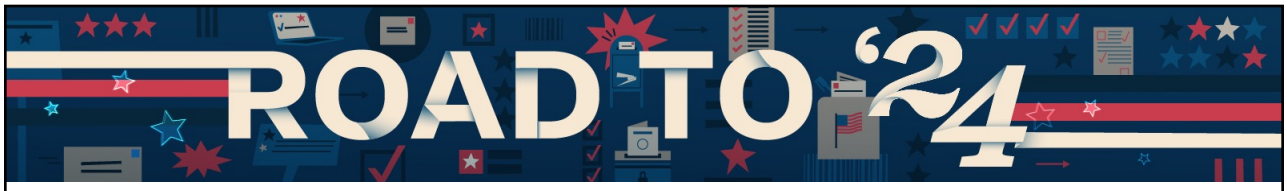

Election 2024: Focus on Money, Cash, Dollars (MCD) – Linking Campaign Finance (CF) to Campaign Strategies & Media

OLLI Fall 2024
Class #5

Wednesday, 16 October 2024

David McCuan, Professor & Graduate Coordinator
Sonoma State University
Department of Political Science
Email: david.mccuan@sonoma.edu

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

1

Slides, for each week, are sent to Grace Burroughs for You All

Additional questions, comments, & concerns to:

david.mccuan@sonoma.edu

2

2

Here's Our Plan for Each Week of the Course: We Take a Break, Halfway, Each Weekly Session

- ~~Class #1, 18 SEPT 2024:~~
  - What matters to watch over the next eight weeks?;
  - What to make of this close race?;
  - Where to get information?
- ~~Class #2, 25 SEPT 2024:~~
  - Deep dive into polling and public opinion formation;
  - Focus on the "Culture Wars" in American politics
  - Guest Speaker, 10:05-10:45 over Zoom;
- ~~Class #3, 02 OCT 2024:~~
  - Briefly more on Public Opinion;
  - VP Debate Wrap-up;
  - Down-ballot races & sub-national elections;
  - How having kids in school matters for the vote;
- ~~Class #4, 09 OCT 2024:~~
  - Direct Legislation & voting in CA;
  - CA politics-focus;
  - Guest Speaker (Over Zoom, Assemblyman Jim Wood);
- **Class #5, 16 OCT 2024:**
  - Guest Speaker: Congressman Mike Thompson, in-class
  - Consequences of the Three Presidencies Hypothesis;
  - State of the Race & Issues vs. Ideology
  - *It Matters!* Event at Noon; ***KPIX-5 possible?***
- Class #6, 23 OCT 2024:
  - Guest Speaker: Ben Shultz, American Sunlight Project
  - Artificial Intelligence (AI) discussion;
  - Mal-, mis-, and disinformation in elections;
  - What to watch Election NIGHT & Week?
  - What happens *after* the race?

3

3

After Class Today, in this room, from 12-1 pm

It Matters!
Engage. Participate. Vote.

SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Initiative Wars: Financing of CA Ballot Measures, November 2024 The Story Behind the Headlines

Zoom Link: https://SonomaState.zoom.us/j/85953181832

POLS 484
Fall 2024
Sonoma State University
Department of Political Science

4

The *It Matters!* Series

- This Series is brought to Us via the hard work of the SSU "Center for Community Engagement" with generous help and assistance by many on campus! THANK YOU!
- Offered each Presidential Election since 2004!
- Please join Us for additional sessions:
  - WED, 23 OCT, on AI & Misinformation;
  - WED, 06 NOV, on Climate & Politics;
  - WED, 13 NOV, *What's Next?*

5

Today's Guest is Congressman Mike Thompson, CA CD-4

- Who is Congressman Thompson? CA CD-4
- What does it mean to be a Member of the House Committee on Ways and Means and be the "Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Tax?"
- The Congressman also serves as a senior member of the Health Subcommittee and after the school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, Cong. Thompson was named Chair of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.
- Background and experience for the Congressman.
- Distinguished career in both D.C. and California politics.

6

Part II: A Short Break – What to Make of Campaign Spending & the Major Candidates' Election Strategies in 2024?

7

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Let's Start Hour Two Today With Two Elements

VOTING for NOV 2024!!

- Status of the "Early Vote:"
  - What to watch?
  - "Battle for the Bros"
- Absentee Vote "Processing" vs. Absentee Vote "COUNTING:"
- Where to find latest, greatest info on this issue of ***HOW*** VOTERS CAST BALLOTS? Here!
- Here is the NCSL report on Vote Processing and Vote Counting.

CAMPAIGN SPENDING in NOV 2024!!

- To understand Spending, we need to understand "Media:"
  - What to watch?
  - "Battle for the Bros"
- Ads, Ads, Ads EVERYWHERE:
- Where to find latest, greatest info on ad spending? Here! And here!
- **REMEMBER**: Ad spending in linked with: a). Where the Votes are; and b). Where Candidates spend their time!

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For Next Week, And…Our LAST CLASS - You have…HOMEWORK!

1. We look at the role of "information" in the election space and what is happening there, building on our media space discussion that starts today;

2. We look at PATHWAYS in the final two weeks for victory for Both Major Candidates; this includes a focus on The Big 7 States, the MONIES ($$$) spent; and this culminates in…

Our **LAST CLASS FOCUS**: What comes *next*…after 05 November?
We convene a conversation on:

A). What if Trump loses?; and

B). What if Kamala loses?

9

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REMINDER: Keep an Eye on the Methodological Polling Debate!

- "In one universe, Kamala Harris leads only narrowly in the national popular vote against Donald J. Trump, even as she holds a discernible edge in the Northern battlegrounds…In the other, Ms. Harris has a clear lead in the national vote, but the battlegrounds are very tight. It's essentially a repeat of the 2020 election."
- This divide is almost entirely explained by whether a pollster uses "weighting on recalled vote," which means trying to account for how voters *say* they voted in the last election.

