. Thousands of local US supporters were stranded among victorious North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces. The slaughter was the direct result of Eisenhower's 1956 sabotage of legitimate national elections and two decades of US intervention.
- In 1975, duly elected Australian Labor Party Prime Minister Edward Whitlam was stripped of power when the CIA coerced the governor-general, a ceremonial imperial holdover appointed by the Queen, to install a more corporate-friendly regime. This overt operation was one of the few made public in which America intervened in the electoral affairs of a white-dominated country.
- In 1975, Congressional hearings held by Idaho Senator Frank Church and New York Representative Otis Pike, the CIA admitted to over 5,000 "benign operations" described as "election rigging" at the local, state and national level in foreign countries. Church lost re-election in a heavily funded right wing smear campaign. Pike declined to run again. The committee met stiff resistance against publishing its findings. The House refused to accept the Pike committee's report, but some of it was leaked to the *Village Voice* by TV

news reporter Daniel Schorr. *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* by Victor Marchetti & John Marks, and *Inside the Company* by Philip Agee, about CIA covert operations, were both published in 1975. President Gerald Ford responded by appointing the Rockefeller “whitewashing committee” to minimize the damage from these published findings.

- In 1975, the CIA intervened in Angola’s complex civil war involving Soviets and Cubans. Congress cut off funds in 1976, but the CIA sustained covert operations through the 1980s. Some 300,000 Angolans died in the course of the civil war.
- With the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the US began funding anti-communist Islamic fundamentalists including Osama bin Ladin’s al Qaeda, with which the US did not break until 1991. Bin Laden claimed “credit” for terror attacks on the World Trade Center in 1996 and 2001, among others.
- When leftist Sandinista rebels ousted Nicaragua’s brutal CIA- sponsored dictator Somoza in 1979, his personal guard rebelled, transforming themselves in “Contras” who funded their war against the Sandinistas by shipping millions of dollars’ worth of cocaine into the US. That operation was supported by the CIA. Much of the cocaine was turned into crack, which helped disenfranchise millions of mostly black and Hispanic Americans.
- Embittered by a quarter- century of US support for the Shah and his Savak torturers, Iranian students in November, 1979, took 55 American hostages in Teheran. Eight Americans died in a failed attempt to free them.
- In an apparent “October Surprise” operation, echoing Richard Nixon’s 1968 sabotage of Vietnam peace talks, former CIA Director George H.W. Bush and later CIA Director William Casey were suspected of secretly persuading Iran’s fundamentalist regime to hold US hostages through our presidential election to guarantee the victory of Ronald Reagan. The hostages were released in January, 1981, precisely as Reagan was sworn in as president.

- The US supported both sides in a ghastly 1980s war between Iran and Iraq, in which more than a million people died. Amidst the slaughter, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld traveled to Baghdad to publicly embrace Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.
- In 1983, a suicide bomber blew up a US barracks in Beirut, killing 241 Americans, including 221 Marines and other military personnel. It was the US military's single deadliest day since Iwo Jima. Reagan pulled largely out of the Middle East.
- Two days later Reagan attacked the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada, allegedly to protect US medical students. While "rescuing" the students, Reagan installed a pro-corporate regime.
- After US hostages returned from Tehran during Reagan's inauguration, he secretly sold arms to Iran at inflated prices. He denied any connection between these illegal arms sales and the prolonged imprisonment of our hostages which guaranteed his election in 1980.
- Reagan then illegally slipped profits from these arms sales to cocaine-dealing Contras fighting to strip out Nicaragua's duly elected Sandinista government.
- In 1986, a CIA plane carrying military supplies to the Contras crashed. Its cargo included a "Freedom Fighters Manual" outlining the use of political assassination, torture, interrogation techniques, extortion, bribery, blackmail, election rigging, economic sabotage and media manipulation.
- Amidst the massive Iran-Contra uproar, Reagan claimed no knowledge of the illegal money laundering scheme, but likened Contra coke pushers to America's Founding Fathers, and continued attempts to strip Nicaragua of its duly elected government.
- In 1986 the CIA tried to electronically rig elections for Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos. But mainframe computers broke down and technicians walked out, prompting international observers, including a US delegation led

by Indiana Republican Senator Richard Lugar, to declare Corazon Aquino the winner. *The Power Game*, a documentary film by *New York Times* reporter Hedrick Smith, later called this the first documented CIA attempt to rig an election with computers.

- In 1987, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFEF) promoted itself as the “world’s premier election assistance organization.” The IFEF was founded out of the Iran-Contra scandal with funds from the CIA-backed National Endowment for Democracy (NED).
- In 1979, the IFEF received \$125,000 from the NED to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. It succeeded in a 1990 election that installed Violetta Chamorro, a president friendlier to the US. In 2015, the IFEF web page listed more than 100 nations that it has worked with in supplying computer voting technology.
- In 1989, President George H.W. Bush, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, sent the US military to arrest once-favored Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega on drug charges. He was surrounded in a compound and “tortured” with constant loud rock music. Noriega surrendered and was brought to the US to stand trial. He attempted to expose US drug dealing in Panama, but was silenced by a federal judge and imprisoned. His memoir *America’s Prisoner: The Memoirs of Manuel Noriega* was published in 1997. He remains in a US prison.
- In 1990, leftist priest Jean Bertrand-Aristide was elected Haiti’s premier with 68% of the popular vote. The CIA soon stripped his power with a military coup. A global CIA propaganda campaign branded Aristide as “insane” for demanding higher wages for Haitian workers, the lowest paid in the Western Hemisphere.
- George H.W. Bush’s short-lived 1991 Operation Desert Storm forced Iraq’s CIA-installed Saddam Hussein to leave the oil fields of Kuwait. Hussein thought a meeting with US diplomat April Glaspie had given him tacit approval to attack Kuwait.

- Despite few immediate casualties, more than 250,000 vets became eventually disabled by “Gulf War Syndrome,” whose existence the US military initially denied. The Syndrome was blamed on vaccines and chemicals that caused debilitating headaches, skin and respiratory disorders. At the time, G.H.W. Bush declined to strip Saddam of his power. Clinton’s Secretary of State Madeleine Albright admitted that 500,000 or more innocent Iraqi children died as a result of infrastructure damage by bombs and US sanctions, especially to water and sewage facilities.
- In 1993, Bill Clinton overthrew the Haitian dictatorship Bush had installed and helped re-install former president Aristide. But after his 2000 re-election, Aristide demanded France pay reparations for Haiti’s original enslavement, so in 2004 US President George W. Bush supported Aristide being stripped from power yet again. Covert French and US operatives then flew him to the Central African Republic on a military plane. Aristide’s wife later told Congressional Representatives Charles Rangel and Maxine Waters that the US Ambassador threatened mass killings throughout Haiti if Aristide did not leave.
- In 1996, investigative reporter Gary Webb published an award- winning expose in the *San Jose Mercury News* demonstrating that the CIA was running crack cocaine into Los Angeles and beyond in cooperation with the Contras trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. Webb’s widely acclaimed *Dark Alliance* was savaged in the corporate media. Webb lost his job and marriage. He died in 2004 in an apparent suicide in which he allegedly shot himself in the head twice.
- On September 11, 2001, some 3,000 Americans died in attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, with “credit” claimed by Al Qaeda, the fundamentalist Islamic terror organization founded with US support during the Afghan war. Coming just nine months after the disputed inauguration of George W. Bush, bitter controversy still rages over exactly how this happened and who is responsible.

- After the 9/11 attack, huge quantities of toxic dust poured into the New York region, impacting the health of millions with no significant warnings or direction from the Bush administration. Thousands of courageous clean-up workers have suffered and died from impacts that echo Agent Orange abuse in Vietnam and Gulf War Syndrome. Former Environmental Protection Chief Christie Todd Whitman has since apologized for failing to fully inform the public of the dangers.
- The 9/11 attacks were followed immediately by anthrax attacks, which convinced many Americans that the nation was under continuous assault. Letters containing anthrax were sent to Senators Leahy and Daschle, both potentially instrumental in opposing the hastily passed Patriot Act. The FBI incorrectly blamed Bruce Ivins, resulting in his suicide. It later determined that the anthrax spores originated at a Maryland bio-weapons lab. But the original source material was ordered destroyed before the FBI investigation was completed.
- In 2003 Bush claimed non-existent “weapons of mass destruction” required the overthrow of Iraq’s Saddam Hussein and continued presence in Afghanistan. Those wars have claimed countless lives, cost hundreds of billions of dollars and thrown the entire Middle East into chaotic instability. Among the many explanations for why Bush attacked Iraq is the widespread belief that Presidential advisor Karl Rove wanted it so the vastly unpopular Bush could seek re-election in 2004 as a “War President.”
- President Barack Obama later extended the war in Afghanistan, making it America’s longest military intervention. The US continues to strip Afghan “elections” of real public control so it can maintain regimes in Kabul friendly to US military interests.
- In Libya, Syria and elsewhere, the US has become further embroiled in an endless morass of middle eastern regime changes, influenced and engineered with or without “elections” that deprive the region of peace and stability. A stream of desperate refugees have helped Donald Trump destabilize US politics.

- In 2009, then-Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton supported a right-wing coup in Honduras to remove an elected leftist president, Manuel Zelaya. Stripped from power in the middle of the night, he was flown to Costa Rica. Clinton has admitted she conspired to keep Zelaya from returning.
- The rise of terror organizations like ISIS and ISIL dedicated to psychotic acts of random murder, with no obvious goal or coherent strategy, and no easy off-switch, continues to shape our own elections as candidates outdo each other in demanding military solutions to complex problems where armed intervention (and torture) often make things worse.

The blowback to this long history of military interventions has left us with the history's largest, most expensive imperial network, including some 900 military bases in as many as 175 countries.

We now have a 200-year legacy of intrusion into the internal affairs of other nations, and a massive bureaucracy trained in making a mockery of the electoral process all around the world, including here.

This long history of unrestrained interventions has produced a deadly expertise in stripping governments and flipping elections.

It comes complete with a sense of entitlement and empowerment that – facilitated by electronic poll books and easily rigged voting machines – has flowed straight into stolen elections here at home.

In the next section of this book, we'll see how that expertise has come to bear in decisive locales like New Hampshire in 1988, Florida 2000, Ohio 2004...and the flipped and stripped selection of 2016.

THE FIFTH JIM CROW:

Election Theft Comes To The US

As the troops returned home from World War II, and as the military and Major League Baseball were desegregated, a new level of technology entered the electoral playing field.

Overseas, the CIA began to apply advanced electronics to the art and science of election theft. By the 1970s, in front of the Church Committee, the Agency admitted to already having manipulated countless third World elections to protect America's corporate and "national security" interests.

At home, powered in part by black veterans returning from WWII, Korea and then Vietnam, an increasingly effective Civil Rights Movement turned the African-American community into a rising nation-within-a-nation. Its demands for equal rights, including the right to vote, began to resemble the rise of other oppressed nations around the world. With the extraordinary leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others, the movement became increasingly difficult for the powers to ignore.

Then, with John F. Kennedy, the Democratic Party shifted to the left on race. In the wild tumult of the 1960s, the black-white alliance so desperately feared by America's ruling elites for 300 years again reared its progressive head.

Paralleling what was being done to charismatic leftist leaders around the rest of the world, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, JFK, Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy were all assassinated.

Then, in 1971, Richard Nixon escalated the Republican Party's "Southern Strategy" with the 46-year police action in the form of the Drug War, as described earlier.

But there were now additional new ways to fight black power. The use of electronics to overturn elections had been tried and tested overseas by the Central Intelligence Agency and other arms of the imperium.

Under Ronald Reagan, it became available for use in elections here at home. In 1988, former CIA director George H. W. Bush became the first to benefit. Here's how it happened:

- In 1950, the Bureau of Social Science Research (BSSR) was founded as a division of the School of Social Sciences and Public Affairs at the American University. In 1953, it became a non-profit organization involved with the CIA, and was used as a propaganda tool in the overthrow of Iran's Mossadegh. It then emerged as a key player in the rise of electronic voting.
- In 1974, the US General Accounting Office commissioned a year- long study on the rise of electronic voting equipment. In 1975, Roy G. Saltman, an electronics expert at the National Bureau of Standards, warned about the dangers of electronic voting. In his *Effective Use of Computing Technology in Vote Counting*, he wrote: "Increasing computerization of election-related functions may result in the loss of effective controls over these functions by responsible authorities and that this loss of control may increase the possibility of vote fraud." (National Bureau of Standards Special Publication #500-30).
- In 1975, the CIA admitted to a US Senate investigative committee chaired by Senator Frank Church that it was engaged in 5000 "benign" operations, which involved, among other things, electronic election rigging in the Third World. Rigged elections were preferable to bloody coups, said the Agency.
- In 1975 Congress created the Federal Election Commission (FEC).
- Gary Greenhalgh emerged as a key player as the assistant staff director at the FEC from May 1976 to January 1985. In 1983, he co-founded the International Center on Election Law & Administration to promote electronic voting worldwide. In 1985, he founded his own company, the Election Center, to promote electronic voting. In 1997, he became regional account manager for Election Systems & Software (ES&S) which today controls almost 50% of the American vote. In May 2010, Dominion, a Canadian company, acquired Premier Elections Solutions, formerly Diebold. Its voting machines are used in 600 jurisdictions in 22 US states.

In its coverage of the 1980 Iowa Republican Caucus, the *Manchester Union-Leader* (New Hampshire) wrote: "the Bush operation has all the smell of a CIA covert

Operation....Strange aspects of the Iowa operation [include] a long, slow count and then the computers broke down at a very convenient point, with Bush having a 6% bulge over Reagan.” Bush won the primary over Reagan, 31.6% to 21.5%. Bush declared he had the “Big Mo,” i.e. momentum. This break-down of tabulating equipment at a key point in the vote count became a staple of the electronic tabulation process in elections to come.

In 1981, the Reagan-Bush administration established ties between the Bureau of Social Science Research (BSSR) and the International Center for Election Law & Administration (ICELA). The CIA-linked BSSR provided initial funding for the ICELA to promote the spread of electronic voting machines worldwide.

In 1984, at Greenhalgh’s urging, the Election Center, affiliated with the Academy for State and Local Government, was established. The Center was an independent non-profit resource serving US state and local election officials. In 1985, Greenhalgh took over as director.

In 1984, the *New York Times* revealed that a company called the Computer Election System of Berkeley, California, created a software program and related equipment “...used in more than a thousand county and local jurisdictions to collect and count 34.4 million of the 93.7 million votes cast in the United States,” more than a third of the total votes. President Reagan signed National Security Directive NSDD245. The *New York Times* revealed that the secret directive involved: “a branch of the National Security Agency investigating whether a computer program that counted more than one-third of all the votes cast in the United States in 1984 is vulnerable to fraudulent manipulation.”

On December 18, 1985, legendary *New York Times* reporter David Burnham reported in California Official Investigating Computer Voting Security that state Attorney General John Van de Kamp found major errors in the computerized vote count from the 1984 election in California and elsewhere. Problems were found in at least thirteen areas nationwide, including Illinois, Montana and North Dakota. Van de Kamp said he “is concerned about what he sees as a potentially serious problem.”

- In 1985, Greenhalgh, who had become director of International Center on Election Law and Administration, stated that electronic voting presents “a massive potential for problems” and that it “centralizes the opportunity for fraud,” according to the book by election integrity activist Bev Harris, *Black Box Voting*.
- On November 25, 1986, Dr. Michael Ian Shamos, a computer scientist employed by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Elections as an electronic voting systems examiner, issued a report entitled *An Outline of Testimony on Computer Voting Before the Texas Legislature*. His conclusion: “When one company or a conglomerate of companies apply unauditible software from a general distribution point, or participate directly in ballot setup procedures, there exists the possibility of large-scale tampering with elections. An errant programmer or tainted executive could influence or determine the outcome of a majority of election precincts in a country....”
- The July 21, 1986 issue of *Election Administration Reports* (#80), a newsletter for election administration officials, in reference to a disputed 1986 Democratic primary for County Commissioner in Stark County, Ohio, concluded: “A special computer program was written, in order to count only the disputed contest and not the other contests on the ballot. The mystery, however, was why 165 additional votes had been tallied in the recount, although the number of ballots read by the computer was the same.....A more complete checkout using a large number of ballots would have identified the logical error that caused the program used in the recount to fail to distinguish between voters of different political parties.” In other words, the program awarded Republican votes to certain Democrats, a syndrome that would resurface in the stolen presidential election in Ohio in 2004.
- In 1987, Greenhalgh resigned as director of the Election Center to become vice president of operations for the R.F. Shoup Company. The company’s founder, Ransom Shoup, had been convicted in 1979 for conspiring to defraud the federal government in connection with a bribe attempt to obtain voting machine business, according to the *Commercial Appeal* newspaper of Memphis. His machines were known as Shouptronics. Under a different

name, these machines were used in the disputed 2004 election in Columbus, Ohio.

In 1987, Carol Garner became the Election Center's second director. She had previously worked for Governor Bill Clement of Texas and was an associate of Karl Rove, who worked for Clement in the 1978 gubernatorial campaign.

In the 1988, New Hampshire Republican primary, the nation witnessed the first large-scale use of computer voting machines in a presidential election. Former CIA Director George H.W. Bush trailed Bob Dole by eight points in polls taken on Election Day. But when the votes were electronically tallied, Bush beat Dole by nine points. Such a 17-point turn-around qualifies among mainstream election statistical analysts as a "virtual statistical impossibility."

In August, 1988, Roy Saltman wrote *Accuracy, Integrity and Security in Computerized Vote Tallying* for the National Bureau of Standard's Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology. He warned that "the possibility that unknown persons may perpetrate undiscoverable frauds" was a key problem with electronic voting systems.

In 1988 Ronnie Dugger, long-time editor of the *Texas Observer*, wrote a major piece on the move toward electronic-based elections in the *New Yorker Magazine*. He warned that the capacity now exists for "...altering the computer program or the control punch cards that manipulate it, planting a time bomb, manually removing an honest counting program, and replacing it with a fraudulent one, counting fake ballots, altering the vote recorder that voters use at the polls or changing either the logic that controls precinct-located vote- counting devices, or the voting summaries in these units' removable data-hyphen storage unit." Dugger concluded: "the problem in this segment of the computer business, as in the field at large, is not only invisibility but also information as electricity."

In 1996, Chuck Hagel ran for US Senate in Nebraska against popular incumbent Democratic Governor Ben Nelson. Hagel had never held elective office. But he was part-owner of ES&S, a computerized voting machine company whose machines were used in conducting the statewide election. Michael McCarthy, president of ES&S, was Hagel's campaign treasurer. Hagel became Nebraska's first Republican

elected to the US Senate in 24 years. Hagel's part ownership of ES&S was hidden from the public during the campaign. One Nebraska newspaper called Hegel's victory a "stunning upset." Some 80% of the state's ballots were cast and counted on ES&S machines.

