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Claremont McKenna College

**Herschel Walker, Black Voters, and the 2022 U.S Senate
Race in Georgia**

Submitted to
Professor John J. Pitney

By
Janise Waites

For
Senior Thesis
Fall 2021
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Introduction

The famous Herschel Walker of the Georgia Bulldogs is running to unseat the first Black U.S. senator from Georgia. If he wins the Republican nomination, this election will be the first time Georgia will see two Black men vie for a Senate seat. In the 2022 midterms Republicans look to win in battleground states such as Georgia to take back the House and Senate. In 2020, the Black vote proved significant in Georgia as the state went blue for the first time in almost 30 years. Given the history of both Black Republicans in America and disenfranchisement in Georgia, this race stands to be exciting because Democrats look to have the support system that they had in 2020. Michael Steele, a former chair of the Republican National Committee and Senate candidate in Maryland, remarked that the “Warnock vs Walker race won’t be as close as people think it will. Warnock has a lot of energy behind his effort. How does Walker build the coalition that Warnock has? Republican politics will race to play catch up as Georgia changes.”¹ But with Walker’s background and the political climate in 2021, this race may not be easy for Warnock. Steele went on to say during his talk at the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum, that “the current political state is about as screwed up as it’s been in 200 years.”² I agree, which is why I predict that Herschel Walker, while albeit an unconventional candidate, will be a challenge for Raphael Warnock in the Senate 2022 election in Georgia, and will get an above-average share of the Black vote.

The first chapter starts near the end of Reconstruction and examines the history of Black Republicans and the relationship between Blacks and the major parties in the United States. Black Americans vote in blocs, and whichever party promises them social, political, and

¹ Waites, Janise, and Michael Steele. Interview with Michael Steele at the Athenaeum. Personal, October 25, 2021

² Ibid.,

economic equality is the party they embrace. In simple terms, African Americans will vote for the party that promises to uphold their 13th, 14th, & 15th Amendment rights. The Party of Lincoln started out strong in the mid to late 1800s with providing African Americans the Reconstruction amendments, encouraging their participation in politics, and establishing organizations such as the Freedman's Bureau to help the former enslaved get on their feet.

African Americans started to switch sides when they migrated out of the South and the New Deal provided them with economic benefits. Black people bounced back and forth, many of them never wanting to let go of their Republican roots, and others realizing they needed to vote for the party that helped them, albeit indirectly. The elections and tenures of Presidents Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, and Johnson contained major shifts of Black political support to the different parties, and further solidified their importance as a voting bloc. The bottom fell out of GOP Black support when Republican politicians started to appeal to the White Southerners. White Southerners did not want to see Black enlightenment, they were afraid of Black Americans retaliating against them if they gained positions of power or felt that Black Americans were inferior. Republicans found that they could not appeal to both the racist White Southerners and the African Americans seeking equality.

The second chapter examines the politics and election system in Georgia. Run-off elections have helped and hurt the current party in control. There was a partisan shift in Georgia although it was different from the one Black Americans experienced. The shift happened slowly, by the 1990s Black voters had shown their power to decide races, which is impressive considering the amount of voter suppression that still occurred despite the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Nevertheless, in the early 21st century Georgia's shift from blue to red was complete – for the time being.

The third chapter studies Herschel Walker. He is a unique candidate considering he runs on Donald Trump's support but preaches unity across. The final chapter analyzes the Georgia Senate race of 2022. Following the October 2021 polling, Walker received endorsements from prominent Republicans as they had to come to terms with the likelihood of Walker winning the Senate nomination. Supporting Walker and showing a unified front proves to be exceedingly important as the GOP leadership looks to take back both chambers in the 2022 midterms. When I began this project in September 2021, I believed that Warnock would win easily, although after conducting the research, I now believe this race will be dangerously close.

Chapter 1: The Origins and Ideology of the Republican Party

In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, Michael Fauntroy writes that political parties have always struggled to “effectively address issues of concern to African Americans because of their appeal to the median voter, who is White and frequently indifferent or hostile to the interests of Blacks.”³ This has been proven true as the major parties have both supported and bullied African Americans, albeit during different time periods. There has never been an equal number of Black Americans in either party, as historical events caused major shifts in the political affiliation of Black voters.⁴ In the Reconstruction Era, Republicans had the same overwhelming support from Black voters that Democrats have now.⁵ The Black vote shifted based on which party had provided more support to Black Americans.