The Tilt

How One Polling Decision Is Leading to Two Distinct Stories of the Election

A methodological choice has created divergent paths of polling results. Is this election more like 2020 or 2022?

By Nate Cohn

Oct. 6, 2024

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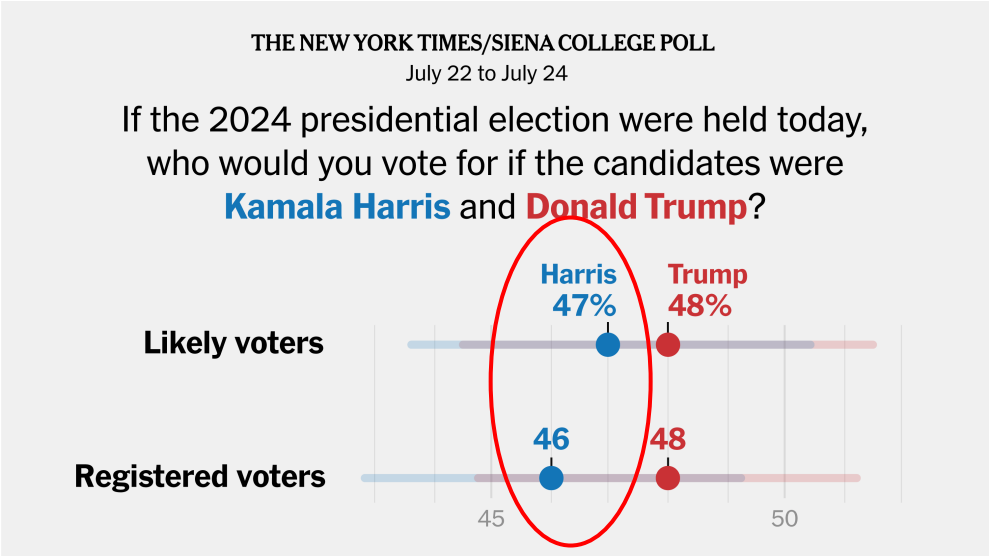
Why, How the Polling Methodology *MATTERS*!



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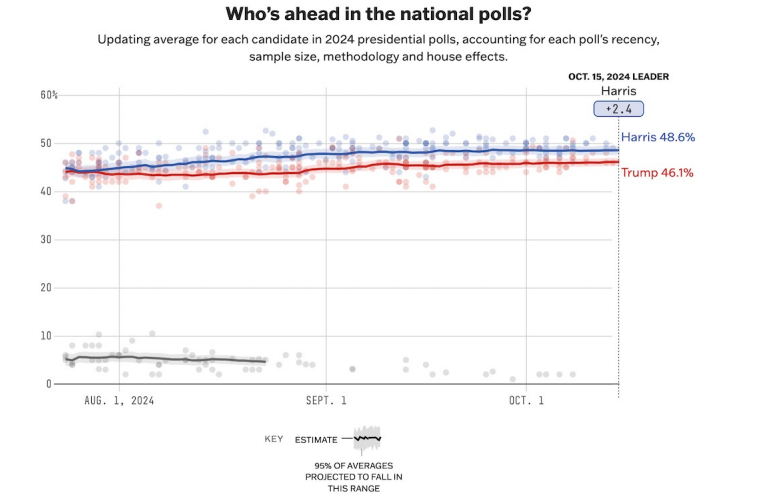
Latest Polling Averages & Findings



Polling averages are adjusted based on state and national polls, which means candidates' averages can shift even if no new polls have been added to this page. Read the full methodology here.

On Sept. 13, 2024, we fixed a bug in this polling average that arose after Robert F. Kennedy Jr. dropped out of the race on Aug. 23, 2024. See here for more details and an archived version of the previous average.

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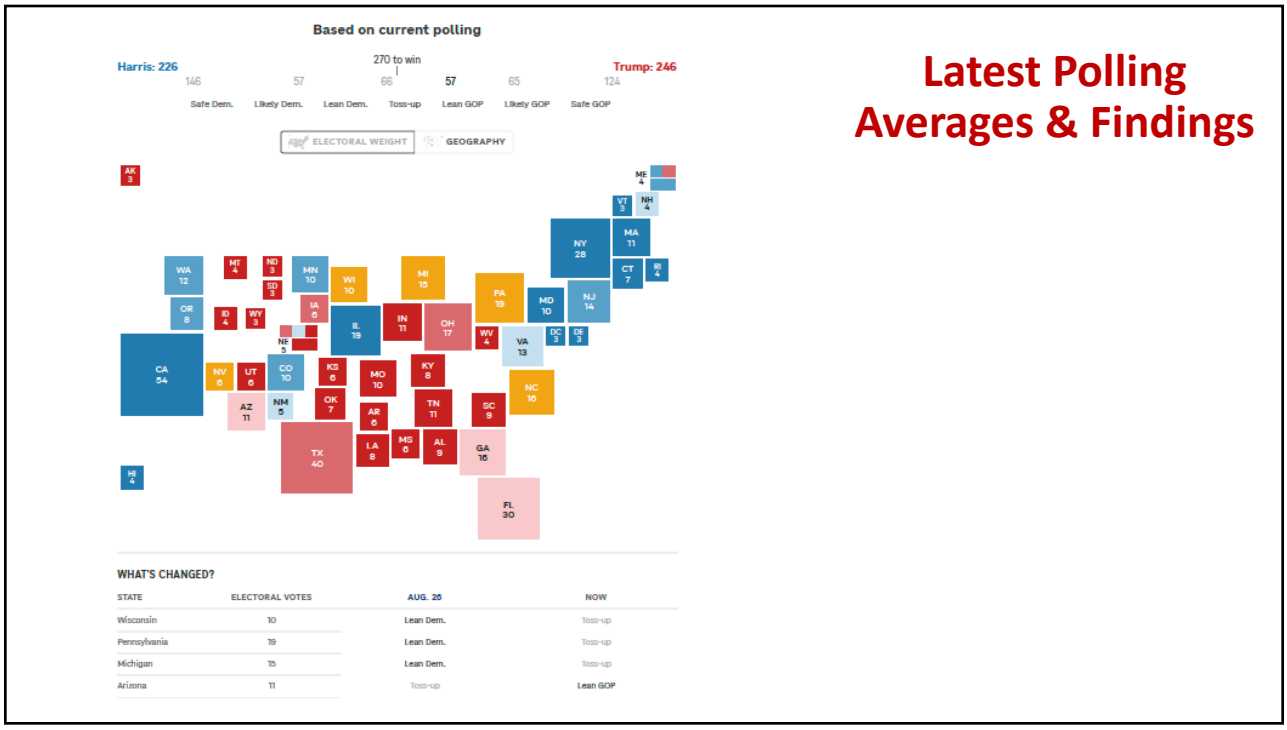