The Electronic Selection of 2000

In 2000, Democrat Al Gore, the incumbent Vice President, won the nationwide presidential vote tally by more than 500,000 votes.

But for the first time since 1876, a Constitutional crisis arose over the alignment of the Electoral College. The final decision was thrown to the state of Florida (which had also been "in play" in 1876).

The Bush campaign was coordinated by Karl Rove. The Florida election was officially controlled by Republican Secretary of State Katherine Harris, who openly supported Bush as the co-chair of his election campaign.

The GOP campaign employed a wide range of tactics reminiscent of the Jim Crow era to cut into the turnout among tens of thousands blacks and Latinos, who favored Gore by as much as 9:1. Among other things, state police and other law enforcement agencies physically intimidated potential voters in predominantly black areas of Orlando and elsewhere.

In largely Jewish areas of south Florida, where Gore and his vice- presidential candidate Joe Lieberman campaigned repeatedly, misleading "butterfly ballots" yielded large numbers of votes for Pat Buchanan, who is widely viewed as anti-Semitic. Many Jewish residents later realized votes they thought they had cast for Gore went to Buchanan instead, becoming the subject of Aviva Kempner's classic documentary film "Today I Voted for My Joey."

In other predominantly Democratic areas around the state, shortages of voting machines and a lack of paper ballots slashed Gore's vote count.

Nonetheless, early Election Day evening, exit polls and preliminary vote counts showed Gore as the clear winner. But a Constitutional crisis arose as the vote count

suddenly became an extremely tight vote. The entire fiasco is based largely on complications with the electronic voter registration and voting process:

- As the Florida polls closed, major networks reported that Al Gore was the winner. But as the count proceeded, the Fox network suddenly reported that Florida was “in play.”
- A vote count “glitch” on Global Election Systems (later Diebold) machines in Volusia County, Florida, subtracted 16,022 votes from Gore, and added 4,000 votes for George W. Bush. Bush’s first cousin John Ellis, who had been hired as a Fox Network temporary election analyst, used the shift to proclaim that his cousin would win Florida and the presidency.
- Bev Harris, author of *Black Box Voting*, posted a series of internal Diebold memos relating to the Volusia County miscount on her website, blackboxvoting.com. One memo from Lana Hires of Global Election Systems, now part of Diebold, complained, “I need some answers! Our department is being audited by the County. I have been waiting for someone to give me an explanation as to why Precinct 216 gave Al Gore a minus 16,022 [votes] when it was uploaded.” Another, from Talbot Ireland, Senior VP of Research and Development for Diebold, referred to key “replacement” votes in Volusia County as “unauthorized.”
- Based on exclusive reporting by Bev Harris of Black Box Voting, and by award-winning journalist Greg Palast, *The Nation* magazine reported that Florida Governor Jeb Bush (brother of GOP candidate George W. Bush) electronically purged Florida’s voter registration lists in a partisan manner. He used a secret proprietary computer program from a \$4 million contract with Database Technologies (DBT) recently merged with ChoicePoint Inc. of Atlanta, which was the only bidder, to coordinate the definitive electronic purge. ChoicePoint has strong right-wing ties among its Board of Directors.
- The contract was awarded in 1998 by a Republican legislature in league with then-Secretary of State Sandra Mortham, who later became Jeb Bush’s Lieutenant Governor. That August, Mortham was warned by the Florida State

Association of Supervisors of Elections that there was a botched rush “to capriciously take names off the rolls.”

- The purge involved 90,000 or more duly registered Florida voters, very far more than the 537 votes that allegedly decided the election for George W. Bush.
- The purge affected primarily black and Latino citizens who vote overwhelmingly Democratic, and who would easily have turned the election to Gore.
- The DBT list included thousands of citizens who had allegedly been convicted of felonies, but actually were not.
- Many of the names on the DBT purge list came from other states, such as Alabama, where a “John Jones” may have been convicted of a felony, while the “John Jones” in Florida was not. But the Florida John Jones was purged from the registration books anyway. In many cases, differing middle initials were ignored, as were differing suffixes such as “Junior” and “III.” Many such misidentified citizens had been lawfully registered for years and showed up to vote on November 7 at their traditional precincts but were told they were not registered and were not allowed to vote.
- Many of the names on the DBT purge list were those of citizens who may have been felons in other states but had since moved to Florida, where their right to vote was not legally deniable. According to Palast’s report, criminal demographer Jeffrey Manza of Northwestern University said at least 80% of such citizens should have been legally granted the right to vote in Florida. But they were denied anyway. The number of rightfully eligible Florida voters purged based on names coming from Texas, Ohio and Illinois were, each on their own, sufficient to turn the election.
- Palast reported that David Bositis, senior research associate at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, DC, described the purge as

“a patently obvious technique to discriminate against black voters.” Blacks, he said, would account for nearly half the “ex-felons” wrongly denied their vote.

- In Hillsborough County, Florida, election supervisors concerned that 54% of the lawful voters electronically denied their vote were black in a county where blacks comprised just 11% of the voting population.
- Overall, DBT electronically “scrubbed” nearly 3,000 voters based on alleged felonies once possibly committed (or not at all) by citizens who came into Florida from at least eight states where their voting rights would have been automatically restored prior to coming to the Sunshine State.
- One electronically scrubbed voter was Pastor Thomas Johnson of Gainesville, Florida. Johnson was pastor of the House of Hope, a faith-based charity that guided ex-convicts from jail into a working life. The program was praised by Johnson’s personal friend, Jeb Bush. Nonetheless, Pastor Johnson was denied the right to vote based on a New York felony from a previous decade.
- The electronic purge proceeded despite previous federal court decisions ruling it illegal. Ultimately, the purge was key to putting George W. Bush in the White House.
- Amidst a global media tsunami, “hanging chads” and other problems complicated the election recount. Violent (but well-dressed) GOP operatives stormed election boards in what were known as the “Brooks Brothers Riots.” Election officials were intimidated and the process slowed, deepening the sense of a national crisis. Such tactics would be used again by the 2016 Trump campaign to kill attempted recounts in Michigan and Wisconsin.
- Amidst the chaos the crisis was “solved” by an inexplicable 5-4 vote of the US Supreme Court which stopped the recount and handed the presidency to George W. Bush. The Justices called this *Bush v. Gore* landmark a “one-time only” decision, not meant to set precedent. At least one pro-Bush Justice, Sandra Day O’Connor, later regretted her vote.

- The Congressional Black Caucus appeared before the Senate where Gore was the presiding officer and attempted to challenge the Florida electoral vote but at Gore's request, the Senate refused to allow it to be considered. Hillary Clinton later told the *Free Press* that she wished the election would have been challenged.
- A year later, more thorough recounts of the Florida vote were conducted by an independent media consortium. If the 175,000 so- called “spoiled ballots” had been counted, Gore would have won by approximately 29,000 votes.
- In his later film *An Inconvenient Truth*, Gore jokingly mentioned that he was once “the next president of the United States.” But he did nothing to further research or publicize what actually happened in Florida 2000 and around the US with the electronic vote count and other irregularities that denied the will of the voting public and changed the course of history.
- Post-2000 corporate media coverage largely blamed independent candidate Ralph Nader for turning the election from Gore to Bush. The media and Democratic mainstream ignored the fact that Gore actually won the election both in Florida and nationwide, but was deprived of the presidency by Jim Crow intimidation and electronic theft. Neither Gore nor the Democrats took effective steps to address either of these problems in the four-year lead-up to the next presidential election....or any time since.

The Help American Vote Act of 2002

- In 2002, the Congress responded to the Florida fiasco by passing the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), providing billions in federal funding for states to shift the registration and voting process onto electronic machines.
- In 2002, Republican Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel was “re-elected” with more than 80% of the vote. Hagel was still a principle in the ES&S electronic voting machine company. The state’s votes were cast and counted in large part on machines in which the candidate had a financial share. His official margin

of victory was highly improbable, because he received an unexpectedly high vote among urban and black voters.

- In the November 2002 Georgia election, incumbent US Senator Max Cleland lost his seat against Saxby Chambliss in an unexpected last-minute upset. It was the first election in which Georgia had used Diebold voting machines, and just prior to Election Day in an unusual move, the president of Diebold's election unit Bob Urosevich brought in illegal software updates to the system. Bev Harris of Black Box Voting found a set of files called "rob-georgia" among the secret voting machine database files.
- In the 2002 Alabama gubernatorial election, Bob Riley (R) defeated sitting governor Don Siegelman (D) by the smallest margin in Alabama history – some 3000 votes. Siegelman was one of the most popular politicians in Alabama's history, the only one elected to the top four statewide offices from Secretary of State, Attorney General, Lieutenant Governor to Governor. The Associated Press initially declared Siegelman the winner on election night. In Baldwin County, Alabama the paper ballots had been opti-scanned and the results posted. During the wee hours, the posted results showed an unexplained shift that supposedly produced enough additional votes to give Riley the election. Siegelman's campaign wanted to count the paper ballots from Baldwin County to determine the real results, but Alabama's Republican Attorney General Bill Pryor refused to allow the disputed votes from the malfunctioning machine to be manually recounted. He impounded the paper ballots from Baldwin County and said he would criminally prosecute anyone who tried to get their hands on them effectively ending the election dispute over the vote count.
- In 2006, Siegelman was sentenced to seven years in prison after being convicted on felony corruption charges. More than 100 former Attorney Generals and government officials in both major parties have alleged that Siegelman's conviction was politically motivated and marred by prosecutorial misconduct. Dana Jill Simpson, a Republican lawyer and political operative, swore under oath that she was on a conference call with Karl Rove when he orchestrated criminal charges against Siegelman to neutralize him in Alabama.

Raw Story reported that Rove worked with Bill Canary, Alabama's top Republican operative. The voting machine controversy and conviction ended Siegelman's political career.

The “All the Above” Selection of 2004

As the election of 2004 approached, incumbent President George W. Bush seemed unlikely to win a second term. His performance in the wake of the 9/11 attacks won him many supporters. But as time passed, his failure to protect the country from those attacks and much else about his presidency, affirmed for others an impression of profound incompetence, even of conspiracy.

In August 2002, presidential advisor Karl Rove established and chaired the White House Iraq Group (WHIG). Its mission was to develop a strategy for publicizing the White House's assertion that Saddam Hussein posed a threat to the United States.

In 2003, presidential advisor Karl Rove calculated that Bush's chance to win a second term would be improved if he could call himself a “War President.” So Rove, Vice-President Dick Cheney and other hawks within the administration began to promote an all-out assault on Iraq, which by all accounts had nothing to do with the attack on the World Trade Center.

The attack was sold with the claim that Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein (originally installed by the CIA, and publicly embraced in the 1980s by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld) had weapons of mass destruction. The assertion was false.

The war was cheer-led in large part by Cheney, who predicted that the Iraqi people would shower American soldiers with love and flowers as they invaded. This preposterous ideological lie was sold to the US electorate by a small neo-conservative think tank called the Project for a New American Century.

Instead the invasion opened a Pandora's Box of instability and bloodshed. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died, along with thousands of US soldiers. The invasion cost hundreds of billions of dollars and spawned a network of global terror that has extended from Al Qaeda to ISIS and beyond. It also set in motion a terrible refugee crisis that caused immense suffering to millions of innocent people and impacted the political landscape of Europe and the United States for years to come.

As the war grew increasingly unpopular, all predictions of the 2004 electoral outcome hinged on Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida. We have documented more than 100 of these in our HOW THE GOP STOLE AMERICA'S 2004 ELECTION & IS RIGGING 2008, which was published in 2005. (see it at www.freepress.org).

OHIO

The 2004 Presidential Selection

- In March 2004, Bob Fittrakis and Harvey Wasserman published the article *Diebold, Electronic Voting, and the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy* on freepress.org and on commondreams.com. They also published a similar article on motherjones.com called *Diebold's Political Machine*. Both articles predicted that Ohio would be the new Florida in the 2004 presidential election because of the partisan connections of George W. Bush to the private owners of the electronic voting machines and vote tabulation software. The key source for the article, Athan Gibbs, was an African American entrepreneur who had invented a voting machine that gave each voter a verified voting receipt. Approximately one week after the article ran, Gibbs was killed when his car was hit by a truck on an interstate highway.
- Due in part to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), like most of the rest of the country, the majority of Ohio's 2004 registration records were managed electronically, and votes were cast and counted electronically.
- In Auglaize County, the whistle-blowing Deputy Director of the Board of Elections resigned after complaining that a former employee of ES&S was given "inappropriate" access to voting machines prior to Election Day.
- On Election Day 2004, virtually all Ohio's votes were tabulated on electronic machines owned by companies with strong Republican ties, including Diebold, ES&S (with ties to Chuck Hagel), and Triad.
- In 2002, Tom Noe, Chair of the Lucas County (Toledo) Board of Elections, had brought in Sequoia touchscreen machines. But the county used O'Dell's

Diebold machines during the 2004 election. Neither offers an independently monitored paper trail for verifying election outcomes.

- Noe was later convicted of laundering money into the Bush re-election campaign in a scandal involving ties with Republican Governor Bob Taft, who allowed the state to make fraudulent investments in Noe's coin business.
- Tom Noe was succeeded as Chair of the Lucas County Board of Elections by his wife Bernadette. During the 2004 election process, she allowed GOP election officials access to unsecured ballots into an area designated as requiring both a Democrat and Republican to be present together.
- Under Bernadette Noe's leadership, the County's Diebold electronic voting machines broke down before Election Day and remained in disrepair throughout the November 7 election, disenfranchising thousands of voters.
- In 2003, Ohio businessman Walden "Wally" O'Dell, promised in a fund raising letter to wealthy GOP supporters that he would deliver Ohio's electoral votes to Bush. O'Dell ran Diebold, which owned and operated the bulk of Ohio's electronic voting machines. Diebold also controlled the software that would count the votes that decided the 2004 presidential election.
- O'Dell had visited the president's ranchette – a converted pig farm – in Crawford, Texas, and was a "Bush Ranger" responsible for delivering more than \$100,000 to the Bush/Cheney/Rove campaign for a second term. O'Dell hosted at least one Bush fundraiser with an admission price of \$1,000 per guest. Except for the *Columbus Free Press*, no national or Ohio media found this conflict of interest worth noting.
- Ohio's Secretary of State in 2004 was J. Kenneth Blackwell, who played a role parallel to that played by Kathleen Harris in Florida 2000. The central part of Blackwell's job was to administer the state's elections. He simultaneously co-chaired Ohio's GOP committee to give Bush and Cheney a second term, a re-run of Katherine Harris's dual role in Florida 2000.

- Blackwell was a far-right Republican known for his outspoken contempt for those who disagreed with him. He administered Ohio's election using an "all the above" barrage of tactics pioneered throughout the Third World by the CIA and other covert operatives since the beginning of the Cold War.
- To count the votes, Blackwell awarded a no-bid contract to GovTech, an Akron-based IT firm owned by Michael Connell, a long-time Bush family operative. Connell had created the Bush-Cheney website for the 2000 presidential campaign. As a chief IT consultant and operative for Karl Rove, Connell was a devout Catholic and the father of four children. In various statements Connell cited his belief that "abortion is murder" as a primary motivating factor in his work for the Republican Party and his strong desire to see candidates who supported legal abortion be defeated.
- Connell's company, New Media Communications worked closely with SmartTech in building Republican and right-wing websites that were hosted on SmartTech servers. Among Connell's clients were the Republican National Committee, Swift Boat Veterans for Truth and gwb43.com. The SmartTech servers at one point housed Karl Rove's emails. Some of Rove's email files have since mysteriously disappeared despite repeated Congressional and court-sanctioned attempts to review them.
- In 2001, Michael Connell's GovTech Solutions, LLC was selected to reorganize the Capitol Hill IT network. Connell bragged that LLC was the only private-sector company to gain permission from HIR (House Information Resources) to place its server behind the government's firewall.
- Prior to the election, Blackwell established a wide range of measures aimed at systematically disenfranchising potential Democratic voters, and for electronically shifting the vote count to guarantee a Bush-Cheney victory.
- Ohio's system of elections provided that each county board of elections have two Democrats and two Republicans, with the Secretary of State's vote as the tie-breaker, meaning all 88 counties in 2004 were controlled by Blackwell.

- In the lead up to the vote, Blackwell eliminated numerous precincts from inner city Democrat-leaning areas. He consolidated them into larger precincts, causing procedures on Election Day to be more difficult. Suppression of the black vote became much easier. Few precincts were eliminated in the state's rural Republican areas. Similar maneuvers have become commonplace throughout our elections nationwide, including the infamous Arizona primary in 2016, where voters in largely Latino areas waited five hours and more to cast their ballots.
- As precincts were shifted, the Ohio Secretary of State's website had out-of-date inaccurate information, frequently directing citizens to places where they would not be able to vote, or where provisional ballots would be required.
- A Hocking County, Ohio board official leaked information to the *Free Press* that Lisa Schwartze, GOP-appointed Director of the Hocking County Board of Elections, shredded voter registration documents prior to the 2004 election.
- The Lucas County (Toledo) Democratic Party headquarters was burglarized, with loss of crucial voter lists, internal correspondence and other campaign documents just prior to election.
- More than 30,000 letters on official Boards of Elections stationery throughout southern Ohio were sent to alleged ex-felons threatening them with arrest if they attempted to vote, even though there was no law in Ohio preventing ex-felons from voting.
- Eleven months before the 2004 election, Matt Damschroder, the GOP Director of the Franklin County (Columbus) Board of Elections, accepted a \$10,000 donation from Diebold contractor Pasquale "Patsy" Gallina on behalf of the county's Republican Party. Damschroder was suspended without pay for a month.
- Blackwell demanded Ohio's 88 counties print all voter registration forms on 80 bond paper or they would be rejected, but the ones distributed

from his own office were on 60 bond paper and would have been rejected under his decree.

- Operatives of unknown origin went door-to-door “registering” potential inner city voters, then trashing the forms, rendering the signees ineligible to vote. They also picked up absentee ballots from nursing homes that never made it to the boards of elections. Such “caging” tactics were illegal, but were rampant throughout the state during the 2004 election.
- Prior to the 2004 election, more than 300,000 voters were purged from the registration rolls, virtually all of them in heavily Democratic urban areas such as Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus. (Bush’s official margin of victory was less than 118,775). They were purged without explanation in a presidential election year, when voter purges did not normally occur in Ohio.
- In Lucas County, Board Chair Bernadette Noe purged some 28,000 voters from registration rolls, including some who’d voted in the same precinct, without changing residence, for four decades.
- Throughout the state, duly registered voters (including co-author Harvey Wasserman) were denied absentee ballots.
- On Election Day, President Bush and Rove personally visited Blackwell at Republican headquarters in Columbus. The meeting was secret. Bush gave no public speeches in Ohio that day, but did make a “get out the vote” call.
- Blackwell banned international election observers from coming within 100 feet of Ohio’s polling places. He threatened to arrest representatives from a distinguished United Nations team if they tried to do any monitoring inside any Ohio precinct. Such actions would have been roundly condemned by US democracy advocates monitoring election rights in other countries.
- However, Blackwell did allow Republican “challengers” into primarily African-American precincts to threaten potential voters with Jim Crow-style retribution if their voter registrations were not “in order.”

