

How Gore, Kerry and Clinton Put Trump in the White House

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*Amidst the hellish chaos of the **Donald Trump** catastrophe, it's more essential than ever to understand how he got into the White House and who put him there. Then we need to make sure it doesn't happen again.*

In her recent blame-everybody-else-while-doing-nothing screed, "What Happened," **Hillary Clinton** fingers **James Comey**, the Russians and **Bernie Sanders**.

But, in fact, **Hillary Clinton**, **Al Gore** and **John Kerry** put this madman in office.

This trio of multi-millionaire corporate Democrats won the presidential races of 2000, 2004 and 2016. Then they lay down, said hardly a word and did even less as they let George W. Bush and Donald J. Trump rule the land.

All three presidencies were stolen by stripping large numbers of black, Hispanic, Asian-American and young citizens from the voter rolls, and then electronically flipping the vote count. In 2000 and 2016, the thefts were finalized by the Electoral College.

Along the way, the United States House, Senate and a thousand state, federal and local offices also have been flipped. The Supreme Court has come along for the ride.

The impacts—eight years of George W. Bush and an eternity of Donald Trump—have been somewhere between catastrophic and apocalyptic.

We will recover only if we do what the corporate Democrats have not: Face up to how our entire electoral system has been become a sham and then change it.

Let's start with Al Gore and Florida 2000.



Al Gore

In 2000, Gore was duly elected president of the United States. He won the popular vote nationwide by more than 500,000 ballots. Later, independent assessments showed he rightfully won Florida, which would have given him a majority in the Electoral College.

Officially, Gore lost Florida by 537 votes. In its infamous 5-4 Bush v. Gore decision, the Supreme Court stopped the recount that might have given Gore the presidency. The deciding vote was cast by **Clarence Thomas**. Gore, as a U.S. senator, had voted to put him on the bench.

But then-Gov. Jeb Bush, George's brother and son of the former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, actually *prevented* the legitimate citizen votes that would have won Gore the presidency. In shifting Florida from Gore to George W. Bush, Jeb Bush used a wide array of strategies perfected by their father at the CIA for overthrowing Third World regimes that American corporate interests deemed inconvenient. Florida 2000 was the logical follow-up.

As [Greg Palast reported](#), Jeb used the ChoicePoint computer program to strip some 90,000 mostly black and Hispanic citizens from the voter rolls. As reported by activist [Bev Harris](#), some 20,000 votes were electronically bounced around in Volusia County and elsewhere. At critical points on election night, they kept Bush2's chances alive.

About 50,000 votes were tallied for the great consumer activist **Ralph Nader** in Florida 2000. Corporate Democrats still [scream at him](#) for daring to run at all. That public assault has shifted the focus away from how the election was actually stolen while undercutting America's most effective corporate critic. In the perennial war waged by corporate Democrats against social democrats, this has been the new millennium's centerpiece.

But had Nader not run, and had all who voted for him tried to vote for Gore, Bush still would have become president. With computerized stripping of the voter rolls, and electronic flipping of the vote count, Jeb Bush and Katherine Harris showed that a governor and secretary of state can take any reasonably close statewide vote and engineer whatever outcome they want.

Until very recently, Al Gore never publicly challenged the existence of the Electoral College,

which was originally formed in part to empower slave owners. He was the fifth presidential candidate to rightfully win an election but lose the White House.

After 17 years, Gore still has not confronted publicly the issue of Jeb Bush's stripping the voter registration rolls or flipping the electronic vote count. Gore has never used his considerable public persona or immense personal wealth to open a public dialog about that election's corrupted outcome—or to work to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Indeed, while presiding over the U.S. Senate as vice president, Gore crushed a legitimate challenge to Florida's stolen Electoral College delegation that put the GOP in the White House.

Gore has since got a Nobel Prize for his work on climate change. But his actions were the first inconvenient steps to a Trump administration now making climate chaos infinitely worse.



John Kerry

Four years later, John Kerry followed suit.

In [Ohio 2004](#)—as in Florida 2000—the voter rolls were stripped and the electronic vote count flipped. This time, the prime perpetrator was GOP Secretary of State [Kenneth Blackwell](#), today a member of Trump's "election integrity" commission.

Working with Bush2, Karl Rove and Dick Cheney, Ohio's first African-American secretary of state unleashed a veritable barrage dirty tricks to take the Buckeye State—and the presidency—away from John Kerry.

In Democratic urban strongholds and college towns, precincts were riddled with chaos that was distinctly lacking in rural Republican regions. Incorrect addresses were posted on the state's official website, and polling stations were shorted on voting machines. While Blackwell spread confusion about the weight of the paper stock required for ballots, he refused to send usable ones to precincts short on voting machines. As a result, thousands of Ohioans—many students and people of color—simply could not vote.