Latest Polling Averages & Findings

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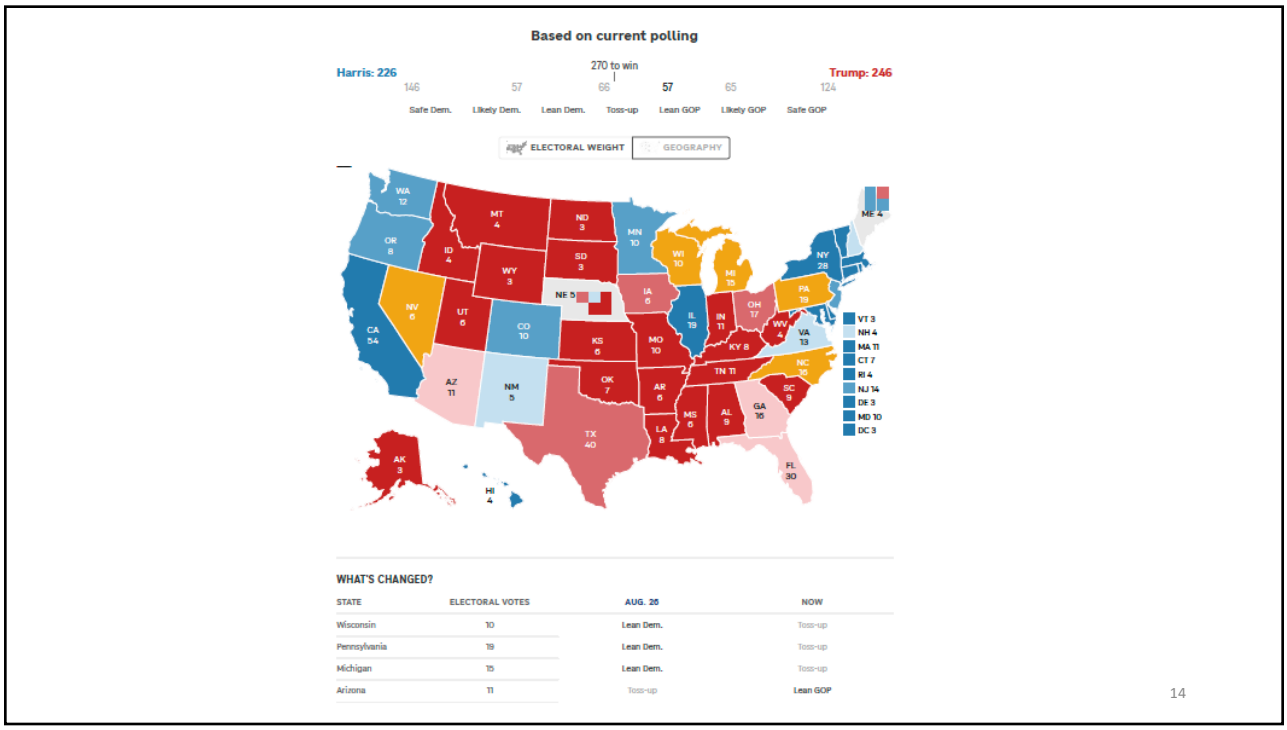
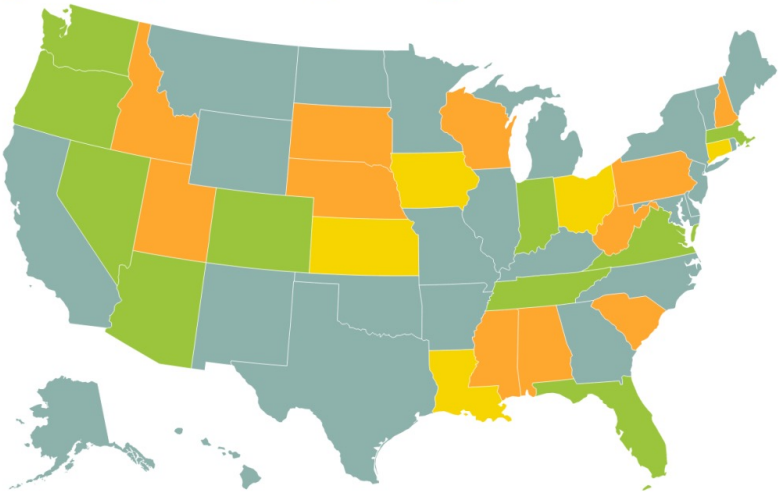


14

When states can begin processing absentee/mail-in ballots

Upon receiving completed absentee/mail-in ballots, election officials must first process the ballots before they can be counted. Processing practices can vary widely from state to state.