- For the first time in Ohio's history, Blackwell imposed a wide range of very restrictive management policies, including a refusal to count ballots for president cast by a voter in a precinct other than the one in which s/he was registered. This included denying voting rights to citizens who came to the right building to vote, but mistakenly lined up at the wrong table in a crowded general voting area, even if the right table was adjacent to it, less than a three feet away.
- Blackwell refused to provide paper ballots as requested even by Republican officials in the event machines broke down.
- Registration books at numerous precincts were out-of-date, disenfranchising thousands of Ohioans, especially in Franklin County.
- The Franklin County (Columbus) Board of Elections requested 5,000 new machines for Election Day. But Blackwell vetoed the purchase of the new machines. Thus the election was conducted with roughly half the number of machines needed. The shortages were primarily in Democratic precincts. The resulting long lines made it impossible for many working citizens to vote, as waiting time in the very long lines stretched for five hours and beyond.
- In Franklin County, 76 wards had fewer voting machines available on November 2nd than they had during the spring primary election. All 76 wards that were shorted on machines were in the city of Columbus, rather than in the suburbs; 42 of the short-changed precincts were in predominantly African-American districts. Statewide shortages and misallocation of voting machines and other impediments led to long delays, that, when combined with an atmosphere of intimidation and other problems, may have prompted 3% of the state's electorate to be disenfranchised, representing a vote deprivation total well in excess of Bush's official margin of victory.
- The machine shortages caused long lines in numerous precincts, most of them predominantly African-American. In the inner city of Columbus, wait times for voting were 3-7 hours.

- Some absentee ballots were delivered pre-punched for George W. Bush.
- Thousands of absentee ballots did not arrive for Ohio citizens (as in Florida) until after Election Day.
- In Hamilton County (Cincinnati) some absentee ballots were delivered lacking an option to vote for John Kerry.
- As with butterfly ballots used in Florida 2000, absentee ballots in Ohio 2004 were often impossible to understand or deliberately confusing.
- The Republican Party sent thousands of letters to college students wrongly challenging their right to vote based on their residency.
- Republican Director of the Franklin County Board of Elections Matt Damschroder sent letters to ex-felons, felons, those charged with felonies or misdemeanors, and to many citizens who turned out to have no criminal record whatsoever. The letters wrongly warned the recipients that they had lost their right to vote and that they would be arrested if they tried to do so.
- Ex-felons, people behind on their child support and people traffic tickets were targeted with threatening phone calls by a Republican “Mighty Texas Task Force” made up of GOP operatives who flew into the state for the election, warning these Ohio citizens not to vote or they would be arrested.
- Disinformational flyers were circulated in inner-city precincts on official-looking stationary threatening civil rights and voter registration groups with legal prosecution if they helped citizens register to vote.
- Flyers on official-looking stationary were circulated in inner cities advising Democrats to vote the day after the election. They read: “Due to increased voter registration, Republicans vote on Tuesday and Democrats will vote on Wednesday.”

- Voters in crowded inner city voting precincts were forced to use provisional ballots if they came to the “wrong” table, even if the “right” table was two feet away, or they had to go back to the end of the “right” line.
- Cars legally parked at inner city precincts (including Columbus's Driving Park neighborhood, where Harvey Wasserman grew up) were illegally towed while their owners attempted to vote in very long lines caused by shortages of machines and time-consuming harassment by GOP challengers.
- Citizens waiting in line to vote when their precincts closed at 7:30pm were illegally ordered to leave without voting; the law provided that those in line when the precincts closed were entitled to vote even after closing time. But in predominantly Democratic inner city precincts, the law was ignored.
- In Knox County, students at Kenyon College and local citizens were forced to wait up to 12 hours to vote due to a shortage of working machines and a lack of paper ballots, while students at a nearby fundamentalist Bible college waited just five minutes to vote.
- Students at Oberlin College and citizens of Oberlin, a liberal bastion, waited eight hours to vote due to an “unavoidable” shortage of machines and Blackwell’s refusal to provide paper ballots.
- At Wilberforce College, mostly African-American students were illegally challenged during the registration process.
- In Lucas County, the wrong ballot marking pens were issued for opti-scan voting cards which did not register on the machines designated to read them, thus creating thousands of “spoiled ballots” that were never counted.
- Blackwell failed to provide Spanish-speaking poll workers as required by law in heavily Latino precincts, especially in Cleveland.
- The implausibility of the vote count was confirmed in part by official vote tallies in key southwestern Ohio counties showing Kerry being credited with far fewer votes than those counted for C. Ellen Connelly, a black Democrat

running for the Ohio Supreme Court. Connelly never campaigned in the heavily white rural area and was virtually unknown there. The idea that she would receive more votes than Kerry in an election that was not rigged borders on the absurd.

- In Mahoning County (Youngstown), voting machines were recalibrated in the middle of Election Day, creating long lines and casting doubt on the vote count. Between twenty and thirty ES&S iVotronic machines broke down in the middle of the voting process and had to be re-calibrated because voters were complaining that they tried to vote for one candidate but the machine indicated that a vote for a different candidate was being recorded. The Mahoning County Board of Elections admitted that 31 of their voting machines were electronically flipping votes.
- In sworn testimony taken after the election, voters in Mahoning County reported pushing John Kerry's name on their touchscreen voting machines and having George W. Bush's name light up. In sworn testimony after the election, one voter said this "vote hopping" happened repeatedly on his machine, and that an election official confirmed that it had been doing that "all day." The poll worker suggested he just keep pushing Kerry's name until it stuck.
- Voters in Franklin County reported seeing their vote for Kerry disappear from the voting machine screen. This became known as the "Franklin County Fade."
- On election night, immediately after the polls closed, Warren County GOP officials inexplicably declared a Level 10 Homeland Security alert and excluded all media observers from the vote count. All materials relating to the vote count were confiscated by GOP officials, who ordered media representatives out of the process, in contradiction to long-standing practice. They moved the ballots from an officially sanctioned site to an unsanctioned warehouse, raising suspicions about the validity of the chain of command. Later investigations indicate that before Election Day, discussions had occurred in Warren County election circles about the possibility of staging

such a Homeland Security alert during the vote count. But no confirmation of any authorization of such an alert ever came from the FBI or any other federal agency that might have been authorized to call one. To this day, Warren County officials have issued no documented explanation for the origin of the Homeland Security alert. Despite exit polls indicating he received fewer votes, Bush was credited with 14,000 more votes than he had received in 2000.

- The infamous “Loaves and Fishes” vote count in Gahanna, a Columbus suburb inside Franklin County, gave Bush an impossible tally. At the Ward 1B precinct in Gahanna, a suburb of Columbus, 4,258 votes were tallied for George W. Bush where only 638 people were registered. The precinct was housed at the New Life Church, a fundamentalist congregation led by cohorts of the Rev. Jerry Falwell, a close associate of George W. Bush. The glitch was blamed on a faulty electronic transmission, but was later dubbed the “loaves and fishes” vote count, in Falwell’s honor.
- Two strongly pro-Bush precincts in Perry County initially reported official voter turnouts in excess of 100%. They reported turnouts of 124.4% and 124.0% respectively. The vote count was heavily in favor of George W. Bush.
- The vote count in two strongly pro-Bush Miami County precincts reported impossibly high results. The tallies in the Concord South and Southwest precincts of Miami County reported official turnouts of 94.27% and 98.6% respectively. The vote counts were strongly in favor of Bush. County election officials later admitted that there were approximately 2500 phantom cyber-votes added to their vote tally by the central tabulators.
- On Election night, GOP-controlled Miami County announced a total turnout of 31,620 votes, with a majority of about 66% favoring George W. Bush. Later, the Board of Elections added nearly 19,000 votes to the total, about 13,000 of which went to Bush. The second tabulation gave John Kerry precisely the same percentage of the vote as the first one, another virtual statistical impossibility.

- A faulty electronic voting machine in Mahoning County (Youngstown) showed John Kerry receiving a negative 25,000,000 votes. The “glitch” was apparently “corrected.”
- Republican-controlled Warren, Butler and Clermont Counties gave Bush a total margin of victory over Kerry in excess of his entire margin in the state of Ohio and in excess of what he got in 2000 over Al Gore. Official tallies showed Bush beating John Kerry by a collective margin of 132,685 votes in Warren, Butler and Clermont Counties. Bush’s margin in these three counties alone substantially exceeded his 118,775-vote margin of victory in the entire state.
- In Trumbull County, which went heavily for Bush, 650 more absentee ballots were counted than there were absentee voters. (In Broward and Palm Beach Counties, Florida, problems with absentee ballots had also cost tens of thousands of citizens their right to vote.)
- After the election, Blackwell illegally ordered all poll records to be kept secret from the public, with at least one volunteer election monitor being physically ejected in Pickaway County.
- Minor, obscure third-party candidates got unexplained, improbable high vote counts in a few Cuyahoga County precincts that vote heavily Democratic, denying those votes to Kerry. Results showed that Black neighborhoods voted inexplicably for the far right-wing Constitutional Law Party.
- At least seven heavily Democratic precincts in Cleveland showed voter turnouts 30% lower than the average in the rest of the state for no apparent reason, costing Kerry thousands of votes.
- In Democratic-rich northern Ohio including Toledo and Cleveland, the ratio of machine-rejected ballots versus those successfully counted was eight times higher in Democratic precincts than in Republican precincts.

- In some areas, underfunded and little-known “down-ballot” Democratic candidates received more votes than the presidential candidate John Kerry, a highly unlikely outcome. Kerry also received, in certain Republican-controlled areas, fewer votes in the November election than he got in the spring primary that had a much lighter voter turnout
- In Greene County, bags of official ballots were left unguarded on folding tables in an open building, breaking the chain of command and compromising any recount.
- In one heavily Democratic Lucas County (Toledo) precinct, zero voting machines were available to the public at the beginning of the day, depriving many citizens of their ability to vote.
- In Lucas County down-ballot congressional Democratic candidate Marcy Kaptur was credited with 13,461 more votes than Kerry.
- In Mahoning County (Youngstown) voting machines were re-calibrated in the middle of Election Day, creating long lines and eradicating the reliability of the vote count.
- Voters in Mahoning and Franklin counties using touch-screen machines repeatedly reported pushing Kerry’s name on the screen while having Bush light up. In some cases pushing Kerry’s name would bring on a light that would then fade away, apparently leaving no vote being cast.
- Bush IT associate Mike Connell set up the vote-counting apparatus for Ohio’s election results in the basement of the Old Pioneer Bank Building in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The same basement housed the email servers for the Republican National Committee and for Karl Rove.
- At 12:20am on the night of the 2004 presidential election, when election exit polls and initial vote counts showed John Kerry the clear winner, the Ohio computers went down and the state’s vote counting was moved to Tennessee. Blackwell had dismissed state IT workers for the night, leaving the vote count

in this historically critical period under the supervision of Bush associate Michael Connell.

- At 12:30am, CNN reported that John Kerry was carrying Ohio with a margin of 4.2% (more than 200,000 votes) and would almost certainly become the next President. The call echoed those made for Al Gore in 2000 before the vote flipping in Volusia County.
- Around 2am the computers came back up and the Ohio vote count had shifted, giving Bush the presidency. Kerry's 4.2% margin of victory shifted to a 2.5% margin of victory for Bush.
- This shift of 6.7% (more than 300,000 votes) has been termed a “virtual statistical impossibility” by Dr. Ron Baiman, professor and statistician, and others.
- About 15% of the 5.6 million votes cast in the Ohio election were recorded by electronic voting machines that had no paper trails and could not be reliably monitored or recounted. This represented about 700,000 votes in an election whose official margin for George W. Bush was 118,775 votes. The reversal of a small percentage of the votes cast on electronic machines could have changed the outcome of the election. A shift of a mere six votes in each of Ohio's 11,000- plus precincts would have given Kerry the White House.

Post 2004 Ohio Election

- The source code for electronic machines used to gather about 80% of the votes cast in US presidential elections has been ruled proprietary by the courts. There is still no way to cross-check or verify the electronic vote count from the disputed 2004 election or any other election held in Ohio or any other state where electronic voting has dominated.
- On a state-by-state basis, the Edison/Mitofsky and other major polling reports showed a strong correspondence between the exit polls and the official vote counts in 38 states plus the District of Columbia. Statistical variations were

concentrated in 2004 in four key swing states: Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire.

- On election night 2004, Jonathan Simon, a lawyer and chiropractor, became the man who captured the screenshots of the national presidential election exit polls. Mitofsky International and Edison Media Research under contract to six major news organizations had conducted the exit polls. The screenshots captured by Simon documented what he called a “Red Shift” in 10 out of the 11 swing states. The unexpected and improbable variations all went toward George W. Bush. Simon would later write an important book on the topic, *Code Red*.
- Of America’s eleven key swing states, ten experienced similar shifts from Kerry to Bush from 12:30am to the morning after the election. Wisconsin stayed steady for Kerry at 0.4%. Colorado and Florida started with slight leads for Bush and ended with large ones. Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania started with large leads for Kerry and ended with smaller ones. Iowa, Nevada, New Mexico and Ohio, all showed statistically significant leads for Kerry at 12:30am; they all ended in the morning in the Bush column, giving him a second term. Those four “purple states,” which shifted from blue to red, experienced shifts of 2.2%, 3.9%, 3.7% and, in Ohio, 6.7%.
- On November 13, 2004, the Ohio Election Protection Coalition chaired by Bob Fitrakis, *Free Press* Editor and attorney, held the largest known public hearings about election and voting irregularities in Ohio history putting 32 Ohio precinct judges, pollworkers, legal observers, party challengers, voters and observers under oath. Additionally, 66 others provided written affidavits that day. Other hearings followed in Cincinnati, Toledo, Youngstown and another in Columbus. More than 500 people provided sworn testimony under oath on election irregularities. Their testimony provided the basis for the lawsuit *Moss v. Bush* and the book *Did George W. Bush Steal America's 2004 Election? Ohio's Essential Documents*, by Bob Fitrakis, Harvey Wasserman and Steve Rosenfeld.

- After the election, the presidential candidates from the national Green and Libertarian Parties filed for a recount of the vote in Ohio. Despite paying for the recount, they were denied the right to inspect poll books.
- Under Ohio law, recounts involve randomly counting 3% of the ballots in a county by hand. If they don't match, then all ballots are hand-counted. During the Ohio recount, precincts to be examined were specifically designated by Blackwell rather than being chosen at random.
- During the recount, Shelby and other Ohio counties discarded key equipment and data prior to being independently examined.
- In Hocking County during the recount, a representative of Triad, a conservative-owned voting machine company, replaced the county board of elections' central tabulator's hard drive and gave Deputy Director Sherole Eaton, a "cheat sheet" to use if the votes didn't match up. When Eaton made this information public, she was fired.
- In Ohio, Kerry carried 54.46% of the votes that were counted by hand during the recount, but lost the state—and the presidency—due to "votes" that were counted by machine. A similar outcome was documented in New Mexico.
- In the aftermath of the massive irregularities in the Ohio 2004 presidential election, Bill Moss, long-time black activist and former Columbus School Board member, contested the election results by filing an action before the Supreme Court of Ohio, *Moss v. Bush*. Due to the delays caused primarily by Ohio Secretary of State Blackwell, there was never a full hearing granted on the case. However, more than 20,000 pages documenting Ohio election irregularities and fraud were placed in the court record.
- US Congressman John Conyers of the House Judiciary Committee received so many complaints about election irregularities in Ohio that he held hearings in both Washington DC and Columbus, Ohio in December 2004. The information gathered at the hearings and through investigation by the Judiciary staff was published as a book entitled, *What Went Wrong in Ohio*:

The Conyers Report on the 2004 Election. Noted literary figure Gore Vidal wrote the introduction.

- On December 13, 2004 before a hearing organized by US Rep John Conyers (D-MI) in Columbus, Ohio, computer programmer Clint Curtis testified that he was asked by US Rep. Tom Feeney (R-FL) to write a program for a touchscreen voting machine that would make it possible to flip votes without being detected.
- For the first time in US history, the entire electoral delegation of a state (Ohio) was challenged before the US Congress January 5, 2005. US Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH) of Cleveland, the first black female to represent Ohio in the US House, brought a formal complaint before the US Senate. US Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) provided the required support to allow it to be debated for two hours in both the House and the Senate. The challenge failed to unseat the Electoral College delegation, but set an important precedent.
- Kerry conceded the 2004 election at 1pm the day after Election Day, despite the fact that 250,000 votes remain uncounted in Ohio, far in excess of the then-predicted Bush victory of 130,000 (it came in finally at 118,775). In Ohio overall, more than 106,000 provisional ballots were left uncounted, and to this day have never been tallied or accounted for.
- In a conference call that included co-author Bob Fittrakis, Kerry later complained that he lost every precinct in New Mexico where ballots were counted by machine rather than by hand. But he never made a public statement to that effect or demanded a recount.
- In Franklin County, Ohio, where inner city precincts were shorted on voting machines, the turnout among African-Americans was officially 10% lower than in white precincts, indicating that long lines and machine shortages prevented thousands of black citizens from voting.

- A post-election study showed it took African-Americans 55 minutes to vote in Ohio 2004 but it took white citizens an average of just 5 minutes
- A door-to-door survey of the Concord Southwest precinct (Ohio) after the 2004 election confirmed that 25 citizens, who were listed as having voted, told the survey team that they actually never did vote in the presidential election. In that precinct, 679 out of the registered 689 voters allegedly cast ballots, according to the Board of Elections, but only 549 actually signed-in to vote. The Board of Elections admitted there had been 130 “phantom votes” and that the vast majority of them had been awarded to Bush.
- In Cuyahoga County at least 8,099 of 24,472 provisional ballots were thrown in the trash.
- In Montgomery County (Dayton) 2.8% of the ballots cast in pro- Kerry precincts showed no vote for president, versus 1.6% in pro- Bush precincts.
- Mathematician Richard Charnin analyzed the 2004 presidential election and found what he calls the “Bush Urban Legend.” To accept George W. Bush’s 2004 alleged victory, one must accept data that shows Bush’s votes declining in rural Republican areas but increasing in Democratic urban areas of the country.
- Michael Collins, writing for Scoop.com, questioned how Bush received 2.5 million fewer rural Republican votes in the 2004 election, compared to the 2000 election, but gained an unexpected 12 point jump from the urban Latino vote across the nation in that same election, according to the national exit polls.
- On September 25, 2006, as result of the *King-Lincoln-Bronzeville* lawsuit, *the Free Press* reported the following additional irregularities in the 2004 election:
- In Delaware County Precinct Genoa I, researcher Stuart Wright viewed and recounted three separate bundles of ballots. In the second bundle, there were

274 consecutive ballots allegedly cast for Bush. In the third bundle there were 359 consecutive ballots allegedly cast for Bush. Genoa I was not one of the four precincts recounted as part of a required official recount, conducted by Blackwell on December 15, 2004.