Official letters were also sent to "ex-felons" threatening criminal prosecution if they dared to vote, even though ex-felons can legally vote in Ohio and many who were threatened weren't ex-felons anyway. At least 300,000 citizens were stripped from the voter rolls, nearly all in heavily Democratic urban areas. Some absentee ballots in southern Ohio were sent out missing Kerry's name.

In some Democratic strongholds, voters who pressed Kerry's name on touchscreen machines saw Bush's name light up. Some who chose Kerry saw that their choice had disappeared by the time they got to the end of the ballot.

There was much, much more, which Bob Fitrakis and I have documented in "How the GOP Stole America's 2004 Election," at freepress.org.

On Election Day, Bush and Rove made one trip out of Washington, D.C.—to check in with Blackwell. They made no public appearances and didn't bother with Ohio's GOP governor, Bob Taft.

At 12:20 on election night, despite mass chaos and huge lines (up to five hours long) in Democratic precincts, CNN showed John Kerry winning Ohio—and thus the presidency—by 4.2 percent of the vote. The projected margin was well over 200,000 ballots.

Somehow, a "glitch" stopped the tally. The "problem" was in a server in Chattanooga, Tenn., where the email accounts of **Karl Rove** and the national Republican Party also resided. They were all managed by **Michael Connell**, a Bush family high-tech consultant running Ohio's vote count under a no-bid contract from Blackwell. [Editor's note: Connell [died in a small plane crash](#) in Ohio in 2008, after recently being subpoenaed to testify in a lawsuit alleging [vote rigging in the 2004 Ohio election](#).]

When the flow resumed at 2 a.m., all was flipped. Bush somehow won by 2.5 percent—a 6.7 percent shift. Scholars such as **Ron Baiman** deemed this change a "virtual statistical impossibility." Bush's Blackwell-approved Ohio margin was a beyond-improbable 118,000-plus votes, much of it from three southwestern counties riddled with chaos.

Kerry's staff was thoroughly briefed on the likely fraud. At noon the next day, with 250,000 votes still uncounted, Kerry conceded. Then he went windsurfing.

Kerry has yet to say a public word about what happened in Ohio 2004, or in other states that year where election theft was blatantly obvious. The fraudulent tactics the GOP "test marketed" in 2004 have been used full force right through the "Trump triumph" of 2016, flipping an untold number of critical elections along the way.



Hillary Clinton

Like Gore and Kerry in 2000 and 2004, Hillary Clinton was the designated winner in 2016. And like them both, she has said and done nothing about the third theft of the U.S. presidency in the first five presidential elections of the new millennium.

Clinton won the national popular vote by at least 2.9 million, despite a massive **Jim Crow** [vote-stripping fraud](#) perpetrated by GOP governors and secretaries of state in about 30 states. Parallel to ChoicePoint in Florida 2000, they used a program called [Interstate Crosscheck](#), spread by Kansas **Secretary of State Kris Kobach**. As [reported by Greg Palast](#), Crosscheck stripped voter rolls on the pretext that citizens were double-registered, even if their names did not match from one state to the other.

Palast estimates that at least 1 million voters were denied their ballots in this way, most of them likely Clinton voters who were black, Hispanic, Asian-American, Muslim and young. As featured in Palast's book and movie "The Best Democracy Money Can Buy," Kobach chairs the [White House commission](#) aimed at [stripping registration rolls](#) in upcoming elections. Clinton mentions Kobach briefly in "What Happened," but offers no meaningful discussion of how his Jim Crow disenfranchisement campaign might have turned the 2016 outcome—or how to prevent it from happening again.

Clinton also briefly mentions the Electoral College that cost her the White House, but—like Gore and Kerry—gives no indication she plans to do anything significant about abolishing it.

She also fails to explore the fact that she won the exit polls in Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin—more than enough to give her an Electoral College victory. In all those states, the official vote count was deeply tainted with massive registration stripping and widespread electronic flipping.

But she harshly [assaults Green candidate Jill Stein](#), echoing Democrat party-line attacks on Nader.

Trump's total alleged margin in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania was under 100,000. As in Florida 2000, Clinton counts Stein's votes and complains that had they all gone to her, she could have won.

But she never mentions that she stifled Stein's attempts to investigate the obvious fraud in all three states. As Palast has reported, more than enough Wisconsin voters were [stripped from the registration rolls](#) using new photo ID requirements to flip that key state to Clinton. In [lawsuits](#) filed on behalf of the Stein campaign, Bob Fittrakis has established that Wisconsin also failed to provide transparent electronic voting machine source codes, as required by law.

In Michigan, where Clinton allegedly lost by about 10,000 votes, some 70,000 ballots were recorded without a presidential preference. In the face of obvious manipulation, Clinton has never questioned the absurd presumption that tens of thousands of Democratic voters in Detroit and Flint would slog through long lines and official abuse to cast ballots without marking a choice for chief executive.