On Election Day | Before Election Day | Upon receipt | Other[1]



[1]Includes states where the exact timing is not specified or is left to the discretion of local governments.

BALLOTPEDIA

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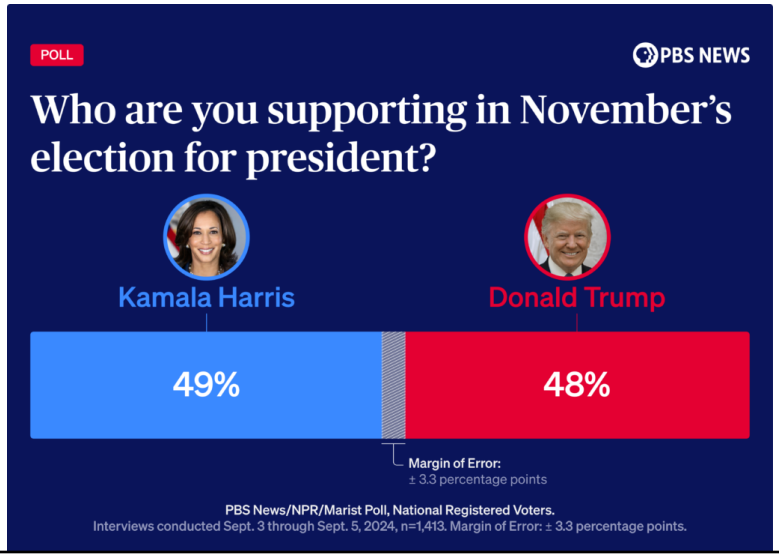
Your Test…Ok, Put Your Mind & EYES to Work Here…



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All Those Texts You Are Getting These Days…How Do You Know If They Are *Legitimate*???

- (4) Rules of Thumb on Political Texts:

1. Is the text *pushy* in tone?;
2. Is there a disclaimer or not?;
3. Is there a ”Committee receipt” / is it an ”official Committee?;”
4. Is the URL linked to a http:// protocol?

*Did You make a contribution by mistake? Both **ActBlue** and **WinRed** allow refunds!

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Where / How to Track the CF & Spending in Federal Races?

- US FEC, “Open Secrets” on 2024 Presidential CF (Campaign Finance)
- The Sunlight Foundation on Transparency in Government: https://sunlightfoundation.com/
- Wesleyan Media Project on TV / Digital Ad Spending:
  - Example here of their work: https://mediaproject.wesleyan.edu/releases-101024/

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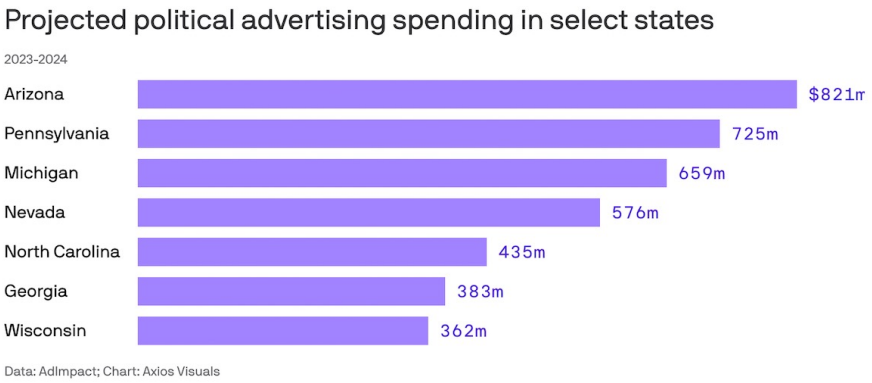
What We Anticipated Last Labor Day (SEPT 2024)



The 2024 election is projected to be the most expensive cycle in history, according to an AdImpact report released Tuesday.

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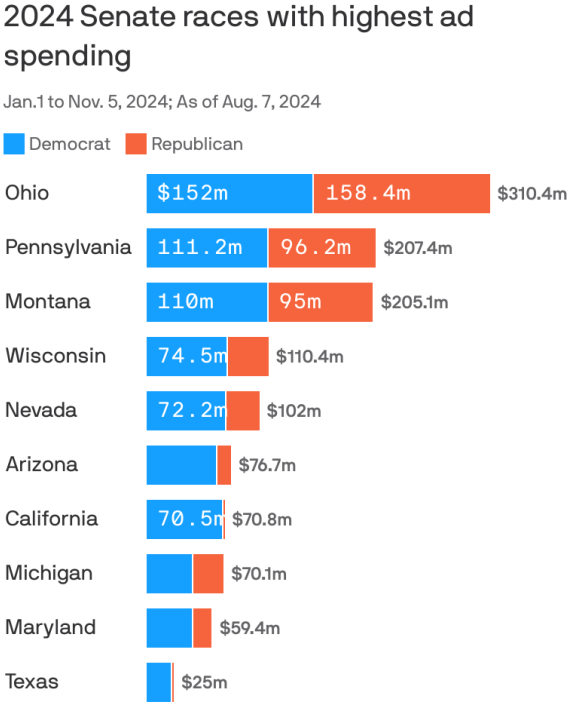