- In Delaware County, BOE officials told researcher Richard Hayes Phillips that after the votes were cast on Election Day, ballots were unloaded by a team of teenage volunteers including the Boy Scouts who carried them into the BOE building, where they were then given to a “mentally retarded man” who scraped the chads off the punch card ballots. Dr. Phillips estimates that the “mentally retarded man” would have had to scrape four or five ballots per second on election night in order to comply with the posting of the results at 12:40am for the nearly 80,000 ballots cast there.
- In Delaware County, Ross Township precinct, Phillips discovered that the BOE certified that 70% of the ballots cast for C. Ellen Connally, an African-American woman from Cleveland running for the Ohio Supreme Court, were also counted for Bush. The implausibility of this outcome in a white, Republican suburb is underscored by the fact that Connally trailed both Bush and Kerry very substantially throughout the rest of the state. Some 60% of the Township’s ballots opposing a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (which passed substantially) also were punched for Bush, an extremely implausible outcome given his opposition to gay marriage. This “anomaly” was widely branded as the “Gays for Bush” phenomenon.
- In Butler County, Phillips found that in Monroe City precinct 4CA, Bush received 52 consecutive votes near the start of voting, and then another run of 212 consecutive votes.
- Also in Butler Country, in Ross Township Precinct 4JB, Phillips found that Bush was awarded 547 votes to Kerry’s 141 votes. In separate sequences, Bush received 41, 29 and 25 straight votes. Neither 4CA nor 4JB were involved in the official recount.

- In Clermont County, which contributed significantly to Bush's margin of victory, statistical researcher Dr. Ronald Baiman discovered a suspicious use of replacement ballots, meant to be issued only if a regular ballot is somehow spoiled by a voter. In a random draw of ballots as he went through the 192 precincts, against huge odds, Baiman found a replacement ballot. Baiman asked that the next ballot from the precinct be drawn and it, too, was a replacement ballot. Continuing pulling ballots from that same precinct, Baiman witnessed 36 straight replacement ballots in a row, a virtual statistical impossibility. Dr. Philips recorded only five spoiled ballots in this same precinct, raising the question of where the other 31 replacement ballots came from. Both Dr. Philips and Baiman were expert witnesses in the *Moss v. Bush* challenge to the Ohio vote.
- Also in Clermont County, Phillips found an opti-scan ballot with a white sticker over the Kerry-Edwards spot which would prevent the counter from recording a Kerry vote. During the December 2004 recount in Clermont County, witnesses swore in official affidavits that they saw several ballots with stickers over the Kerry-Edwards spot. The county prosecutor claimed there were "less than one hundred" of these, but was unable to explain why any stickers were there at all.
- In Miami County on Monday, June 19, 2006, Director Steve Quillen handed co-author Bob Fitakis a print out of what he called "freely amended results." Director Quillen said "You guys were right" regarding the voter turnout in Concord South West Precinct, which had been listed as 98.55% in the certified election results in 2004. Quillen also disavowed the alleged 94.3% voter turnout certified election results in Concord South. *The Free Press* has questioned those results, which would have meant that 679 out of 689 people successfully voted in Concord South West. Using a computer databank of voter history, Quillen has since admitted that the voter turnout was just 82.1% in Concord South West and 79.5% in Concord, discrepancies of more than 15%.
- In Miami County, BOE Director Quillen also said Boy Scouts who volunteered to help on Election Day mistakenly took Concord South West

ballots to the Concord East precinct. Dr. Ron Baiman, professor and statistician, found that the poll books and absentee ballots in Miami County “have little to no relationship to the voters who voted in the county.” He also discovered that “at least 8% of precincts in Miami County have at least a 5% discrepancy between the number of voters who voted and the official certified number of votes.” He also noted that there were two precincts that were off by more than 100 votes.

- In Miami County, both the Chair and the Director of the BOE admitted that the recount matched the official vote count only because they didn’t use the certified results, but simply counted the ballots in the precinct and ran them through the tabulator. This is a valid tabulator test, but not a legally valid recount, since there’s no benchmark.
- Also in Miami County, Diane L. Miley, the BOE’s former Deputy Director said the Director allowed “Republican friends” and “high school students to take ballots out to the polls on Election Day.” Miley also says ten or more Republicans were allowed into the BOE on the evening of Election Day, when votes were being counted, which she says made her “incredibly uncomfortable.” But in going public with her assertions, Miley says she was “abandoned by the Dems . . . when I stood up [to the Republicans] at the Board of Elections.”
- In Warren County, punch card ballots were also shifted from precinct to precinct, which again, due to ballot rotations, could have reversed the intent of thousands of voters. Warren County was also key to the Bush margin of victory.
- General disorganization and administrative problems led to the forced resignation of the entire GOP-dominated Board of Elections in Lucas County (Toledo) following the 2004 election.

Electronic Election Theft Since 2004

In the years following the 2004 election, questions raised about its validity prompted public scrutiny and a wide range of studies.

In 2005, Ohio's Republican Governor Bob Taft filed a no contest plea on four misdemeanor ethics violations involving illegal gifts from Tom Noe, former chair of the Lucas County (Toledo) Board of Elections. Noe was a leader of the Ohio Republican Party and a major Bush-Cheney donor. In his role as BOE chair he was a key player in numerous irregularities involving shifts of votes from Kerry to Bush in 2004.

- In March 2005, a group of university professors at the National Election Data Archive Project released a study suggesting that the 2004 presidential vote count could have been altered. Based on an extensive analysis of election data, their *Final Study of the 2004 Presidential Election Poll Discrepancies* concluded, among other things, that “the required pattern of exit poll participation by Kerry and Bush voters to satisfy the exit poll data defies empirical experience and common sense under any assumed scenario.”
- On March 25, 2005, Congressman Bob Ney, Chair of the US House Committee on House Administration held hearings in Columbus, Ohio where Blackwell denied any wrongdoing in the 2004 election. The American Center for Voting Rights gave testimony. It was a fake "voting rights group" which was just established a few days earlier. Its representative, a Republican operative named Thor Hearne, testified that the "real problem" was the NAACP bribing people to vote Democratic in return for crack cocaine. He presented no evidence to substantiate the assertion. But the idea of large numbers of fraudulent voters flooding the polls began to take root in GOP circles.
- In April 2005, a report by the Montgomery County, Maryland Information Technology Department concluded that as a result of 106 machines freezing in the middle of a vote “Maryland election judges are unable to provide substantial confirmation that the vote was in fact counted.” The IT report found that there was a 12% failure rate with the machines on Election Day –

7% failed completely, while 5% were suspect because of the low official vote totals.

- In July 2005, Members of the Progressive Ohio Backbone Campaign traveled to the Hocking County Sheriff's Department on Monday morning, July 11, to file an affidavit of fact alleging criminal conduct by the county's Board of Elections (BOE) Director Lisa Schwartze. According to the affidavit, some 10,000 voter registration documents were illegally shredded in Hocking County by Schwartze's BOE. The Hocking County Sheriff's department and Prosecutor refused to investigate the situation.
- On July 29, 2005, California Secretary of State, Bruce McPherson denied the certification of the Diebold TSx GEMS v. 1.18.22 voting machines in his state. McPherson cited a 10% failure rate due to jammed printers and computer "crashes."
- In August 2005, Paul Hackett, an Iraq war veteran and a Democratic candidate for Congress in southwestern Ohio, lost his bid late in the evening of a close election. At 9pm election night, with 88% of the votes counted, Hackett and his Republican opponent were in a virtual dead heat. More than half the ballots in Clermont County, Ohio had been tabulated and reported. But Clermont County election officials suddenly reported a "technical malfunction" with optical scan readers. They blamed the problem on "humidity" which allegedly soaked into the Scantron ballots, making it hard for them to pass through computerized tabulators. Once the problem was "solved," Hackett went down to a definitive defeat. The percentages by which he lost votes after the "glitch" was "fixed" were very different from those beforehand. Vote counts were also higher than expected in the strongest GOP precincts.
- On August 5, 2005, the lead plaintiff in the *Moss v. Bush* case, Bill Moss, died unexpectedly after a stroke at age 69.
- On August 25, 2005, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, the Congresswoman who challenged the Ohio's electoral votes going to Bush in the first electoral

delegation challenge in Ohio history, died unexpectedly of an aneurysm at age 58.

- In September 2005, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued its report entitled “Federal Efforts to Improve Security and Reliability of Electronic Voting Systems Are Underway But Key Activities Need To Be Completed.” The GAO found that “some of [the] concerns about electronic voting machines have been realized and have caused problems with recent elections, resulting in the loss and miscount of votes.” The GAO report documented eight major security flaws, including:
- Some electronic voting machines “did not encrypt cast ballots or system audit logs, and it was possible to alter both without being detected.” In other words, the GAO confirmed that electronic voting machines provided an open door to flip an entire vote count. More than 800,000 votes were cast in Ohio’s 2004 election on electronic voting machines, a total more than six times Bush’s official margin of victory.
- The GAO confirmed that “it was possible to alter the files that define how a ballot looks and works so that the votes for one candidate could be recorded for a different candidate.” Numerous sworn statements and affidavits assert that this did happen in Ohio 2004.
- The GAO confirmed that “vendors installed uncertified versions of voting system software at the local level.” Thus election results could be falsified without leaving any evidence of such an action by using altered memory cards.
- The GAO confirmed that access to the voting network was easily compromised because not all digital recording electronic voting systems (DREs) had supervisory functions password- protected. Thus, access to one machine provided access to the whole network. This critical finding confirmed that rigging the 2004 vote did not require a “widespread conspiracy” but rather the cooperation of a very small number of operatives with the power to tap into the networked machines. These individuals could then change large

numbers of votes at will. With 800,000 votes cast on electronic machines in Ohio, flipping the number needed to give Bush a margin of 118,775 could be easily done by just one programmer within a short period of time.

- The GAO confirmed that access to the voting network was compromised by repeated use of the same user IDs combined with easily guessed passwords. Thus even relatively amateur hackers could have gained access to and altered the Ohio vote tallies.
- The GAO confirmed that locks protecting access to the system were easily picked and keys were simple to copy, meaning, again, getting into the system was an easy matter, even for amateur hackers.
- The GAO confirmed that one DRE model was shown to have been networked in such a rudimentary fashion that a power failure on one machine would cause the entire network to fail, re- emphasizing the fragility of the system on which the presidency was decided.
- The GAO identified further problems with the security protocols and background screening practices for vendor personnel, confirming still more easy access to the system.
- Prior to elections in November 2005, 41 Ohio counties added new paperless computer touchscreen voting machines.
- On the Ohio ballot in November 2005 was Issue 2, a reformist ballot measure with widespread bi-partisan support. Issue 2 was designed to help Ohioans vote earlier by mail or in person. The usually reliable *Columbus Dispatch* newspaper poll showed Issue 2 passing 59%-33% with 8% undecided. The Republican-leaning Bliss Institute at the University of Akron showed Issue 2 winning by 28 points. But Issue 2 was vehemently opposed by GOP Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, who ran the election. It lost by an astonishing 65.5%- 36.5% margin, involving a shift from poll to official outcome that was deep into the range of a virtual statistical impossibility.

- Issue 3 also had wide bi-partisan support, but was also opposed by Blackwell. It involved campaign finance limits. The *Dispatch* poll showed it winning 61%-25%. The Bliss Institute showed it winning by 22 points. But the official vote count, as reported by Blackwell, showed it being defeated 67%-33%. This constituted an unfathomable 71 point swing from the *Dispatch* poll to the actual results, an utterly absurd outcome that gives new meaning to the term virtual statistical impossibility. The vote counts on Issues 2 and 3 were never subjected to an independent recount or audit.
- In December 2005, after an acrimonious board meeting, longtime Diebold CEO Walden O'Dell resigned effective immediately. Diebold supplied most of the software for vote tabulation in Ohio counties in the 2004 election. O'Dell had been on record saying he would "deliver" Ohio's vote to Bush. The resignation came amidst a massive class action lawsuit led in United States District Court in Ohio against the firm and eight current and former executives for securities fraud, concealment, and insider trading. After much turmoil, Diebold renamed its voting division Premier, was bought by ES&S and the remnants were spun off into the Canadian-based Dominion.
- On December 27, 2005, tests conducted on Diebold's TSx touch- screen voting machine by Emery County, Utah, Clerk Bruce Funk revealed new problems. Funk booted each machine up to check the battery. Some of the machines were marked with little yellow dots. Screen messages indicated most machines had about 25 MB of memory available, but some had only 7 MB of free memory left. One had only 4 MB of available memory. For perspective, the backup election file generated by the Diebold TSx is about 7.9 MB. The problem raised three possibilities:
 1. There might be completely different software in the machines with low memory.
 2. Some machines might contain different external data.
 3. Or, some of the machines might have been delivered with different amounts of installed memory. Whatever the case, the reliability of the machines on which so-called "democratic" elections

- In April 2006, *the Free Press* reported that Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, Co-Chair of the Bush-Cheney Re-Election Campaign, revealed that he had owned stock in the Diebold voting machine company. Blackwell tried to award unbid state contracts to Diebold worth millions. A top Republican election official told *the Free Press* that a Diebold operative told him he made a \$50,000 donation to Blackwell's "political interests."
- In May 2006, Blackwell was awarded the GOP nomination for Ohio governor in a primary election riddled with voting machine breakdowns. In Franklin (Columbus) and Delaware counties, election officials had to "shut down and recalibrate [machines] throughout the day," according to the *Columbus Dispatch*. The *Dispatch* reported that voting machines recorded votes for wrong candidates. Election officials often use "recalibration" as a code word when machines are reported to be malfunctioning and flipping votes.
- In 2006, Edward Felten, professor of computer science and public affairs at Princeton, did a public demonstration hack on a Diebold AccuVote TS electronic voting machine, proving it was no problem to engineer any desired outcome, not matter what the desire of the actual voters.
- In 2006, the *King-Lincoln-Bronzeville* federal lawsuit was filed in court. Co-author Bob Fitakis was co-counsel and co-author Harvey Wasserman was a plaintiff. The case was a civil action alleging that voters in the 2004 Ohio presidential race were deprived of the right to vote by election officials hacking electronic machines, crippling public access to the voting process and manipulating the vote count.
- In September 2006, federal Judge Algernon Marbley delivered a precedent-setting decision ordering the preservation of the ballots and related documents from the 2004 election. Such ballots were already officially protected by federal law, technically under lock and key, for 24 months. But Blackwell indicated he might order them destroyed before the protection expired. Instead, Marbley ordered Ohio's 88 county Boards of Election to deliver all materials related to the 2004 election to a repository in Columbus. But when it came time to deliver, 56 of the 88 counties announced their materials were

missing. Holmes County officials claimed ballots were destroyed by hot liquid spilled from a coffee urn. In Mahoning County, the ballots were allegedly mistakenly put out to be recycled. Other official explanations were equally absurd. Not one errant official was prosecuted for the destruction of this public property. At least 114,000 ballots from that election remain uncounted. To date there has never been a reliable recount to confirm who was actually the rightful winner of the 2004 presidential election in Ohio.

- In the Georgia 2006 primary election, US House Representative Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) officially lost to her opponent Hank Johnson. Voters complained that electronic choices were flipping before their eyes on computer screens, according to a report on democrats.com by Bob Fertik. He reported: “‘You’ve got electronic voting machines. Many people called in and shared their concern. They pushed the button for Cynthia McKinney and Hank Johnson came up. It wasn’t one time, it wasn’t two times, it was many, many times,’ Karen Fitzpatrick, who has been monitoring elections for US Rep. McKinney’s re-election campaign, told *Atlanta Progressive News* in an exclusive interview.”
- On May 11, 2006, a security alert from Black Box Voting on Diebold machines noted that “Back doors were found in three separate levels. They can be used one at a time or combined for a deep attack that can permanently compromise the Diebold touch-screens.”
- In June 2006, Dr. Ron Baiman, professor and statistician, published an analysis of the so-called “Connelly anomaly” from Ohio’s 2004 election. C. Ellen Connally was the Cleveland Democrat running for state Supreme Court. She is African-American. Against all odds, her official vote count somehow ran significantly ahead of Kerry in certain critical heavily-white conservative areas of southwestern Ohio where she did not campaign and had virtually no name recognition. Baiman concluded that the discrepancy indicated a rigged electronic shift of 75,000-82,000 votes from Kerry to Bush in an election decided by 118,775.

- In August 2006, a Zogby poll found 92% of Americans demanded the right to watch their votes being hand counted. Some 80% rejected the use of secret computer software for vote tabulation.
- On August 16, 2006, Tim Kettler, Green Party candidate for Ohio Secretary of State, filed a criminal complaint in Coshocton County alleging misconduct in the recount of the 2004 presidential election. Nothing came of the proceeding.
- In September 2006, Dorothy Fadiman's documentary *Stealing America: Vote by Vote* premiered in Columbus, Ohio at the Drexel theater. Fadiman, an Emmy-award-winning and Oscar-nominated filmmaker, documented the irregularities in the Ohio 2004 election. Local corporate media and local public radio and television stations blacked out the premiere, with virtually no coverage whatsoever on a major documentary made by a nationally-known filmmaker covering substantive allegations that a presidential election was stolen in their own backyard. WOSU, Ohio Public Radio, refused to interview her. *Columbus on the Record*, a public TV news discussion show, refused to discuss the film.
- On September 30, 2006, Dr. Ron Baiman, professor and statistician, released a statistical report calling Ohio's 2004 presidential results into question. He revealed an email exchange between himself and expert exit pollster Warren Mitofsky (since deceased). The report included an email on December 7, 2005, in which Mitofsky responded to Baiman's call for the release of more data with the following phrase: "Go fuck yourself."
- On November 1, 2006, the *Free Press* reported that "Official states electronic voting system added votes never cast in 2004 Presidential election; audit log missing." *The Columbus Free Press* documented in a 17-page report that approximately 2500 votes were added to Miami County's electronic voting system even though they were never cast by actual voters. The audit log for the system was still missing along with all its information for the 2004 presidential election. This was thought to be the first time election officials admitted that computerized cyber-votes not representing real voters were hacked into a system.