In fact, Clinton killed [Stein's attempt to force a recount](#) in Michigan. When a judge ruled Stein lacked standing, but that Clinton had it, Clinton's lawyers [refused to support the recount](#). They also [stonewalled Stein's investigations](#) in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

None of this is mentioned in "What Happened" or in Clinton's public appearances. The candidate who rightfully won the 2016 election never mentions the obvious stripping and flipping that defined her losses in the three states that put Trump in the White House. Like Gore and Kerry, she has never indicated anywhere that she intends to do anything to stop

this from happening again.

Clinton does, however, famously attack former FBI **Director James Comey** and the Russians for allegedly derailing her campaign at crucial moments.

Comey's announcement of an investigation of her emails did, in fact, put a crimp in Clinton's campaign. She still won the popular vote and the exit polls in the five key states that could have won her the Electoral College.

The Russians may or may not have hacked our electronic voting machines. But it's abundantly clear, 17 years after Florida 2000, that those machines *can* be hacked with ridiculous ease, and that the likeliest culprits will always be local officials whose access is universal, quick and predictable.

The Russians may or may not have also released emails showing that Clinton's cronies on the Democratic National Committee wrongfully sabotaged the Bernie Sanders campaign.

Again and again, Clinton contemptuously assaults Sanders for his allegedly lukewarm support of her candidacy. But she completely ignores the massive grass-roots social democratic uprising that continues to make him America's most popular politician.

Instead, she locked up her boring, uninspired candidacy behind the mighty fortress of corporate Democrats who seem to fear the social/green democrats to whom the party must ultimately belong if it's ever again to take power. She let her personal hatred of Vladimir Putin convince even many of her followers that she might well spark a new Cold War with Russia.

Thus, she still misses and disses the activist nation that nominated Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, helped him survive the GOP's strip-and-flip assaults, and thus escape the Electoral College death trap.

In 2016 the grass-roots "Hope and Change" tidal wave segued into the "Sandernista" uprising. It became the most powerful grass-roots movement for eco-social democracy in modern U.S. history. The latest incarnation is now in a desperate struggle to take the Democratic Party back from the "Clintonista" corporate elite that has gutted it. Its agenda is to turn the party into a force for peace, social justice and ecological sanity that can actually win elections.

Had Clinton lowered herself to embrace it, she might well have overcome a thoroughly corrupted electoral system and kept Trump out of the White House.

But as of now, there is no indication that either she, Al Gore or John Kerry are awake to the power of that movement, or to the need to confront an electoral system that strips millions of citizens from its registration rolls, flips electronic vote counts, and has used the Electoral College twice in this century to elect the likes of Bush and Trump as president.

With the corrupt remnants of the Clintons' corporate-owned Democratic Leadership Council (which Hillary praises in "What Happened") still in control of the party machinery, more than a thousand federal, state and local offices have slipped to the Republicans since 2000. Much of that clearly stems from grass-roots disgust with a party run by a dull, tone-deaf corporate cabal whose agenda on war, trade, welfare and more, is often indistinguishable from that of the GOP.

But much also has to do with the death grip Republican governors and secretaries of state have on the electoral apparatus. In 2016 and 2018, six U.S. Senate seats went to Republican candidates who lost in the exit polls, a virtual statistical impossibility. With those races went control of the upper House—and the Supreme Court.

Trump's federal commission on "voter fraud," headed by Kobach, with Blackwell by his side, is escalating the Jim Crow assault on our voter rolls. Easily hacked electronic voting machines guarantee flipped outcomes. The Electoral College still lets small red states deny the duly elected presidential candidates rightful access to the White House.

The reforms we need to our electoral apparatus include universal automatic voter registration, transparent poll books to guarantee duly registered citizens can actually vote, a four-day holiday for voting, easily accessible polling stations, and, above all, universal hand-counted paper ballots, to stay where they are cast in translucent containers with clear chain of custody until they can be tallied in full daylight, with open national oversight.

We also need an end to gerrymandering, the death of the Electoral College and an end to corporate money in campaigns.

All this seems beneath the corporate Democrats. But without such reforms, it's a sad illusion that the Congress can be retaken in 2018, or that the GOP rampage through state and local legislatures can be reversed.

As for 2020, with the current electoral claptrap, a progressive presidency is almost certainly out of reach.

It will be up to the grass-roots sequel to the Sandernista movement to end this nightmare.

If "What Happened" and their timid inaction are any indicator, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and Al Gore still don't get it. That they opened the door for Donald Trump will be their most profound collective legacy.

"Truth!" shouts Jack Nicholson at the end of the legendary film "A Few Good Men." "You can't handle the truth!"

Until they can, these three biggest losers—and their moribund corporate Democrats—are destined for the scrap heap of history.

The sooner, the better.

***Harvey** is a lifelong activist who speaks, writes and organizes widely on energy, the environment, election protection, social justice, grass-roots politics and natural healing, personal and planetary.*

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