Just US Senate Figures, Thru Early AUG 2024

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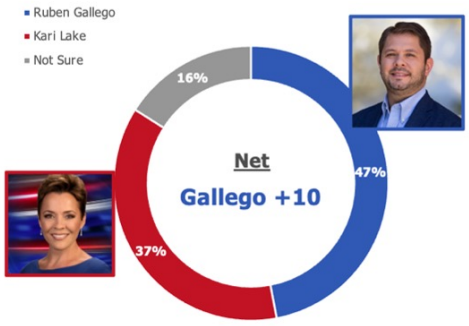
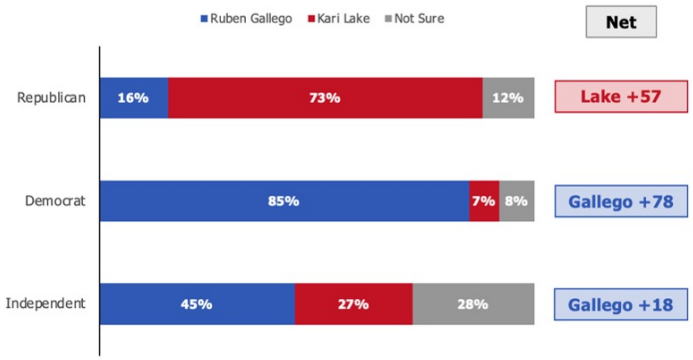
ARIZONA
PUBLIC OPINION PULSE

2024 US Senate Hypothetical: Gallego v. Lake



2024 US Senate Hypothetical: Gallego v. Lake by Party



AZPOP Powered By NOBLE PREDICTIVE INSIGHTS

Arizona Registered Voters
Survey conducted February 6–13, 2024
n = 1,002, MoE ± 3.1%
Online opt-in panel survey
*Totals may not appear to be calculated correctly, due to rounding

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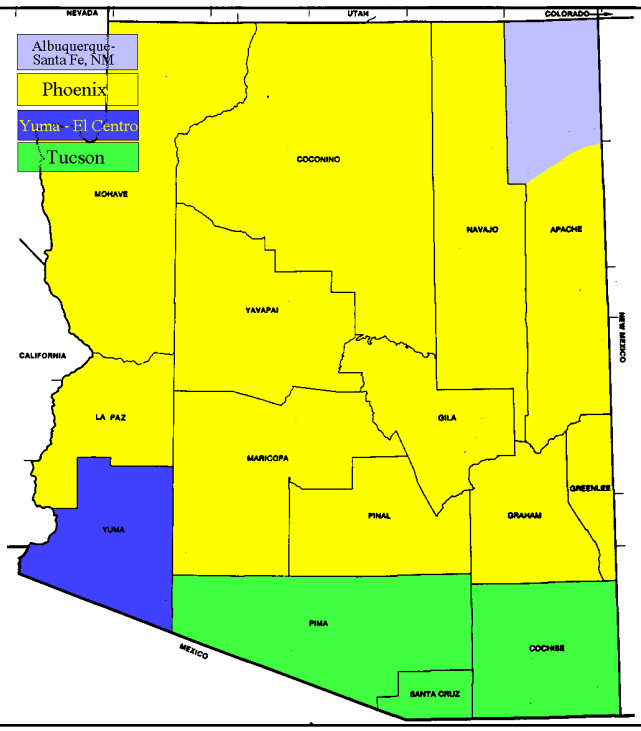
Latest U.S. Senate Race Polling, Arizona

DATES	SAMPLE	POLLSTER	SPONSOR	RESULT	NET RESULT
Polls ending Oct. 13, 2024					
U.S. Senate, Arizona, 2024, General election AVG.					
Oct. 10-13	1,090 LV	Trafalgar Group		Gallego 48% 44% Lake	Gallego +4
Oct. 10, 2024					
U.S. Senate, Arizona, 2024, General election AVG.					
Oct. 7-10	808 RV	The New York Times/Siena College		Gallego 48% 39% Lake	Gallego +9
Oct. 7-10	808 LV	The New York Times/Siena College		Gallego 48% 41% Lake	Gallego +7
Sept. 8-Oct. 10	400 LV	ActiVote		Gallego 53% 47% Lake	Gallego +6
Oct. 8, 2024					
U.S. Senate, Arizona, 2024, General election AVG.					
Oct. 5-8	1,000 LV	Emerson College	Nexstar	Gallego 50% 43% Lake	Gallego +7
Oct. 7, 2024					
U.S. Senate, Arizona, 2024, General election AVG.					
Oct. 5-7	735 LV	SoCal Strategies	On Point Politics, Red Eagle Politics	Gallego 51% 39% Lake	Gallego +13

22



THE BROAD Arizona Media Markets, 2024

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Bowling Green State University
ScholarWorks@BGSU