- On November 1, 2006, Ohio Secretary of State Blackwell issued a directive barring from polling places all election observers not authorized by him personally.
- According to Election Data Services, almost 80% of all voters in 2006 voted on electronic voting machines or optically-scanned ballots nationwide. Less than 1% of voters in the U.S. used traditional hand-counted paper ballots.
- In November 2006, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor filed criminal charges against voting rights activist Victoria Lovegren for passing out data collection forms to election technicians so they could report vote counts for verification. She was officially charged with “obstruction of business.” No similar prosecutions have been filed against Blackwell or other public officials who actively hacked the 2004 election.
- On November 7, 2006 in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, 984 voters cast their ballots in precinct Newtown 1. The voting machine tallied 1089 ballots a 10% overvote.
- On November 14, 2006, Ohio’s 2006 vote count included a higher percentage of uncounted ballots than in 2004, and a statistically impossible swing to the Republicans. Nonetheless, Blackwell, who by this time was extremely unpopular with voters, was defeated in a landslide in his race for governor and Democrat Jennifer Brunner became secretary of state.
- In 2006, the Black Box Voting election integrity organization led by Bev Harris showed in three public demonstrations that the optical scan voting machines used in Florida could be hacked.
- On January 2, 2007, the *Free Press* reported that there had been a 26.48% undervote in heavily African-American Cuyahoga County in the Congressional 2006 midterm election. The expected rate of undervotes was approximately 3% statewide.
- On January 3, 2007, the *Free Press* reported massive discrepancies in the Ohio State Auditor’s race between 2006 election night reported votes cast and

the later official tally. In the Cleveland area, 94,442 votes, a shocking 16.8% of all the votes in Cuyahoga County, disappeared from the official tally. Republican newcomer Mary Taylor, who is white, defeated Democrat Barbara Sykes, who is black, in the Ohio State Auditor's race. Pre-election polls showed Sykes winning by 10%. (Taylor has since become Ohio's Lieutenant Governor and has announced her intent to run for governor in 2018, most likely with the backing of out-going Governor John Kasich).

- On January 4, 2007, *Free Press* reporter Rady Ananda reported that 60% of all randomly audited precincts in Franklin County showed that more official votes were tallied in a Franklin County judge's race than there were voters.
- On January 27, 2007, the first felony convictions were handed down against two Cleveland poll workers stemming from Ohio's 2004 presidential election recount. Cuyahoga County prosecutors say the poll workers "rigged" the recount.
- On February 6, 2007, Michael Vu, Director of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, resigned over his handling of Ohio's 2004 election and official recount. (Vu has since surfaced as an election official in San Diego).
- On March 6, 2007, a third Cuyahoga County Board of Elections official was found guilty of rigging the 2004 Ohio recount. Also, a recount of the Coshocton County presidential votes raised Kerry's total from the officially reported 43% to 49%.
- On March 26, 2007, the *Free Press* reported that a court affidavit claimed that Michael Barbian, Jr. of Triad Governmental Systems, Inc. filed a message to the Hocking County Board of Elections saying he would be in, just prior to the Ohio 2004 recount, "to check out your tabulator and computer..." Triad's management and ownership are tied to the Republican Party and the Right to Life movement. There was no appointment to inspect the Hocking County BOE's equipment prior to the recount day.

- On June 21, 2007, Senator John Edwards became the first major presidential candidate to support “open source code” for U.S. elections. In a letter, Edwards stated that “To ensure security, these machines should be programmed with an open source code for complete transparency, and election results should be safeguarded by voter-verified paper records.” As John Kerry’s running mate, Edwards had vehemently objected to Kerry’s early concession of the presidential race before all votes were counted in Ohio.
- On December 7, 2007, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner announced that a \$1.9 million official study, entitled *Everest*, showed that “critical security failures” were embedded throughout the voting systems in the state that decided the 2004 election. Those failures, she said, “could impact the integrity of elections in the Buckeye State.” They have rendered Ohio’s vote counts “vulnerable” to manipulation and by “fairly simple techniques.”
- In January 2008, the *Free Press* published an article detailing the *Voting Industrial Complex* exposing long-standing ties between the Republican Party, the Federal Election Commission and officials at the major voting machine companies.
- In Ohio’s March 2008 primary, at least 15 touch-screen voting machines that produced improbable numbers in Ohio’s 2006 statewide election were under double-lock in an official crime scene, following an order from Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, after her husband witnessed discrepancies on the electronic ballots.
- Investigative reporter Greg Palast revealed that in the 2008 Presidential election, 1,451,116 ballots were “spoiled” (not counted) nationally – and 54% of those were cast by African-Americans.
- In 2007, whistleblower Stephen Spoonamore told interviewers that Mike Connell, the Bush Family computer specialist who ran the electronic vote count during the Ohio 2004 election, “agrees that the electronic voting systems in the US are not secure” and told Spoonamore said “that he (Connell) is afraid some of the more ruthless partisans of the GOP may have

exploited systems he in part worked on for this purpose.” Spoonamore has run or held senior technology positions in six technology companies, and whose clients have included MasterCard, American Express, NBC-GE, and federal agencies including the State Department and the Navy.

- Various threats were repeatedly reported involving Michael Connell and other IT experts close to the GOP. Connell was being deposed by attorneys Bob Fitrakis and Cliff Arnebeck in federal proceedings related to the 2004 election. On July 24, 2008, Arnebeck emailed US Attorney General Michael Mukasey, stating: “We have been confidentially informed by a source we believe to be credible that Karl Rove has threatened Michael Connell, a principal witness we have identified in our *King-Lincoln* case in federal court in Columbus, Ohio....”
- On Monday, November 3, 2008, one day before national elections, under federal deposition questioning by attorneys Cliff Arnebeck and Bob Fitrakis, Michael Connell revealed that while under contract with the State of Ohio to tabulate the 2004 presidential vote count, he was working with SmartTech, the private contractor in charge of Karl Rove’s personal email server, as well as the GOP’s national website and the Bush-Cheney campaign’s website, and with Triad, which had fixed the official 2004 Ohio recount. Essentially this meant that the vote count that decided the 2004 presidential outcome was done in conjunction with a private Republican-sponsored IT firm linked to the Bush Family with no independent verification. Connell was informed that he would be called again to be deposed after further discovery. Connell remained the IT supervisor for six Congressional committees.
- On Friday, December 19, 2008, five weeks after being deposed, and after being informed he would be deposed again in federal court, Connell died at age 45 in a mysterious single-engine plane crash. An expert pilot, Connell was killed while flying his Piper Saratoga plane home to Akron, Ohio from College Park, Maryland, in unremarkable weather. Connell’s family has since raised questions about his death, questioning the official story that his crash was the result of pilot error. The FBI immediately commandeered the crash site from the FAA and cleaned up the scene overnight, rather than wait for

daylight. Connell's cell phone was officially never found. Connell's suspicious death marked a major set-back in the process of uncovering what really happened in Ohio 2004.

The Obama Era: The 2008 and 2012 Elections, and the Hollowing Out of the Democratic Party

Amidst the unresolved anomalies of the 2000 and 20004 elections, the lead-up to the 2008 contest between Barack Obama and John McCain prompted new attention to how the election would be conducted. Obama enjoyed the benefit of a massive grassroots upheaval. Throughout the US, millions of enthusiastic young voters swarmed to support the Democrat. They called potential voters, made sure they got to the polls, checked on voting procedures and did whatever necessary to prevent another stolen election.

Obama's margin of victory was large enough to prove immune to the stripping of voter rolls and the hacking of electronic voting machines.

But over the course of eight years, the Democratic Party definitively lost some 1,034 federal and state offices...including control of both Houses of Congress and a very substantial core of governorships, state legislatures and other elective offices throughout the US. A hugely funded campaign by the Koch Brothers and other corporatist billionaires successfully slashed the guts out of the Democratic Party at virtually all levels of government under the White House. Their victories were aided by the 2010 Citizens United decision allowing virtually unlimited corporate spending in American elections. And it was especially important in that same year as control of state-based gerrymandering was determined.

It's not entirely clear what role the stripping of voter rolls and the flipping of electronic vote counts played in this process.

But throughout the Obama Era, serious red flags continued to arise:

- On March 25, 2009, a new *Free Press* study revealed that more than a million Ohio voters were purged in the run-up to the 2008 election and that the Republican Party had wanted still another 800,000 voters purged.
- On September 3, 2009, the ES&S voting machine company purchased Premier Voting, formerly known as Diebold, giving ES&S control of an estimated 80% of the electronic voting market in the U.S.
- In November 2009, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner held an Election Summit summarizing the 2008 presidential election. Professor Ted Allen of Ohio State University, an expert in “waiting line analysis theory,” said that citizens using voting machines on average took two minutes longer than those voting on paper. He also pointed out that had Franklin County used the same number of voting machines in 2008 as it did in 2004, the wait would have been “30 hours.” Without early voting in Ohio, the voter wait in 2008 would have been, on average, 15 hours.
- In 2010, computer scientist J. Alex Halderman of the University of Michigan staged an open-to-the-public demonstration hack into an experimental Internet voting system created in DC for overseas voters, including military. With 24 hours Halderman and some grad students penetrated, took control of the system, and got it to play the U. of M. fight song as a signal that their process had been successfully “completed.”
- In August 2010, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner sued Diebold alleging that the company’s voting machines “dropped votes in at least 11 counties” in the 2008 presidential primary. Diebold settled the lawsuit by offering discounted voting machines to the counties in question.
- In September 2010, Bev Harris of Black Box Voting reported that an election audit of Shelby County, Tennessee found 3221 phantom votes from voters who were never signed in to vote.
- In October 2010, Black Box Voting reported that two former felons, embezzler Jeffrey Dean and narcotics trafficker John Elder, received a

contract from King County (Seattle) Washington to computerize the county's vote-by-mail program. At the time of the award, King County had approximately one million voters, with some 600,000 voting absentee.

- In Ohio's 2010 gubernatorial race, exit polls showed GOP challenger John Kasich as having lost to incumbent Democrat Ted Strickland. But Kasich had received a \$1,000,000.00 check from media baron Rupert Murdoch just before the election. The official vote count showed Kasich the winner.
- Also in Ohio 2010, the GOP challenger for Attorney General, former US Senator Mike DeWine, also lost in the exit polls but won in the official vote count against the current Attorney General, Richard Cordray.
- In March 2011, the Ohio Republican-dominated legislature passed HB 159, targeting 900,000 mostly Democratic and minority voters for disenfranchisement. The bill allowed the acceptance of only four types of picture ID to vote – a U.S. passport, a U.S. military ID, an Ohio driver's license, or an Ohio state ID – making it one of the most restrictive in the nation.
- On July 20, 2011, the *Free Press* obtained and published an election contract signed with GovTech, Michael Connell's private IT company that allowed the 2004 Ohio electronic vote count to be stolen, plus a graphic architectural map of the Secretary of State's election night server layout system linked to the IT site in Tennessee. Both documents were filed in the *King Lincoln Bronzeville v. Blackwell* case.
- Following the November 2011 election in Franklin County, Ohio, Board of Elections officials in Columbus admitted that "programming errors" had prevented "many precincts" from being able to print out their vote totals to display at polling sites. This was in violation of Ohio law, which requires all precinct results be posted for public display after the polls close on Election Day.

- On December 22, 2011, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) issued a formal investigative report on Election Systems & So ware (ES&S) DS200 Precinct County optical scanners. The EAC ruled that the ballot scanners made by ES&S electronic voting machine firm failed 10% of the time to read the votes correctly. The EAC found “three substantial anomalies”:
 - Intermittent screen freezes, system lock-ups and shutdowns that prevent the voting system from operating in the manner in which it was designed;
 - Failure to log all normal and abnormal voting system events;
 - Skewing of the ballot resulting in a negative effect on system accuracy.
- Obama’s popular vote should have been higher in 2008, according to mathematician Richard Charnin, and analysts Francois Choquette and James Johnson. They discovered a statistical anomaly that awards Republicans with a higher number of votes than expected based on pre-election polls and exit polls. In September 2012, Choquette and Johnson published a ground-breaking statistical report. Their analysis in *2008-2012 Election Anomalies, Results, Analysis and Concerns* showed how Romney inexplicably gained votes in larger precincts when running in primary elections and only when voters are counted by computers. This was true for Romney in the 2008 primary, the 2012 primaries, and general election.
- Dr. Beth Clarkson, a Wichita State statistician, found the same pattern as Choquette and Johnson in the 2012 Ohio presidential election, the 2014 Wisconsin gubernatorial election, and the Kansas Senate election that year. Clarkson sued her county board of elections commission when they refused to allow her to audit the county’s 2014 voting paper trial.
- On April 15, 2012, the *Free Press* obtained public records from all 88 Ohio county Boards of Elections (BOE) documenting that 1,092,392 voters were removed from the voting rolls since the previous presidential election in 2008. Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) led the Buckeye State with 267,071 purges.

Franklin County (Columbus) removed 93,578 voters. Franklin County went 58% for Obama in the 2008 election. Hamilton County (Cincinnati) removed 65,536 voters, for a total of 426,185 from these three heavily Democratic Ohio counties. Heavily Republican rural Ohio counties including Hancock, Huron, Sandusky, and Wood, reported no purges at all.

- On October 24, 2012, in the lead-up to the presidential election, the *Free Press* reported that through a closely held equity fund called Solamere, Mitt Romney and his wife, son and brother were major investors in an investment firm called H.I.G. Capital. H.I.G. in turn held a majority share (three out of the five board members) on Hart InterCivic, whose voting machines were being used in the 2012 election in heavily populated Hamilton County (Cincinnati). Hamilton County was expected to be key to the outcome of the presidential election in Ohio.
- On October 31, 2012, the *Free Press* learned that ES&S installed “experimental” software patches on voting machines in as many as 39 Ohio counties affecting 4,041,056 registered voters, including those in metropolitan Columbus and Cleveland (www.verifiedvoting.org), involving as much as 80% of the Ohio vote count. The contract called for ES&S technicians and county poll workers to “enter custom codes and interfaces” to the standard election reporting software just as was done with the controversial 2004 Ohio presidential election.
- On November 2, 2012, the *Free Press* obtained internal memos from the senior staff of the Ohio Secretary of State’s office confirming the installation of untested and uncertified election tabulation software in the apparatus counting the votes in the upcoming election.
- On November 5, 2012 the *Free Press* revealed invoices that proved Romney-related voting company Hart InterCivic did key maintenance on Cincinnati’s voting machines. Amy Searcy, Hamilton County Board of Elections director of elections, falsely told the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and the *Washington Post* that Hart InterCivic was not involved with operations or maintenance of their voting machines in Hamilton County. But her signature was on a quote from

Hart InterCivic for voting machine repair. One of the invoices from Hart InterCivic to Hamilton County was for \$134,125.00 worth of ballots; another was for \$15,386.40 worth of maintenance services.

- On the day before the 2011 election, *Free Press* Editor Bob Fitakis sued Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted over the “experimental” software patches placed on electronic voting machines in 44 Ohio counties and the Secretary of State’s office. Fitakis also challenged an unbid non-public contract granted to ES&S to install the experimental patches. Republican-appointed Federal Court Judge Frost denied a temporary restraining order on Election Day. Fitakis immediately went to Ohio’s Common Pleas Court to file the same suit before a sympathetic judge who allowed the case to remain open until the final election results were certified. Judge Serrott indicated that he would allow the case to go forward if there were “funny numbers” in the election.
- * In Wisconsin, a long, bitter war between right-wing Republican Governor Scott Walker and grassroots pro-union citizens took various forms of election theft and fraud. In one instance, Walker was defeated in a recall election only to have a GOP poll workers “miraculously” find enough votes on a laptop computer to save Walker’s seat. The Wisconsin GOP enacted photo ID demand and took a wide range of related steps to limit the vote as best it could, preserving Walker’s seat and the state for the GOP.
- On November 6, 2012, Obama was re-elected to the presidency. The grassroots army that came out for him in 2008 was much diminished. But his margins were still big enough to guarantee victory.
- Many of the problems that have plagued our modern elections still surfaced in 2012. In Ohio, the tabulation website run by the Secretary of State (Republican Jon Husted) went down at 11:13 pm. At 12:23am on Election Day morning, Forbes.com posted a lengthy report on America’s shaky electronic voting technology and how it might be used to tamper with votes in the United States’ foremost swing state.

- On election night, 2012, Karl Rove had his infamous meltdown on Fox News. As election results from Ohio were coming in showing Obama winning the state, Rove continually insisted that there would be a miraculous comeback by Romney. But, as the results proceeded to prove him wrong, he lost it on camera, becoming a viral online video the next day.
- On November 16, 2012, the *Free Press* published its account of the 2012 presidential election entitled, *Why Rove failed to deliver Ohio on Election Day: What happened in Ohio*. This time the Ohio Secretary of State's vote tabulation website went down at 11:13pm, as reported by *Free Press* election protection website monitors, and mentioned by Rove on the news. When the *Free Press* investigated Bush's implausible 2004 victory in Ohio, it was discovered that ES&S and Triad technicians had placed similar last-minute unauthorized patches on tabulators in various Ohio counties including Miami and Clermont.
- On January 31, 2013, Lou Dubose published an article in the *Washington Spectator* entitled, *Did an Election Day Lawsuit Stop Karl Rove's Vote-Rigging Scheme in Ohio?* He suggested that the last minute 2012 Election Day lawsuit regarding the experimental patches on vote tabulators in Ohio filed by Cliff Arnebeck, with co-author Bob Fitakis as the Plaintiff, helped prevent a stolen election for Romney in Ohio.
- In June 2013, the US Supreme Court "...effectively struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by a 5-to-4 vote, freeing nine states, mostly in the South, to change their election laws without advance federal approval," according to the *New York Times*.
- On October 22, 2013, federal prosecutors filed charges against Diebold, Inc. The company had bribed government officials and falsified documents to obtain business in China, Indonesia and Russia.
- In December 2013, the *Free Press* reported on a crucial document that shed light on Connell's mysterious death. As the anniversary of his tragic passing approached. The document revealed that then- Ohio Secretary of State J.

Kenneth Blackwell had signed a legal Statement of Work (SOW) contract fourteen months prior to the 2004 election with Connell's company GovTech. The contract stated that Connell would have "remote monitoring capabilities" to the computers counting the Ohio 2004 presidential vote that dubiously gave a second term to George W. Bush.