The Party of Lincoln

The Republican Party calls itself the Party of Lincoln. The party began with supporting Black people as its leaders wanted to restrict the expansion of slavery. The Republicans led the efforts to get African Americans their rights post-Civil War. The Reconstruction Era produced the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. Republicans also created the Freedman's Bureau, “an agency created to help newly freed slaves with economic, educational, and other benefits,” as defined by Fauntroy. These contributions to the community strengthened the alliance between African Americans and Republicans.⁶ Despite his opposition to the extension of slavery, Abraham Lincoln did not support the integration of Blacks and Whites. He famously said that he would do whatever necessary to reunite the union, which included maintaining slavery. At one

³ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 14. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

⁴ Ibid., 14

⁵ Ibid., 14

⁶ Ibid., 16

time, Lincoln remarked that Black Americans should return to Africa.⁷ Republicans never agreed on how to treat African Americans, which would ultimately lead to them losing their votes. Fauntroy examined the three different types of Republicans, the radicals, the conservatives, and moderates. The radicals are most similar to contemporary Democrats, as they believed in equality for African Americans. Conservatives used Black Americans to win the Civil War but did not want to support them during Reconstruction. Moderates straddled the two sides.⁸ Radicals, however, still succumbed to microaggressions against Black people and were willing to accept segregation in some form.⁹

The Republican support during Reconstruction led to a boom of African American politicians and political participation. After emancipation, Black Americans seized the opportunity to get involved with politics. The passage of the 15th Amendment meant that Black men could increase prosperity in the social and economic aspects of their lives. Examples include all-Black Republican clubs in the south,¹⁰ organizing their own conventions, writing petitions, and attempting to create a foundation of the Republican Party.¹¹ The first 22 African Americans who became members of Congress during Reconstruction were all Republicans.¹² Two thousand Black Republicans held state and local offices around the country. A Black Republican even became Governor of Louisiana¹³ and over half of the candidates elected in South Carolina between 1867 and 1876 were Black. From 1868 to 1872, Black GOP National

⁷ Ibid., 40

⁸ Ibid., 27

⁹ Ibid., 29

¹⁰ Beatty, Bess. Story. In *A Revolution Gone Backward: The Black Response to National Politics, 1876-1896*, 2. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987.

¹¹ Ibid., 4

¹² Beatty, Bess. Story. In *A Revolution Gone Backward: The Black Response to National Politics, 1876-1896*, 2. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987.

¹³ Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 11. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Convention delegates in Georgia rose from 6.7% to 41.9%.¹⁴ Despite their political power – or more likely, because of it -- Black legislators were victims of violence by the KKK. According to Joshua Farrington in *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*: “Terrorist organizations such as the [KKK] served as Democratic proxies bent on ridding the South of Black voters and their White Republican allies.” By 1876, Black Americans became aware that while the 15th Amendment gave them a right to vote, it did not protect their vote.¹⁵ In 1878, Black legislators in Louisiana had been killed or were forced to retreat from the state.¹⁶ By the 1890s their campaign of violence and intimidation had paid off, as Democratic politicians swept into state offices.¹⁷ As mentioned by Fauntroy, “African Americans understood who supported Reconstruction and its improvement of black life --the Republicans--and who did not -- the Democrats.”¹⁸ From 1877 to the 1930s, the rise of White supremacy continued, as Republicans began to ignore the Democrats' violations to the Reconstruction Amendments.¹⁹ In *A Revolution Gone Backward* by Bess Beatty, in reference to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes, a leader of the Black Republican Party in Georgia remarked that “no Black Georgian could ever expect an appointment from a president who had solicited their votes and then ignored them for three years.”²⁰ By the 1890s the Democrats gained control of the former Confederate South, with little

¹⁴ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. “Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South.” *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

¹⁵ Beatty, Bess. Story. In *A Revolution Gone Backward: The Black Response to National Politics, 1876-1896*, 8. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 20

¹⁷ Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 12. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

¹⁸ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 32. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹⁹ Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 33. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

²⁰ Beatty, Bess. Story. In *A Revolution Gone Backward: The Black Response to National Politics, 1876-1896*, 24. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987.

pushback by the Republicans. Nevertheless, African Americans stayed loyal to the Party of Lincoln.²¹ As Frederick Douglass declared in 1891, “I knew that however bad the Republican Party was, the Democratic Party was much worse”²²

Over the next few decades Whites began decreasing Black voting power in the South. According to the University of Michigan, “between 1890 and 1908, every state in the Deep South adopted a new state constitution, explicitly for the purpose of disenfranchising Blacks.”²³ States such as Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina adopted literacy tests, random registration procedures, and poll taxes to keep African Americans away from the voting booths.²⁴ While these practices also disenfranchised poor Whites, they were granted a loophole with Grandfather and Old Soldier clauses. These exempted Whites from voting restrictions if they were a descendant from someone who served in the Confederate Army or someone whose father or grandfather had voted before 1897.²⁵ Registered voters among Freedmen in Virginia were estimated to have dropped to 16%. In Mississippi and Alabama, it dropped to under 2%.²⁶ This resulted in the Republican Party losing representation in the South, as Black people made up the bulk of the voters.²⁷

²¹ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 30. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

²² Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 2. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

²³ “On the Eve of Complete Black Disenfranchisement, 1900.” Black Disenfranchisement, 1900. University of Michigan. Accessed December 3, 2021. <http://websites.umich.edu/~lawrace/votetour6.htm>.