Democracy and Public Policy Research Network

9-2024

Survey of Ohio Likely Voters 18+, September 2024 Toplines

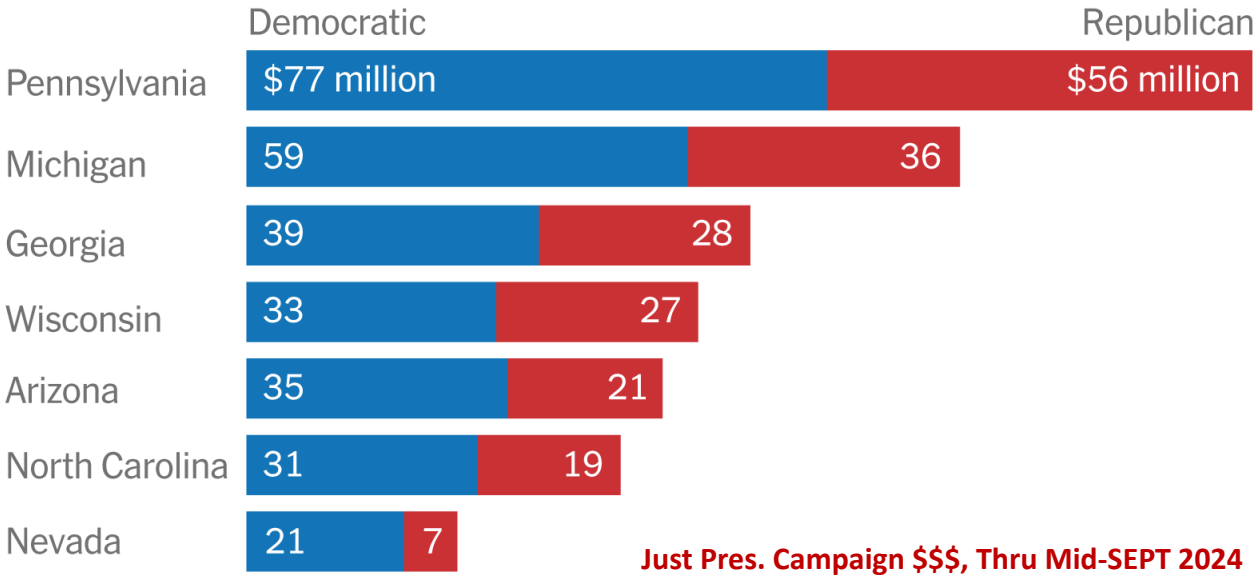
Robert Alexander
Bowling Green State University, robalex@bgsu.edu

4. If the election for the U.S. Senate was held today would you vote for Democrat Sherrod Brown or Republican Bernie Moreno?

Sherrod Brown	49%
Bernie Moreno	45%
A candidate from another party	0%
Undecided	6%

24

TV and radio ad spending plans in swing states



Just Pres. Campaign $$$, Thru Mid-SEPT 2024

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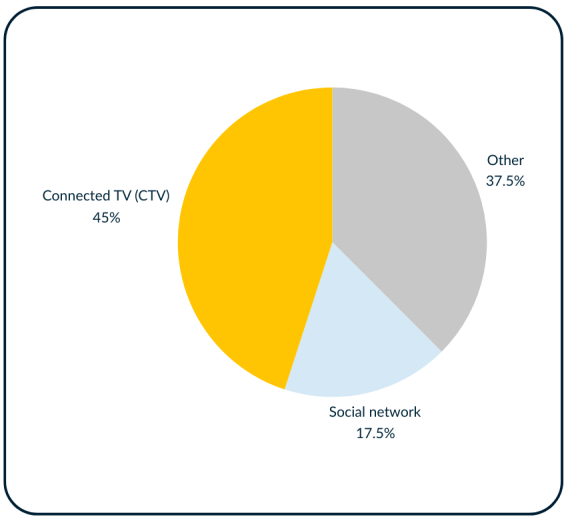
strikesocial

Political Advertising Spending in the U.S.

Budget Allocation for Digital Advertising



Source: EMARKETER

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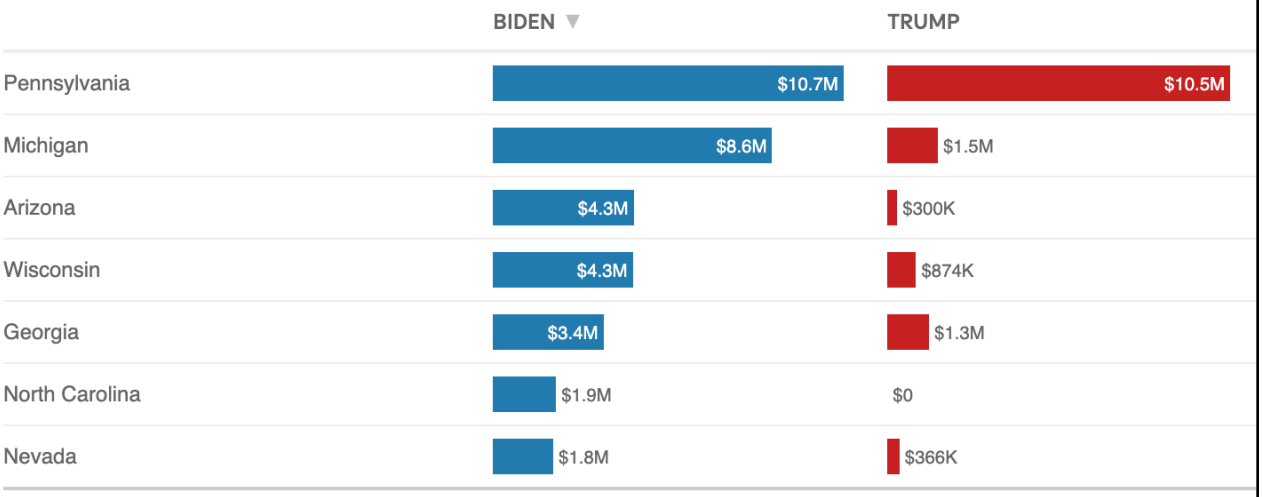
Pre-VP Harris Entry Into the Race