- On October 2, 2014, the *Free Press* published an article revealing how Ohio's Republican Secretary of State Jon Husted was poised to accumulate all real time voting data in the state without the media being able to see it simultaneously. The next day, Husted reversed the policy.
- On October 9, 2014, the *Free Press* published an article outlining how electronic poll books undermine security of elections and secrecy of the ballot by allowing voters names to be linked to their electronic vote and allowing remote access to the voter rolls.
- On November 7, 2014, the *Free Press* reported on the ability of a secretive election company, Scytl, to manipulate election results through its state-of-the-art software. Scytl counts the overseas vote in presidential elections and has been given access to central vote tabulators in a majority of states.
- Mathematician Richard Charnin demonstrated, with three different mathematical models, that it was likely that three gubernatorial elections were stolen in 2014: Maine, Michigan and Oregon. Serious questions have also been raised about that year's US Senate races in North Carolina, Alaska and Colorado, where dubious Republican victories gave the GOP definitive control of the Upper House.
- In March 2015, the Harvard Electoral Integrity Project reported that over fourteen hundred international election experts gathered data the year before and pronounced that the United States ranked 45th in election integrity among the world's long-standing democracies. The Project reported that on a 100-point scale, the U.S. received an integrity rating of 69.3% – one notch ahead of the narco-drug state Colombia at 69.1% and just behind the quasi-narco-drug state of Mexico at 69.8%.

- In 2015, one of the Princeton computer scientists who successfully hacked voting machines, Edward William Felten, was appointed Deputy U.S. Chief Technology Officer by President Obama.
- On November 3, 2015, Ohio's Issue 3 marijuana legalization issue went up in smoke. Pre-election tracking polls showed it winning by a margin of 65-35%. Instead it went down to defeat 65-35%, an outcome bordering on absurdity.
- The proposition was vehemently opposed by GOP Governor John Kasich (who has repeatedly admitted to smoking pot himself, and was widely reported to have sold it during the 1980 Reagan campaign), Secretary of State Jon Husted and numerous other top Republican officials.
- Screenshots from election night vote tallies on media websites showed the issue actually winning 65%-35% with 39% of the votes reporting, in line with pre-election tracking polls. But just moments later, with just 9% more of the vote coming in, it flipped to 65%-35% officially in opposition. Dr. Ron Baiman, professor and statistician called the outcome “a virtual statistical impossibility.”
- Major irregularities have called into question the 2015 race for governor of Kentucky. Matt Bevin, an extreme right-wing Tea Party fanatic, won in an unexpected landslide, with no meaningful recount. The new governor's first act was to reinstate laws disenfranchising tens of thousands of Kentucky citizens.

The Disaster of 2016

Part One: The Primaries

The election of 2016 was among the most bitterly contested in all US history, both throughout the primary season and into the general election.

It was everywhere marred by stripping and flipping. Its outcome was defined by a corporate Democratic Party elite that worked overtime to kill the grassroots

campaign of Bernie Sanders, and then by an Electoral College that—for the sixth time—put an unelected candidate into the White House. The vote in the EC flipped on the basis of five states with statistically significant variations between exit polls and the official outcome, all of them favoring Donald Trump.

The GOP primaries at one point hosted an unprecedented 17 candidates. Though the televised debates and the stump speeches were often intensely personal and uniquely abusive, there's no indication there was significant theft in the conduct of the Republican primaries. Without exception the official outcome for all of them was within the margin of error of the exit polls.

The Democratic primaries were a very different story. Initially a three-way race, they quickly narrowed to a serious fight between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Clinton was the anointed candidate of the party establishment. As a former First Lady, US Senator and Secretary of State, her establishment credentials could hardly have been more rock solid.

Sanders was an Independent US Senator from Vermont who caucused with the Democrats on the Hill. Essentially a 1960s New Leftist, at age 74 he called himself a Socialist. But his anti-imperial core beliefs were in line with New Deal social democracy. He may have begun his campaign initially as a protest against the corporate control of the Democratic Party. But the massive, wildly enthusiastic crowds that came out to hear him speak, and to work for him and the reforms he promised, exposed an explosive grassroots demand for real change, especially among young millennials. The party establishment cynically limited the number of debates between the candidates. But Sanders quickly emerged as the likelier public choice to actually take the nomination. His crowds dwarfed Clinton's in both size and enthusiasm. In the face of Hillary's personal and party millions, Sanders raised a massive campaign chest based on donations that averaged \$27 each. Polls showed him doing far better against Donald Trump than Clinton would.

The Sanders campaign represented to the corporate owners of both major parties the terrifying rebirth of yet another grassroots multi-racial, multi-class uprising. Building on the foundations of Bacon's Rebellion and our anti-imperial, Abolitionist, Populist, Socialist, Civil Rights, New Left, feminist, LGBTQ and

other social rebellions, plus the more recent Occupy, Black Lives Matters and other 21st century uprisings, Sanders embodied for millions the promise of a successful class-based revolution.

The millions who voted for Sanders and who packed his rallies with wild enthusiasm represented the first explicitly socialist campaign since those of Eugene Debs, who was imprisoned by the Democrat Woodrow Wilson to suppress his demands for peace and socialist justice.

Indeed, Bernie may well have been the legitimate Democratic nominee. In primary after primary, Sanders won the majority of votes cast on hand-counted paper ballots, but lost where machines were used. This became especially noteworthy in Massachusetts, where there was a 7-point disparity between the exit polls, which he won, and the official outcome, which went for Clinton. A Sanders victory there might have turned the momentum of the campaign.

Angry disputes also erupted in caucus states, where sloppy, confusing procedures repeatedly threw the real outcomes into doubt. The campaigns proceeded amidst raucous, inflammatory disputes between the party regulars and the Sanders upstarts.

Clinton eventually won a majority of the officially counted primary ballots. But in 28 Democratic primary states there were significant differences between exit polls and the official outcome. In 24 of them, the discrepancies favored Clinton, a virtual statistical impossibility.

The Clinton campaign also engaged in massive disenfranchisement, especially in New York State. In Brooklyn, where Sanders was born and raised, more than 125,000 Democratic voters were denied ballots. In California, deliberately confusing and contradictory party registration requirements prevented hundreds of thousands of independents or sometime Democrats from voting for Sanders, a stripping of voter rolls that had a major impact (see appendix).

As in Ohio 2004, Democratic primaries in Arizona and elsewhere were marred by voting machine shortages, elimination of precincts and long lines, resulting in mass disenfranchisement. In Latino areas of Phoenix, voters stood in line for five hours

and more. The *New York Times* estimated as many as 300,000 voters were disenfranchised in Wisconsin.

Election Justice USA's report entitled "Democracy Lost: A Report on the Fatally Flawed 2016 Democratic Primaries" cited six major areas of election irregularities in 2016's 26 primary elections, including: targeted voter suppression, registration tampering, illegal voter purges, exit poll discrepancies, voting machine tampering and lack of security. The 96-page *Election Justice* report said Clinton benefitted from these "various types of fraud," arguing 184 delegates were wrongly taken from Sanders, enough to have given him the nomination.

Clinton also pushed ahead with the votes of "super delegates" meant to serve the party establishment. These unelected party functionaries formed a corporate "firewall" reminiscent of what the slaveowners had in mind when they established the Electoral College. Though the calculations were complex, they seemed to guarantee that Clinton would be the nominee, no matter what the grassroots wanted....and no matter how that would affect the outcome in November.

On the eve of the Convention, hacked emails from the Democratic Party server made it clear that the official party apparatus, which is supposed to be neutral during a primary season, was in fact working for Clinton. Party chair Deborah Schultz was forced to resign.

The hacking may have been done by Russian government agents working to help Trump. If so, that was a profoundly unprecedeted and illegal breach of American electoral law.

But what it showed deeply alienated Sanders's grassroots constituency, which strongly opposed Clinton's corporate agenda.

During the convention in Philadelphia the party establishment did much to alienate Sanders's grassroots constituency. Many reported shabby treatment on the floor and in the environs around the hall.

Most importantly, Clinton chose not to nominate Sanders for Vice President. Instead she took the non-descript, uncharismatic, corporate conservative Tim Kaine of Virginia.

Political observers will debate for decades whether a Jewish 74-year-old self-described socialist could actually have beaten Donald Trump for the presidency. But there's no doubt he revived the Democratic Party's activist wing, with the critical grassroots energy and commitment that had guaranteed Barack Obama his large margins of victory. The party's young multi-racial social justice campaigners had insulated Obama against the kinds of registration stripping and vote flipping that had defined Florida 2000 and Ohio 2004. The corporate Democrats did pretty much all in their power to drive them away.

Without those young activists and their grassroots energy, the drab, uncharismatic, genetically corporate Clinton drew sparse crowds and scant enthusiasm. The unpopularity of NAFTA, the repeal of Glass-Steagel, the escalated Drug War, "three strikes and you're out," Monica Lewinsky, Hillary's reference to "super predators" and much else from her husband's presidency and her own personal history dogged the Democrats throughout.

In a year saturated with working class anger, Hillary's corporate stump style and general demeanor had the aura of royalty awaiting a coronation. She became perhaps the first Democrat in modern history to fail to campaign in Wisconsin. She referred to an undisclosed multi-million portion of the American electorate as "deplorables."

Nonetheless, despite all that, she won a clear victory in the popular vote count. With a 2,800,000 plurality, she racked up a bigger winning margin both numerically and by percentage than John Kennedy in 1960, Richard Nixon in 1968 or Al Gore in 2000. She also won the exit polls in the critical swing states of Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, which should have guaranteed her an easy victory in the Electoral College.

But with no grassroots army to fight it out in the registration rolls, at the polling booths and in the vote count, Hillary Clinton went down to strip and flip defeat. And then, like Al Gore and John Kerry, she disappeared.

Part Two: The General Election

The single constant in the 2016 presidential election was the persistent, well-coordinated and ultimately successful campaign by the Republican Party to strip from the voter rolls as many black, Hispanic, Asian-American, Muslim and non-millionaires as possible.

In June, 2013, by a 5-4 vote, the US Supreme Court gutted key portions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, removing many of the protections citizens of color had required to be able to vote. The decision set the stage for the massive disenfranchisements of 2016.

The crusade was led by Kris Kobach, right-wing Koch-funded Attorney General of Kansas. As shown in Greg Palast's *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*, Kobach used the computer program Crosscheck to disenfranchise as many Democrats as possible. As with the use of ChoicePoint in Florida 2000, the challenge was to strip the registration rolls of voters who might deprive the GOP of victory.

With Kobach's guidance, Crosscheck was circulated to some 30 GOP secretaries of state around the US. It was used to eliminate countless thousands of voters, with possibly definitive impact in the key swing states that turned the Electoral College.

In concert with Crosscheck, the GOP waged a multi-year assault on the right of certain people to vote. A prime campaign centered on requiring photo ID. For millions of American citizens, a driver's license or any other form of photo ID is unnecessary. Procuring one can be expensive, time-consuming and in some cases actually impossible.

The requirement thus became a form of a poll tax, used by southern racists for decades to prevent black people from voting. As part of the civil rights movement, the poll tax was eliminated in 1964 with the 24th Amendment to the Constitution.

But in Indiana, Georgia and elsewhere, the Republicans have persisted. In Texas, ruling Republicans allowed the use of gun licenses but not student IDs.

Many of the laws were thrown out in court. But some have persisted with powerful disenfranchising impacts. To them GOP secretaries of state in Ohio and elsewhere have eliminated voting stations, selectively short-changed precincts on voting machines, denied paper and absentee ballots, shortened days on which to vote and much more.

In short, the GOP's 2016 Jim Crow campaign successfully eliminated hundreds of thousands of voters, if not millions. Though Clinton still won by 2.8 million ballots, her real margin of victory would certainly have been far higher had all eligible Americans been encouraged rather than assaulted in their attempts to vote.

Through the campaign the Democrats were warned that electronic voting machines might also make the outcome moot. In major swing states nearly all votes are still cast and counted on easily hackable computers whose source code is proprietary, and whose outcome can be easily manipulated by governors and secretaries of state. As in Florida 2000 and Ohio 2004, the Democrats faced a profound vulnerability they were unwilling to confront.

For some time, Bernie Sanders advocated the use of universal hand-counted paper ballots. Clinton did not. US Sen. Elizabeth Warren has since advocated for a national holiday for voting.

On Election Day, Clinton won the exit polls in more than enough states to guarantee her a clear victory in the Electoral College. Most critical were Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

In Michigan, which allegedly went to Trump by some 10,000 votes, more than 75,000 ballots were registered as coming in without a presidential preference. This would have meant that all those Michigan voters had taken the effort to come to the polls and cast a ballot but somehow refrained from choosing any of the four or more presidential candidates that appeared on their ballots. The undervotes were reported in primarily Democratic areas of southeastern Michigan.

However, in all five states, Donald Trump was awarded an official vote count victory, making him the sixth US president to enter the White House after losing the popular vote.

The odds of a "red shift" from Clinton to Trump in all five key swing states deriving from something other than a manipulation of the vote count are vanishingly small.

Despite the long history of electronic election theft in the modern United States, Hillary Clinton did not request a recount in any of the five key swing states, or anywhere else in the United States. She did not contest Trump's victory and virtually disappeared from public view the day after the election.

Green Party candidate Jill Stein, however, did announce her intent to contest the results. With no money to speak of, she launched a web-based fundraising campaign that soon netted an astounding \$7 million based on small donations reminiscent of the Bernie campaign.

Focused primarily on Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania, Stein encountered ferocious opposition, including physical intimidation from well-dressed Trump supporters reminiscent of the "Brooks Brothers Riot" that ended the recount in Florida 2000. For a full report on the Stein attempt to conduct recounts, see the Appendix.

In the wake of his Electoral College victory but popular vote defeat, Trump launched a twitter storm falsely claiming that some 3 million illegal immigrants had entered the United States to vote for Hillary Clinton.

Trump has presented no evidence to support the assertion. Most major media have repeatedly labeled it "a lie" and "a falsehood." But Trump has persisted.

Trump's assertion has been welcomed in GOP circles where it will be used in coming years to further restrict the ability of non-millionaires and people of color to vote.

In US Senate races in 2016, Democrats also won exit polls in Wisconsin, Missouri and Pennsylvania, but lost the official vote count and thus the Senate seat. Six such

races went from Democrat to Republican in 2014 and 2016, giving the GOP overwhelming control of the Senate and thus the US Supreme Court. No losing Democratic candidate ever acted seriously to challenge how the vote count was done.

A Post-Democracy America?

As we proceed into the Trump Era, the Republican Party has an iron grip on America's electoral process. There is little or nothing democratic about them.

With the Voting Rights Act gutted, the ability of the GOP to strip millions of non-millionaire Americans of color is essentially unlimited. The party has escalated its use of Trump's Big Lie assertions about alleged millions of illegal voters to prosecute its on-going Jim Crow war against non-millionaire voters of diverse color and ethnicity.

With 80% of the votes cast on computer screens or on Scantron ballots counted on readers with proprietary source code and no public accountability, the ability to manipulate vote counts is also essentially unlimited.

Those hoping for a reversal of fortune, and a shift from right-wing Republican rule back to a nation run by liberal Democrats are simply kidding themselves.

Similar roadblocks have been implanted by the corporate Democratic Party hierarchy to prevent another grassroots multi-racial socialistic campaigner like Bernie Sanders from winning the nomination.

In short, only one thing can bring democracy back to America: a massive unstoppable nonviolent grassroots rebellion willing to take to the streets in massive demonstrations, strikes and boycotts.

To win in this country a system of conducting elections that is truly democratic will take a level of grassroots activism and organizing never seen here before.

To enjoy a democracy in which the public actually runs the government, we need:

- Universal automatic voter registration;
- Voter rolls maintained by hand with universal access so all citizens can confirm their status;
- A four-day national holiday for voting;
- Universal hand-counted paper ballots;
- Special machines available for those with special needs;
- An end to gerrymandering;
- An end to the Electoral College;
- A ban on corporate money in election campaigns.

Can it happen? The alternative is not sustainable.

This is a life or death situation. We choose life.

APPENDIX 2016 Election

Is the 2016 election already being stripped & flipped?

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman

MARCH 31, 2016

Disturbing signs of the time-tested “Strip and Flip” strategy for stealing elections have already surfaced in 2016. Will they ultimately decide the outcome, as they have in too many recent elections?

The core approach is to STRIP citizens of their voting rights, then FLIP the electronic vote count if that's not enough to guarantee a win for the corporate 1%.

Historically, “stripping” has been based on race. It’s rooted in the divide-and-conquer strategies of slavery and Jim Crow segregation. Today it centers on racist demands for photo ID and other scams designed to prevent blacks, Hispanics, the young and the poor from voting.

“Flipping” is related to electronic voting machines, on which the vast majority of Americans will vote this fall. Nearly all these machines were bought with money from the 2002 Help America Vote Act, which came after the theft of the 2000 presidential election. Virtually all these machines are 10 years old or more, and can easily be hacked. Swing states Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Michigan, Iowa and Arizona, among others, have GOP governors and, except for Florida, secretaries of state who can easily flip the vote count once they are cast, without accountability or detection. Also, private partisan voting machine companies have unlimited access to the electronic poll books, voting machines and central tabulators.

Those who dismiss such warnings as “conspiracy theory” might confront this simple question: “How will the electronic vote count in the 2016 election be verified?”

The answer is simple: “It can’t be.” The vote count in 2016 for the offices of President, US Congress, governorships, state legislatures, county commissioners, dog catchers and thousands of others will come through electronic black boxes. The veracity of the outcomes will vary from state to state based on the whims and interests of those in charge of the electronic tallies.

In the meantime, we have already seen deeply disturbing signs of the “strip and flip” scam in the 2016 primaries. All, of course, have been to the detriment of the Bernie Sanders campaign:

- Despite the claim that Hillary Clinton, “won” the Iowa and Nevada caucuses, there’s clear evidence Bernie was the rightful winner in both states. In Iowa

Clinton's "victory" apparently turned on six coin tosses, all of which she allegedly won.

- There's clear evidence that Bernie actually won the Massachusetts primary, which the corporate media and official vote count gave to Hillary. Analyst Richard Charnin has examined pre-election polls and post-election exit polls, both showing Bernie substantially ahead of Clinton prior to the voting. In a phenomenon we have seen elsewhere (most notably as George W. Bush "beat" John Kerry in New Mexico 2004), Bernie won all the precincts with hand-counted paper ballots but lost all the ones with electronic voting machines. Exit polls significantly "outside the statistical margin of error" are the international gold standard for determining election fraud. If the U.S. held the same standards as the European Union, the Clinton campaign would be investigated for election fraud not only in the Massachusetts primary but also in Missouri, Illinois and Ohio primaries.
- In Arizona we saw a re-run of Ohio 2004, where left-leaning Democratic urban areas were stripped of precincts and short-changed on voting machines and back-up paper ballots, resulting in long lines and thousands of citizens being deprived of their vote. African-Americans in Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Dayton and Cincinnati waited up to seven hours and more to vote in 2004, causing mass disenfranchisement that helped give Bush Ohio and a second term in the White House. In Arizona this year, thousands of citizens were also robbed of their vote due to the elimination of precincts, machine shortages and the failure to provide back-up paper ballots. Many were handed provisional ballots which regularly are discarded and never counted. It is quite likely that with reasonable access to voting, Bernie would have won the Arizona primary.