Source: NPR/AdImpact, as of May 24, 2024

Credit: Shajia Abidi and Domenico Montanaro/NPR

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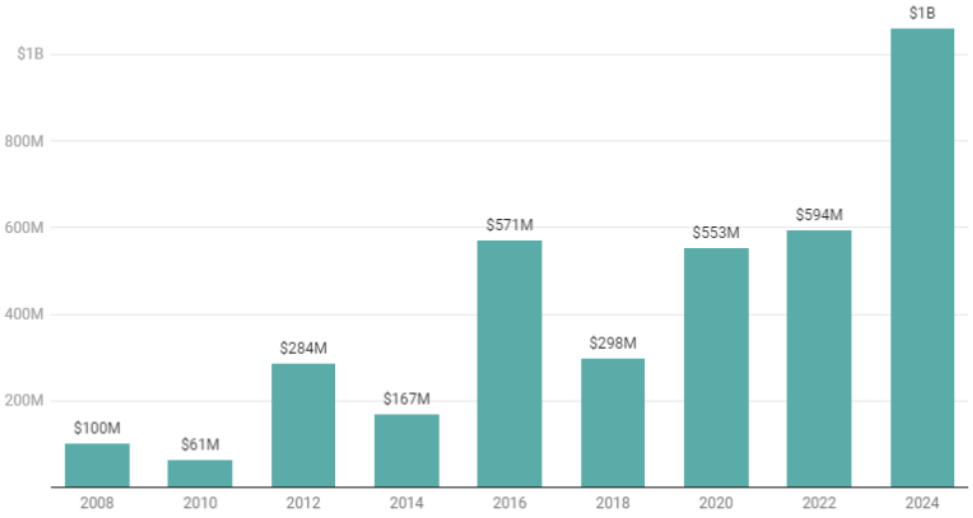
Outside spending is outpacing prior election cycles

Cycle-to-date totals include spending on independent expenditures, electioneering communications, and communication costs.



OpenSecrets analysis of federal campaign finance reports through Aug. 15, 2024, compared to spending through the same date in prior two-year election cycles.

Source: Federal Election Commission · Get the data · Embed · Download image · Created with Datawrapper

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How We Give in Campaigns in 2024?

- **Traditional PACs** are subject to both **donation and spending limits**. They can contribute up to $5,000 per election to a candidate, $5,000 annually to other PACs, and $15,000 to national party committees each year. Individuals, other PACs, and corporations can donate up to $5,000 annually to a traditional PAC.
- **Super PACs,** also known as independent expenditure-only committees, emerged after the **2010 Citizens United v. FEC decision**. These PACs cannot donate directly to candidates or parties but can spend **unlimited amounts on political advertising and other election-related activities** that do not coordinate directly with candidates or parties. There are no limits on the amounts that individuals or corporations can donate to Super PACs. Super PACs cannot accept contributions from foreign nationals, federal contractors, national banks, or federally chartered corporations.

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How We Give in Campaigns, cont'd

- **Hybrid PACs** operate with two separate accounts to accommodate different functionalities. One account adheres to traditional PAC limits and can contribute directly to candidates, while the other operates like a Super PAC, making unlimited independent expenditures without direct coordination with candidates or parties. This dual structure was made possible by the ***2012 Carey v. FEC decision***.
- "The development of super PACs is one of the most recent chapters in the long debate over political spending and political speech," **notes the Congressional Research Service**, and these super PACs, "can substantially affect the political environment in which Members of Congress and other federal candidates compete."

Learn more about political action committees here!

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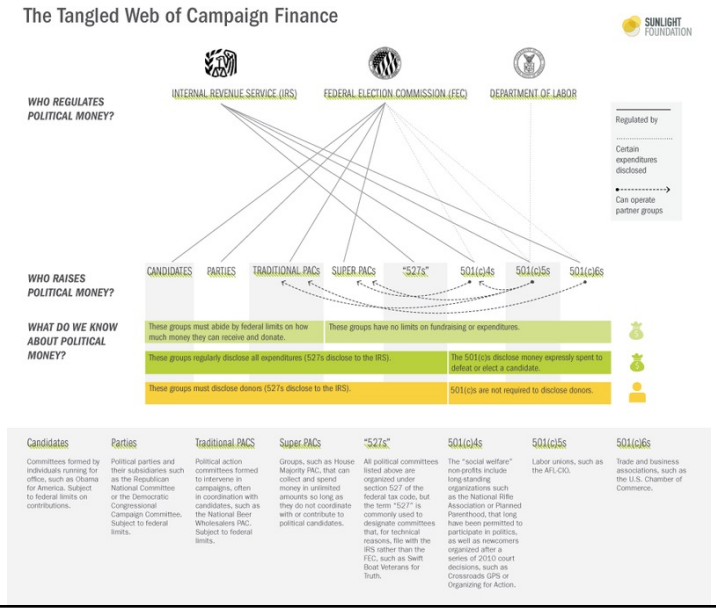
The Sunlight Foundation



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Pre-2020 Numbers Below on CF

The daily fundraising slog

How much energy do lawmakers spend raising money?

The typical senator up for re-election in 2020 raised

$12,200 per day

Comparatively, the typical senator up for re-election in 2022 or 2024 raised

$1,500 per day

Meanwhile, the typical House member raised

$2,100 per day

The typical House member in a competitive toss-up race raised

$5,750 per day

Note: Figures reflect fundraising between july and September 2019.
Source: Issue One review of FEC filings.

issue one FIX DEMOCRACY FIRST

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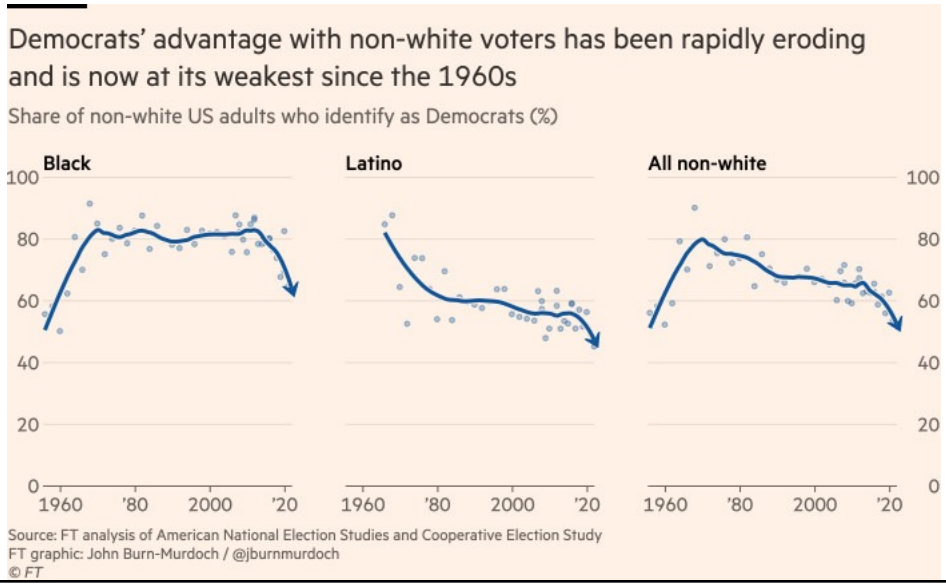
KEY QUESTION FOR *NEXT* WEEK: Are We in the Midst of a Dramatic "Racial Realignment" in American Elections?



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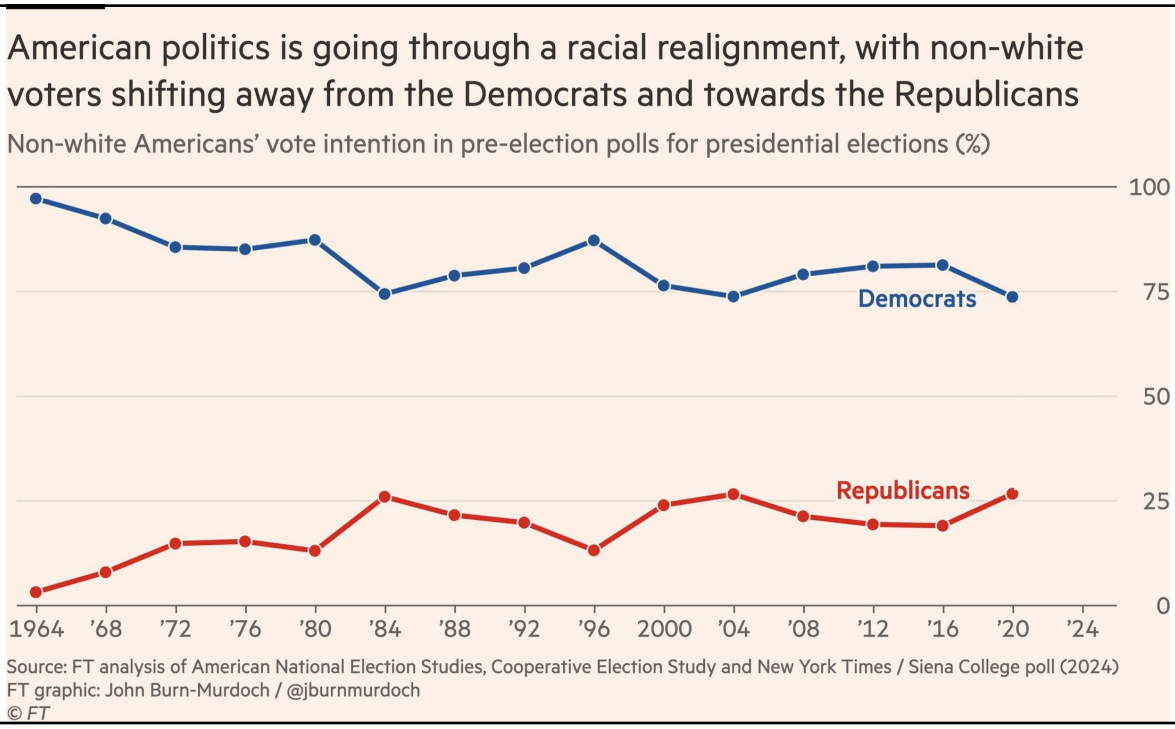

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Let's Continue Today by Examining our New / Emerging? Media Landscape

What is Going ON for Consumption?

- You can't understand November's election — or America itself — without reckoning with how our media attention has shattered into a bunch of misshapen pieces.
- Think of it as the *shards of glass* phenomenon. Not long ago, we all saw news and information through a few common windows — TV, newspapers, cable. Now we find it in scattered chunks that match our age, habits, politics and passions.

- **Why it matters?:** Traditional media, at least as a center of dominant power, is dead. Social media, as its replacement for news in the internet era, is declining in dominance.
- **What comes next?:** America is splintering into more than a dozen news bubbles based on ideology, wealth, jobs, age and location.

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Emerging? Media Landscape, cont'd

- **Between the lines:** It's a "hunt where the ducks are" strategy, or as Rostra founder Lulu Cheng Meservey thinks about it, P=F/A or "pressure equals force over surface area."
- "We all have insane information overload, so if you try to spread yourself too thin and you're saying 10 different things to appeal to everyone, people are just going to forget about it," Meservey previously said at Axios Communicators Live.
- Instead, the goal should be to deliver a precise message that will reach a hyper-engaged audience and call them to action.
- These newer, niche platforms and communities make that possible.

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Where to Fine Information About What is on the Fall 2024 November Ballot?

- The LWV– So Co:

https://www.lwvsonoma.org/content.aspx?page_id=2507&club_id=720180&item_id=5091&pst=25707

In English and in Spanish – all measures found here:

https://www.youtube.com/@leagueofwomenvoterssonomac9305/videos

- The *It Matters!* Series at SSU:

Join Us IN THIS ROOM! From noon to 1 pm, for discussion of "what is happening behind the ballot measures appearing on the ballot."

It Matters!
Engage. Participate. Vote.

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