A wide range of irregularities in other states have also dogged this primary season. They could well be the determining factor in who gets the nomination in both major parties.

A recent study by Harvard and the University of Sydney, Australia found that the United States had the “worst elections of any long-established democracy.” The U.S. ranked 47th out of the 47 long-term democratic nations.

Something serious must be done. Without radical action, these carefully engineered precinct eliminations, ballot and machine shortages, mass disenfranchisements and too much more will not only determine who wins the presidency this fall, but also who controls the Congress, numerous governorships and state legislatures and the whole gamut of elective offices around the country.

In the long run, only universal automatic voter registration, a four-day national holiday for voting, universal hand-counted paper ballots and other reforms will guarantee us a fair and reliable vote count. Posted at www.freepress.org, we call it the “Ohio Plan.”

Is Hillary Stealing the Nomination? Will Bernie Birth a Long-Term Movement?

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman
APRIL 29, 2016

At this delicate moment in the primary season, we all need to take a deep breath and evaluate what comes next.

Bernie Sanders has a mathematical chance to win. But Hillary seems the likely Democratic nominee.

Donald Trump has an army of delegates. But if he doesn’t win on the first ballot, Paul Ryan could be the Republican nominee.

Oy!

For a wide variety of reasons, we believe Hillary and Bernie could beat Trump. But we’re not sure about Ryan, who we find absolutely terrifying.

Key is the stripping of our voter rolls. Millions of Democrats have already been disenfranchised. In a close race, that could make the difference.

Also key is the flipping of the electronic vote count, which few on the left seem to be willing to face in all its depressing finality.

As Greens, we believe this election's most critical imperative is that Bernie convert the HUGE upwelling of mostly young grassroots discontent he has ignited into a long-term multi-issue movement. His success won't be measured by whether he wins the nomination or presidency. Miles Mogulescu has written nicely about this at The Huffington Post.

It matters most that those he's energized emerge after November full of commitment and heart. We've seen too many electoral campaigns feed into a general "disillusionment" when they don't win the vote count. We've seen too many youthful uprisings too quickly dissipate.

As geezer vets of the civil rights, anti-war, No Nukes, social justice, election protection and other campaigns, we desperately want all these brilliant folks of all ages to take on the issues nearest to their hearts with renewed ferocity in the coming months, years, decades.

Having awakened this glorious beast, we need Professor Sanders to teach this class of '16 the ultimate lessons in staying power (of which he is such a sterling example).

So whatever happens with the nomination, we respectfully request that Bernie soon organize a broad series of grassroots gatherings where those who have worked so hard for him will get the best possible training and inspiration toward becoming lifelong activists who'll make a tangible difference in the day-to-day business of saving this planet.

We all know that some meaningful changes can be made by putting better people in office. But in the long run it's the nitty-gritty grind of facing down the corporations issue by issue, place by place, nuke by nuke, that will save us.

Along the way there's the collapse of our electoral system. From Jimmy Carter to Harvard to the UN and so many others who've studied it, it's patently obvious the mechanisms by which we conduct elections in this country are ridiculously decrepit and corrupt.

As a partial solution, we've concocted the "Ohio Plan," which demands: universal automatic voter registration at age 18; a four-day national holiday for voting; voter ID based on a signature that matches the registration form with stiff felony penalties for cheating; universal hand-counted paper ballots.

We also want money out of politics, public-funded campaigns, an end to gerrymandering, and abolition of the Electoral College.

In 2016, the first thing to face is the massive disenfranchisement of millions of voters, mostly citizens of color and youth. We are heartened to see Bernie and Hillary joined together in an Arizona lawsuit.

But the long lines and urban registration stripping that we saw in Phoenix, Madison, and elsewhere this spring will spell doom for the Democrats if they cannot guarantee their constituencies' the right to vote in November.

At this point, we're not optimistic. The efforts at re-enfranchisement are little and late. Among those doing superb work on this stripping of our voter rolls are the great Greg Palast (www.gregpalast.com), Ari Berman of *The Nation*, and others.

But the electronic flipping of the alleged vote count remains a demon black box. The 2000 election was turned from Gore to Bush by electronic manipulations in Volusia County, Florida. The 2004 election was turned from Kerry to Bush in a Chattanooga basement which transformed a 4.2% Democratic lead into a 2.5% GOP victory in 90 dark minutes.

All that could happen again in 2016.

Over the years we've respected the work of *The Nation*'s Josh Holland, whose expressed concern about our reporting on indications of irregularities that seem to favor Hillary over Bernie.

But our stated conclusions on them remain far from conclusive. If we thought we had definitive evidence that the Clinton campaign was stealing the nomination from the Sanders campaign, we'd say so in direct, explicit and unmistakable phrases.

Simply put: we do NOT at this point believe they rise to the level of provable theft, as we are certain was the case in 2000 and 2004.

We understand concerns and welcome the dialogue. But we'd like to avoid the usual circular firing squad.

Writing in *The Nation*, Josh has deemed it important to mention disagreements with our former collaborator Steve Rosenfeld, and our good friend Mark Hertsgaard.

Mark's writing on global warming has been legend. In 2004 he criticized some of our reporting on the Ohio vote count. We disagreed with him then and still do. Nothing in the past 12 years of our research and writing while based in central Ohio has surfaced that would make us change our reporting on how the 2004 election was stolen. Quite the opposite.

But other comments on the nature of electronic election theft throw up a HUGE red flag. And here we worry about a dangerous gap in the work from The Nation and the left as a whole.

If international election standards were applied to the 2016 primaries, eight states – Georgia, Massachusetts, Alabama, Texas, Mississippi, Ohio, New York, Tennessee – would be investigated for suspected fraudulent election results, because the actual

vote deviates so greatly from the exit polls. Also, the exit polls indicated that Sanders won in Illinois, Massachusetts and Missouri.

The bottom line is this: there is no viable method for monitoring or verifying the electronic vote count in 2016. In a close race, which we expect this fall, the outcome could be flipped in key swing states where GOP governors and secretaries of state are running the elections. This includes most notably Ohio, Michigan, Iowa and Arizona, plus North Carolina and Florida (where the situations are slightly different).

Steve has called this “a stretch.” He and Josh seem to dismiss the assertion that an election can be electronically stolen as “conspiracy theory,” apparently based on the idea that such thefts would become obvious fodder for an infuriated media and public outrage.

Under our current system there is no way to counter-indicate a stolen electronic vote count except by exit polling, for which Josh has expressed contempt. Exit polls in other countries (especially Germany) are highly reliable; here the raw data is too, but can be hard to get. And it’s now standard procedure to have the public numbers “adjusted” to fit official vote counts, fraudulent or otherwise.

And even raw data exit polls have no legal standing. Nor, apparently, does the court system itself.

After the 2004 election, we won a ruling in the King Lincoln Bronzeville v. Blackwell federal lawsuit. Bob was lead attorney, Harvey a plaintiff. Judge Algernon Marbley ordered Ohio’s 88 county election boards to deliver the ballots to the Ohio Secretary of State’s office in Columbus so they would be open and available as public records. But 56 of those 88 counties failed to produce the requested records. Some boards of elections “accidentally” destroyed all of the requested ballots. No one was prosecuted.

Admitted into evidence in the lawsuit was the Ohio secretary of state's architectural map of the computer network used to count Ohio's votes. It is included here so everyone can take a look.

The votes were counted by private contractors in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The three main companies involved were all heavily linked to the Right to Life movement in Ohio. The *Free Press* also uncovered the contract where these companies arranged with the Secretary of State's office a year prior to the 2004 election to move the Ohio vote count to Tennessee should Ohio's supercomputers fail on Election Day, which would happen for the first time in known history. Cyber-security expert Stephen Spoonamore told the *Free Press* that the computer configuration was set up to allow a "man in the middle attack" to alter Ohio's votes.

The late night shift in the 2004 electronic vote count in 10 decisive swing states was by all accounts a "virtual statistical impossibility," with the odds against that happening in the millions. But now we are being told the idea that this could indicate a stolen election is "conspiracy theory."

PLEASE!!! If someone – anyone! – can demonstrate EXACTLY how the electronic vote count will be monitored, verified and made clear to the media in 2016, and then guarantee that the public and the courts will react with enforceable fury, we will be eternally grateful.

We hope in the meantime *The Nation* will add to Ari Berman's fine reporting on the stripping of voter eligibilities an in-depth investigation into the "other shoe" of election theft – the flipping of the electronic vote count.

Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Ga.) raised the "Diebold question" at a Congressional Black Caucus hearing on April 21, 2016. Johnson noted how easy it would be to hack the old voting machines, many that are over 20 years old, and vowed to introduce legislation that would make voting secure.

Finally, we are often asked how, if the 2000 and 2004 elections were stolen, Obama won in 2008 and 2012. We did, after all, write in 2004 that the 2008 election was being rigged.

The answer is simple: it was. But Obama won by far too many votes to have that election credibly stolen. And his campaign was not in denial.

We are happy to hear from Steve that our reporting on Ohio 2004 might have enhanced Obama's scrutiny on the 2008 vote count.

But it should be made clear that Obama's victory could easily have been flipped had the vote count been closer and had fewer states been so definitively won. We believe he actually won by more than 10 million votes in both 2008 and 2012, but was officially credited with far less.

Where, exactly, is the line beyond which an election can't be stolen? Do the Democrats need to win by 5%... 10%... to get an official victory? And what then happens to the down-ballot races?

We prefer not to see those limits tested again.

And we need to have people prepared to take tangible action. In 2012 Bob Fitrakis filed a successful Election Day lawsuit preventing illegal computer patches being rigged into Ohio's electronic machines. In a closer race, those patches might have made the difference. We believe the expectation that they would work did cause Karl Rove to do his legendary flipped-out double-take on Fox News as he was told Mitt Romney had lost Ohio.

We also reported (as did *The Nation*) that voting machines in key Cincinnati precincts were financially linked to the Romney family. We each wrote separate articles about that and were each blacklisted by Daily Kos for doing so, even though the vast bulk of Harvey's 150+ previous blogs on that site were about nuclear power and renewable energy.

Some publications that aren't progressive understand the problem. Twenty-three minutes into the 2012 Election Day, *Forbes* took the *Free Press* reporting seriously, and warned voters of the dangers of private, for-profit companies owning and maintaining voting machines.

Over the years we've been repeatedly told that we should stop reporting on electronic election theft because it might discourage voter turnout. And that the key to a Democratic victory in 2016 will be another massive vote count victory that will be "too big to steal."

Frankly, we don't see that happening this year.

And we find such talk deeply disturbing. We have no doubt that innumerable US House and Senate races have been stolen over the years, along with governorships, control of state legislatures, referenda and more, all of it producing a deep reinforcement of the corporate control of our government.

We're also reasonably certain that neither Hillary nor Bernie is likely to amass in November a margin of victory over either Ryan or Trump that would be big enough to negate the possibility of massive disenfranchisement and electronic vote flipping in key states like Ohio, Michigan, Iowa or Arizona.

And anyway ... why the hell are we even thinking about leaving such a problem unsolved?

This disease needs a definitive cure.

We look forward to further reasoned and reasonable dialogue. We invite Josh and Ari to join us on our panel at the upcoming Left Forum in New York in May. We welcome a public discussion with Steve and Mark in California.

Above all, we hope to see those millions of Bernie supporters joining us at the reactor sites, the banks, the women's health centers, the shelters, the schools and so

many other critical hot spots in our corporate-plagued society, no matter who wins (or how) in November.

She Won! Abolish the Electoral College

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman
NOVEMBER 10, 2016

For the sixth time in our history, a candidate for President of the United States may have won the popular vote and lost the White House.

This must end.

While the nation—and much of the world—shudders at the thought of a Donald Trump presidency, our electoral system has once again failed to deliver a formal victory to the person who got the most votes.

Hillary Clinton appears to have won the nationwide popular vote. As of about 1 PM eastern time, the tally was roughly 58,909,774 votes (47.6%) for Clinton, versus 58,864,233 votes (47.5%) for Trump. (The exact numbers will change as the vote count continues.)

But Donald Trump's Electoral College tally has exceeded the 270 Electoral College votes needed to take the White House.

There is much more to tell about this. This year's vote has once again been stripped and flipped by GOP Jim Crow segregationist tactics that disenfranchised millions of primarily African-American and Hispanic citizens.

But if the current vote tallies continue roughly the way they are, Donald Trump will join Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, Rutherford B. Hayes, Benjamin Harrison, and George W. Bush as presidents who lost the popular vote but still took the nation's highest office, in every case with huge impacts.

The Electoral College was established at the 1787 Constitutional Convention to prevent the public from voting directly on our national leader. Ostensibly, it was meant in part to protect small states from being bullied by bigger ones.

It also installed a “three-fifth bonus” that gave plantation owners a 60 percent headcount for their slaves. The ruse was counted into Congressional districting, giving the south a distinct advantage over the northern free states. That’s why every President from Jefferson to Lincoln either owned slaves or had a vice president who did.

In 1800, Jefferson beat the incumbent John Adams in an Electoral College swung by “bonus votes” that came from slaves who could not actually cast them. In 1824, John Quincy Adams made a deal with Kentucky slaveowner Henry Clay to steal the presidency from Andrew Jackson, who had beaten Adams by about 50,000 popular votes.

In 1876, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes lost to Democrat Samuel Tilden by about 250,000 votes. But the GOP used federal troops in the south to shift enough Electoral College votes to create a deadlock. Hayes then became president by agreeing to remove those troops and end Reconstruction, a catastrophe for southern blacks and a triumph for the Jim Crow segregation that has defined our national politics ever since.

In 1888, Republican Benjamin Harrison lost the popular vote to incumbent Democrat Grover Cleveland but became president anyway. Cleveland won back the White House in 1892.

In 2000, Democrat Al Gore beat Republican George W. Bush by a nationwide tally of about 500,000 votes. Gore was also ultimately shown to have won the popular vote in Florida. But Bush’s brother Jeb, then governor of Florida, used a computerized system to remove voters from the rolls, to steal Florida’s electoral votes and put George in the White House.

Much the same was done in Ohio 2004 to defeat John Kerry. Bush ultimately was credited with a victory in the nationwide popular vote.

This year, Donald Trump's Electoral College victory will change history in unimaginable ways. But nationwide it appears he did not win the popular vote. Hillary Clinton did.

There is much more to this story. But one thing is clear: There is no useful function for the Electoral College, a vile 230-year-old holdover from the bad old days of the southern slaveocracy. It poisons our electoral process.

It will require a Constitutional Amendment to get rid of it. But if we are to have anything that resembles a democracy, the Electoral College must be abolished.

The Real Story of the Recount

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman

JANUARY 4, 2017

Jill Stein's multi-state presidential recount was unprecedented. The idea originated from a group of computer scientists represented by attorney John Bonifaz, who after analyzing the U.S. computerized voting system found it to be vulnerable to hacking and manipulation. Social scientists and statisticians deemed some of the 2016 election results to be improbable. Election integrity volunteers and attorneys stepped up to help sort it out.

Jill Stein, Green Party presidential candidate, agreed to ask for recounts in three states: Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. The donation page went online the afternoon before Thanksgiving. The recount was quickly financed in a few weeks by 150,000 small donors at the grassroots level across the political spectrum.

But if you were watching Fox News or reading Facebook during the recount you would think Stein, with a suspicious and nefarious agenda, was at best working

undercover for the Clinton campaign or at worst, involved in a political payola campaign scam to enrich herself.

In reality, she was using the U.S. State Department and U.S. Agency on International Development (USAID) standards of election integrity that every democratic country on the planet is held to – except the United States.

That standard is simple: If there is a significant mismatch between exit poll numbers and official vote totals, it is assumed something is amiss. In the case of this November's presidential election, 13 states had exit poll-vote total mismatches that raised red flags with discrepancies that were far outside the margin of error. Twelve went for Trump and one for Clinton.

In the Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Florida exit polls, Clinton was ahead but Trump won the official vote count. In fact, in 24 out of 28 states there was a shift to Trump. This wouldn't happen except once in every 52,440 presidential elections. Statisticians predict that this should be more evenly divided between the two candidates. All three states chosen for the recount admitted errors in their official vote counts, all in Trump's favor.

Stein raised \$7.3 million for the recount, all funds being segregated in a special bank account overseen by the Federal Elections Commission to be spent only on the recount. Her costs are estimated to be \$7.4 million.

Bonifaz and the computer scientist group also approached Clinton to challenge the suspicious election results, but she declined to act.

Trump campaign super PACs and state officials did everything they could to block an actual valid recount. Bruce Dixon, writing for *Black Agenda Report*, summed it up best: "U.S. elections are intentionally and fundamentally broken and rigged, recount-proof and audit-proof; . . . state and federal courts are willing to issue patently absurd rulings from the bench to keep it that way."

On Wisconsin

Why recount Wisconsin? Exit poll numbers showed Hillary Clinton with 48.2 percent to Donald Trump's 44.3 percent in Wisconsin. These numbers did not match the vote totals: Trump - 47.9, Clinton - 46.9. Given the difference between the exit poll numbers of 44.3 and Trump receiving 47.8 percent of the vote, the likelihood of this occurring is only once in every 614 elections.

Wisconsin's governor is the controversial Republican Scott Walker. Former Trump campaign consultant Roger Stone stated, "As someone with great sentimental attachment to the Republican Party, as I joined as the party of Goldwater, both parties have engaged in voting machine manipulation. Nowhere in the country has this been more true than Wisconsin, where there are strong indications that Scott Walker and the Reince Priebus machine rigged as many as five elections including the defeat of a Walker recall election. Mathematician and voting statistic expert Richard Charnin has produced a compelling study by comparing polling to actual results and exit polls to make a compelling case for voting machine manipulation in the Badger state."

Wisconsin voting conditions: Wisconsin voted approximately five percent on paper ballots, 10 percent on Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) computer voting machines, and 85 percent on paper Scantron ballots.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) administers all of the state's elections. Wisconsin is one of the few states to have same-day voter registration. Under Wisconsin law, voting machine vendors are required to put their secret source code used to program their machines and tabulators into escrow. There is no evidence this was done, dating back to 2005.

Chief WEC administrator Michael Haas offered shocking testimony confirming that some of Wisconsin's voting machines can connect to the internet: "Some of the newer equipment does have modems that operate using wireless internet. And so after the polls close, then when those unofficial results are transmitted, in some cases, they could be transmitted. The instantaneous transaction would be conducted over the internet."

Election integrity activist John Brakey who was on the ground in Wisconsin confirmed the use of modems and SIM cards in ES&S Optiscan voting machines. ES&S never tried to hide this and included it in their marketing materials for the DS200 model. .

Stein's attorneys also found that "Wisconsin has no rules requiring private vendors to protect their computers from cyberattacks." Also, "No national cybersecurity standards for these computers exist," they wrote in a letter to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch.

Shockingly, Haas admitted that USB drives from private vendors who are contracted to run the elections are allowed to be "inserted into the voting machine before the election." This makes the voting machines easily vulnerable to malware attacks.

What happened in the recount: The Stein campaign was forced to pay \$3.5 million to conduct the recount. Wisconsin "recounted" the vote in all 72 counties. Approximately 51 percent of the state's vote was counted by hand, but 49 percent were counted by running the ballots through the same machines that may have miscounted them on election night. In Milwaukee County, Wisconsin's largest and most racially and ethnically diverse county, there was no hand count.

Election observers watched the hand recount and had the opportunity to object if they saw any irregularities, but where there was no hand count, they simply observed ballots running through machines.

The Stein campaign sued the WEC to force a hand recount. Dane County Circuit Judge Valerie Bailey-Rihn found that there was no clear and convincing evidence of fraud, hence she interpreted the law to allow counties to conduct a machine recount if they chose. She conceded that a hand-counted recount was clearly preferable but there was no legal basis to force counties to conduct a hand recount.

Two pro-Trump super PACs – the Great America PAC and Stop Hillary PAC – filed a federal lawsuit in an attempt to stop the recount, but Federal Judge James Petersen refused.

On election night, Trump led by 27,000 votes. Trump’s victory was eventually certified in Wisconsin leading by 22,000 votes.

As we go to press, the Stein litigation team is still trying to obtain the source code used to program the voting machines in Wisconsin.

My Michigan

Why recount Michigan: The Stein campaign paid \$973,250 for the Michigan recount. Michigan was a toss-up state with both Trump and Clinton having 46.8 percent of the exit polls. Trump ended up with 10,704 more votes than Clinton. But, there was a major problem with “undervotes.” This made the state an ideal recount target. On 75,335 ballots in the presidential election, constituting 1.5 percent of all Michigan votes, there was no vote for president.

Michigan’s voting conditions: Michigan voters cast paper Scantron ballots counted by machines. The state emergency manager had denied Detroit’s request to spend money on newer voting machines. All of Michigan’s vote tabulators are at least a decade old, according to the Associated Press. This is the same emergency management law that forced Flint residents to drink from a lead poisoned river to save money.

What happened in the recount: The recount effort revealed serious operating problems with Michigan’s voting machines. In Detroit, at least 87 voting machines malfunctioned on Election Day, according to city election officials. Numerous precincts in Detroit also lost their pollbooks – the only record of how many people signed in to vote. Other problems included improperly sealed and transported ballot boxes. A Detroit precinct reported to contain 307 ballots could only produce 52.

Nearly a quarter of all ballots in Wayne County were not properly handled resulting in discrepancies between the number of ballots in the ballot box and the total ballots issued. Detroit election officials also reported finding numerous broken security seals on the bags containing ballots and voting material. Under a 1954 law, 610 of the county's precincts could not be counted because of the discrepancy between the pollbooks and number of ballots issued and counted, 392 of them in Detroit. As a result of mismatched numbers and broken security seals, 59 percent of Detroit precincts could not be recounted.

Approximately 11 percent of all the precincts counted statewide showed documented irregularities. In a letter to U.S. Attorney General Lynch, Stein's attorney Jonathan Abady pointed out that the number was much higher in low-income counties like Branch where 27 percent of the precincts showed irregularities.

There was an all-out Republican blitz to stop the recount from happening, including legal action. State and federal courts blocked Stein's recount with two-thirds of the vote uncounted. Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette led the charge to shut it down. At the time of Schuette's actions, the recount was revealing irregularities.

Federal Judge Mark Goldsmith initially allowed the recount to go forward but then reversed himself after Schuette and Michigan courts, including the state Supreme Court, ruled in favor of stopping it. The Michigan Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal by a 3-2 vote with two recusals. Chief Justice Robert Young and Justice Joan Larsen recused themselves because they were on President-elect Trump's short list to be nominated for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Before Judge Goldsmith halted the recount, 2725 of Michigan's 7786 precincts, roughly a third, were recounted. In the Stein recount, more than 1600 votes were discovered and recorded that had not been counted the first time.

Michigan Secretary of State Ruth Johnson has, however, announced plans to audit 20 of Detroit area polling places.

Mighty Pennsylvania

Why recount Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania's exit polls reported Clinton with 50.5 percent and Trump with 46.1 percent. The election night tally showed Clinton leading Trump by 1.2 percent instead of losing by 4.4 percent. Clinton's 47.6 percent of the Pennsylvania vote in the election night compared to the exit polls of 50.5 percent would happen once every 85 presidential elections. The state voluntarily removed 27,000 erroneous votes for Trump just prior to the recount. The primary reason Pennsylvania was recounted was to take a close forensic look at the electronic voting machines, since the state is not designed to be recounted.

Pennsylvania's voting conditions: More than 85 percent of Pennsylvania voters voted on non-verifiable computer machines with no paper to recount. Pennsylvania's state and county governments had not allocated the funds for auditable machines. Of the voting machines, 30 percent were the notorious ES&S iVotronics, determined to be easily tampered with by Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner's famous Everest Study. Additionally, 29 percent of Pennsylvania voted with the even worse Danaher Shouptronic voting machines, one of the earliest machines dating back to the 1980s.

Voters also reported never receiving requested absentee ballots in time to cast them. In Montgomery County an estimated 70,000 people risked being disenfranchised before a judge ordered an extension to absentee voting. Many voters reported issues with the DRE machines inaccurately recording their vote. In Montgomery County, out of nearly 450,000 ballots cast, more than 4000 recorded no vote for President.

Alex Halderman, a University of Michigan computer science professor, testified that the Pennsylvania computer voting machines were vulnerable to hacking by both transferring infected files from one machine to another through ordinary flash drives or by someone physically tampering with computer chips. Halderman told the court that "Putting myself in the role of attacker, with all its vulnerabilities, I would hack Pennsylvania." Halderman is known for successfully hacking into the Washington DC voting system for a demonstration after District election officials challenged anyone to try hacking in.

What happened in the recount: The recount never successfully happened in Pennsylvania. For a recount to happen, three voters from 9158 precincts, 27,474 people, would have had to submit notarized affidavits and make a combined payment of \$457,900 to state election officials. The Stein campaign accused the Pennsylvania Department of State of giving “erroneous guidance” on the requirements for the recount and claimed the county boards engaged in “erratic compliance with shifting and secret deadlines.” In all, “thousands of voters had valid recount petitions wrongfully rejected.”

U.S. District Court Judge Paul Diamond stated that suspicion of a hacked election in the Quaker State “borders on the irrational.” In prohibiting a recount, Diamond held that there was “...no credible evidence that any ‘hack’ occurred and compelling evidence that Pennsylvania’s voting system was not in any way compromised.” Diamond’s ruling came after the Washington Post claimed that a secret CIA report found the Russians interfering in the U.S election electronically in order to hurt Clinton and aid Trump.

The Allegheny County Elections Commission and a state common pleas judge rejected Stein’s request to examine the voting machines that lacked a paper trail. Allegheny County is the second most populous county in the state. Common Pleas Senior Judge Joseph M. James, in a classic Catch-22, ruled that since Stein lacked evidence of voting irregularities, she couldn’t examine the electronic voting machines for irregularities.

Jill Stein stated the purpose of the recount: “Despite overwhelming evidence and consensus from cyber-security and computer science experts that our election system is vulnerable to hacking, manipulation, malfunction and human error, the political establishment in Washington has dismissed the need for comprehensive recounts of the 2016 election. Concerns about the security and accuracy of our election system extend into the realm of human and machine error, where there is already evidence before our eyes of widespread machine failure. We must get rid of tamper- and error-prone electronic voting machines and work toward a verifiable

paper ballot system, which has long been central to the Green Party's democracy platform.

Stein campaign manager David Cobb, who led the recounts in Ohio and New Mexico after he ran as the 2004 Green Party presidential candidate said the recount's purpose is "ensuring confidence in the integrity of the voting system." He laid out the Green Party's election reform proposals: "A system where we count every vote, and where every vote counts. Every vote to be cast on a paper ballot. All software must be non-proprietary and open-source. Robust audits. State funded recounts in any election decided by .5 percent or less of all votes cast. And nonpartisan election administration."

Postscript:

Global Hackers & the Russians Have Made Hand-Counted Paper Ballots an Issue of Urgent National Security

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman

We have no evidence at this point that the Russians, or global hackers, hacked our electronic voting machines to put Donald Trump in the White House.

But we are 100% certain our electronic voting machines have been hacked by many many others, and could be in the future by virtually anybody with entry-level computing capabilities. As the New York Times and others have reported, cyberattacks have now become an integral part of the modern landscape. A tool stolen from the very National Security Agency meant to protect us has been used to perpetrate more than 75,000 recent hacks—and those are just the ones being reported.

The evidence that our electronics-based election system is particularly vulnerable to such attacks has long been well-established. It ranges from a wide range of public vote flipping demonstrations to a computing professor using a voting machine to play the University of Michigan fight song.

But, why would you need to hack the machines if you are one of the private, for-profit partisan corporations that secretly program the computerized voting machines and tabulators with secret proprietary software? The lack of transparency with our "black box voting" means that none of our elections are truly verifiable.

In 2016 some 80 percent of America's ballots were cast and/or counted on such machines and tabulators. Many touchscreen voting machines provide no usable paper trail and render vote counts that cannot be independently verified. Scanners of paper ballots can be rigged to render dishonest counts that go undetected if the ballots are never manually audited.

Though we have no evidence of Russian hacking on our electronic voting machines in 2016, there is no doubt that they or any other hacker with an interest in the outcome could have done so if they wanted to.

Or, the private companies could have simply programmed the results

So that leaves us with one inescapable conclusion: to protect the integrity of our future elections, our entire electoral system must convert to universal hand-counted paper ballots.

It has become an issue of national security.

The entire nation is now in an uproar over Donald Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey. We know he was investigating possible Russian involvement in our election. The Russians clearly wanted Trump to win.

During the campaign, Trump very publicly asked the Russians to hack Hillary Clinton's emails. The Russians did, in fact, hack the Democratic National Committee, releasing documentation showing the DNC hierarchy worked actively against the nomination of Bernie Sanders.

We don't yet know what else the Russians actually did or did not do, if anything, to help shape our choice of presidents in 2016.

We know further that someone hacked into the recent French elections on behalf of Marine LePen.

In an electronic era, election theft has now become a matter of a few keystrokes.

Indeed, election theft in the United States is very much a home-grown industry. As we explain in our new **STRIP & FLIP DISASTER OF AMERICA'S STOLEN ELECTIONS** (www.freepress.org / www.solartopia.org) electronic machines are

perfectly designed to steal elections. As Bev Harris has shown, they are black boxes that give local election officials virtually unlimited power to shape the outcome however they like.

Thus we document clear instances of electronic vote theft in the 1988 New Hampshire Republican primaries won by George H.W. Bush, and in the general presidential elections won by George W. Bush in Florida 2000 and Ohio 2004.

Along the way we have encountered likely electronic hacks in numerous other local, state and federal elections. In Ohio 2006 a series of statewide election reform referenda were defeated with swings of more than 30% from pre-election polls to official outcome, a virtual statistical impossibility. In 2014 and 2016, Republicans claimed six US Senate seats in elections where they lost in the exit polls by significant margins. That six such vote counts would all go in the same direction is also a virtual statistical impossibility.

In 2016, the Electoral College was decided by five states—Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin—where Trump lost the exit polls but won the official vote count. That all five states would go in the same direction is, once again, a virtual statistical impossibility.

In Michigan, more than 75,000 ballots were counted in heavily Democratic Flint and Detroit metropolitan area without presidential preferences being registered. This presumes that some 75,000 citizens took the trouble to vote (often waiting hours in line) but failed to choose a president. In Wisconsin, electronic anomalies also abounded. In Wisconsin, a suspicious anomaly was uncovered across several voting precincts where the last number in Trump and Clinton's vote totals appeared not to be randomly distributed in regards to zeros and fives. In these precincts, over half of Trump and Clinton's total numbers ended with a zero or a five.

Meanwhile, countless black, Hispanic, Asian-American, Muslim and other non-millionaire citizens were stripped from registration rolls by some 29 GOP secretaries of state. As shown in Greg Palast's "Best Democracy Money Can Buy," the far-right secretary of state from Kansas, Kris Kobach, spread the Crosscheck program around the country with the clear intent to strip as many likely Democrats from the voter rolls as possible. Trump has just appointed Kobach to head his special commission on voter fraud, aimed at "proving" that millions of illegal voters cost Trump a majority in the popular vote.

Additional mass disenfranchisement has been done throughout the US through demands for photo ID, short-changing of precincts and voting machines, deliberate misinformation and much more.

There is little doubt that between stripping the voter rolls and flipping the electronic vote count, our electoral system is in shambles. The Russians are clearly NOT at the root of the problem. Election theft can be and has been repeatedly perpetrated right here, by Americans.

But the Russians could have done so. In coming elections, they, other foreign powers and a veritable army of domestic hackers can deliver pretty much whatever outcome they want.

Our private voting machine companies like ES&S and the now-defunct Diebold have long had this power.

The solution is obvious: we must secure our voting system entirely off-line with outcomes that can be certified in real time, by real people. We need universal automatic voter registration; a four-day national holiday for voting; universal hand-counted paper ballots; an end to gerrymandering and the Electoral College; and a ban on corporate campaign spending.

As we now know from this past presidential election, whether flipped by the Russians or not, it has become an issue of national security...and the future of our democracy.

Bob Fittrakis and Harvey Wasserman have co-written seven books on election integrity, including the new **STRIP & FLIP DISASTER OF AMERICA'S STOLEN ELECTIONS** (www.freepress.org / www.solartopia.org).

About Bob Fittrakis and Harvey Wasserman

After witnessing election suppression in Ohio's 2004 presidential election, Fittrakis was one of four attorneys to file the *Moss v. Bush* challenge to Ohio's presidential elections results, and Wasserman was one of the plaintiffs in the case. In 2006, Fittrakis was co-counsel and Wasserman was a plaintiff, in the King-Lincoln-Bronzeville lawsuit against the Ohio Secretary of State's office seeking to end racially discriminatory electoral practices in Ohio and to ensure free and fair elections. The two authored a 50-point consent decree to ensure election integrity in Ohio submitted to the current Secretary of State. Many of these proposals have been adopted by the state of Ohio. Both briefed the Congressional Progressive Caucus in 2005.

In the meantime, Fittrakis and Wasserman co-authored hundreds of articles exposing the election fraud of Ohio's 2004 election and subsequent elections all over the country, including one that was chosen for a Project Censored award in 2005: "How a Republican Election Supervisor Manipulated the 2004 Central Ohio Vote." Fittrakis is the editor of the *Free Press*, freepress.org and columbusfreepress.com. Wasserman is the Senior Editor of freepress.org. Their investigative reporting at www.freepress.org prompted Rev. Jesse Jackson to call them "the Woodward and Bernstein of the 2004 election."

Fittrakis and Wasserman have co-authored several books: "Impeach Bush," "George W. Bush vs. The Superpower of Peace," "Did George W. Bush Steal America's 2004 Election? Ohio's Essential Documents" (with Steve Rosenfeld), "How the GOP Stole America's 2004 election and is rigging 2008," "What Happened in Ohio: A documentary record of theft and fraud in the 2004 election" (with Steve Rosenfeld), "As Goes Ohio: Election Theft Since 2004" and "Corporate Vote Theft & the Future of American Democracy" (with Gerry Bello). They have appeared on countless news shows and in independent documentaries about election integrity.

Bob Fittrakis

Fittrakis is a Political Science Professor in the Social Sciences department at Columbus State Community College, where he won the Distinguished Professor Award in 2012. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Wayne State University and a J.D. from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. As a journalist, Fittrakis has won eleven investigative journalism awards from the Cleveland Press Club, Project Censored, and the Ohio Society of Professional Journalists.

Fittrakis has been an election protection activist since March 1994, when he served as an international observer for the national elections in El Salvador. He co-wrote and edited the El Salvador election report for the United Nations. Fittrakis was an election protection attorney on November 2, 2004 in Franklin County. In December 2004, Fittrakis testified before the Judiciary Committee of Congress at the request of Rep. John Conyers in both Washington D.C. and Columbus. The information gathered from the Fittrakis' investigations and hearings resulted in the Conyers Report, "What Went Wrong in Ohio?" released January 5, 2005. Fittrakis briefed John Kerry, worked on election reform with Rep. Maxine Waters (D-LA), and briefed the Democratic Party Senate leadership. Dr. Fittrakis testified at the Election Assessment hearings in Houston, Texas in 2005, which became part of the Carter-Baker Commission Report on federal election reform. He has also briefed the Senate Democratic leadership, as well as briefing the Congressional Black Caucus in 2005 and 2016.

Harvey Wasserman

Wasserman has taught history, cultural diversity, globalization and journalism at Columbus State Community College, Capital University and Hampshire College. He holds an MA in US history from the University of Chicago and a BA from the University of Michigan.

Wasserman is a life-long activist, teacher, radio host and author or co-author of a dozen books including "SOLARTOPIA! Our Green-Powered Earth"; "Harvey Wasserman's History of the U.S."; and, "A Glimpse of the Big Light: Losing Parents, Finding Spirit." With wind pioneer Dan Juhl, Harvey co-authored *Harvesting Wind Energy as a Cash Crop: A Guide to Community-Owned Wind Farming* (www.danmar.us).

In 1968 Wasserman helped found the legendary anti-war Liberation News Service, and the communal/organic Montague (Massachusetts) Farm, now a conference center. In 1973 he helped pioneer the global grassroots movement against atomic reactors, then helped organize mass demonstrations at Seabrook, N.H., and New York City's 1979 "No Nukes" concerts and rally, featuring Bruce Springsteen, Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, CSN, James Taylor and others.

Wasserman's radio shows have included the Green Power & Wellness Show at prn.fm, California Solartopia at KPFK/Pacifica in Los Angeles, and others. His appearances throughout the major media and at concerts, campus and grassroots citizen gatherings have focused since the 1960s on energy, environment, peace, justice, U.S. history and election protection. In 1994 he spoke to 350,000 semi-conscious rock fans at Woodstock II.

With Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, Graham Nash and others, Wasserman helped found NukeFree.org, which helped stop a \$50 billion federal loan guarantee program proposed by the US reactor industry in fall, 2007.

He has served as Senior Advisor to Greenpeace USA and the Nuclear Information & Resource Service. His upcoming *AMERICA AT THE BRINK OF REBIRTH* describes the decline and fall of the US in terms of cycles.