²⁴ Ibid.,

²⁵ Hench, Virginia E. “The Death of Voting Rights: The Legal Disenfranchisement of Minority Voters.” *The Death of Voting Rights: The Legal Disenfranchisement of Minority Voters*. Case Western Reserve University School of Law Scholarly Commons, 1998, :736. <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/caselrev/vol48/iss4/3/>.

²⁶ Hench, Virginia E. “The Death of Voting Rights: The Legal Disenfranchisement of Minority Voters.” *The Death of Voting Rights: The Legal Disenfranchisement of Minority Voters*. Case Western Reserve University School of Law Scholarly Commons, 1998, :737. <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/caselrev/vol48/iss4/3/>.

²⁷ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. “Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South.” *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 6. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

Proving Douglass's words, Democratic President Woodrow Wilson's tenure set back racial equality. He appointed segregationists to his cabinet and made racist jokes about African Americans. White supremacists rose to high-ranking positions and Black people were shut out from holding appointed positions in his administration.²⁸ Wilson had allowed for Jim Crow laws to grow in Washington DC where African Americans had previously enjoyed more opportunities for employment. Black soldiers who came back from World War 1 could not get their jobs back or even go into the same buildings as before the war.²⁹ Six months into his presidency, prominent African American scholar WEB DuBois said Wilson "had given aid and comfort to every hateful enemy the Negro community knew."³⁰

By the early decades of the 20th century, Jim Crow laws had drastically reduced Black voting power in the South. Beginning in 1916, Black Americans began moving from the rural South to urban Northern cities. Known as the Great Migration, the first wave saw Black people leave to escape poor economic conditions and racial oppression.³¹ The South's small Republican Party began to abandon racial inclusiveness and increasingly yield to the Lily-White Movement. The Lily Whites were Republicans who opposed Black participation in politics. According to Farrington, "Lily Whites consisted mainly of southern industrialists who were skeptical of Democratic populist appeals and sought to 'purify' the GOP of African Americans in order to bring competitive two-party politics to the South." Black-and-Tans were Republicans who

²⁸ Du Bois, W. E. "My Impressions of Woodrow Wilson." *The Journal of Negro History* 58, no. 4 (1973): 453–59. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2716751>.

²⁹ Lewis, Tom, Jeremy B. White, Sam Sutton and Carly Sitrin, and Bill Mahoney and Josh Gerstein. "How Woodrow Wilson Stoked the First Urban Race Riot." *POLITICO Magazine*, November 2, 2015. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/11/woodrow-wilson-racism-federal-agency-segregation-213315>.

³⁰ Lewis, David Levering (1993). *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race 1868–1919*. New York City: Henry Holt and Co. p. 332. ISBN 9781466841512. 334-335

³¹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Great Migration." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, June 30, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Great-Migration>.

supported Black equality in the South.³² Both factions avoided coming to a consensus on what the party should look like and instead focused on pushing their individual agendas.³³ The Lily-White movement grew as they advocated for an all-White party and Black disenfranchisement.³⁴ Lily-Whites in the Deep South did not make much of a difference because White voters still saw the GOP as the party advocating for Black equality.³⁵ According to research conducted in *Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South*, the whitening of the GOP was necessary as it led to the Republican Party's electoral growth and dominance in the Outer South, (Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) and eventually the Deep South (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina).³⁶

In Georgia, many state legislators in high-ranking positions were Black, from William Shaw, the Secretary of the Georgia Republican State Central Committee, to Mamie Williams, the national committeewoman. According to Farrington, "Georgia's Black-and-Tan leadership was among the most active in the South."³⁷

Herbert Hoover and African Americans

³² Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 12. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

³³ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. "Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South." *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 6. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 10

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 16

³⁶ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. "Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South." *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 27. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

³⁷ Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 13. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Hoover was elected easily in 1928. The reestablished KKK was anti-Catholic, pro-Prohibition, and despised Democrat candidate Al Smith of New York. The KKK claimed that Smith would take orders from the Pope and annul Protestant marriages.³⁸ The Klan supported Hoover and the Republicans won 40 states, including New York. Smith still won the Deep South states, although he lost the Outer South states, with the exception of Arkansas, to Hoover.³⁹ This also proves that the growth of the Lily-Whites in the GOP had led to more White voters in the Republican Party. At this time there were no Black GOP National Convention delegates in Alabama, and the number Louisiana's delegates had been cut in half.⁴⁰

His administration focused on implementing its "Southern Strategy," which according to David Day in *Herbert Hoover and Racial Politics: The DePriest Incident* is, "the goal of...cooperation with, and eventually the co-option of, the progressive White elements of the South."⁴¹ In other words, the Southern Strategy was to increase the voting power of Whites in the South and maintain White supremacy without being overtly racist. In June 1929, the DePriest Incident involved Hoover's wife inviting the wife of Black Republican U.S. House Representative Oscar DePriest for tea at the White House. This action received backlash and the tea was split into four days to accommodate the Lily-Whites wives who did not want to have tea with a Black woman.⁴² Southern Whites claimed Hoover was reluctant about having DePriest's

³⁸ Hamilton, David E., David E. Hamilton Associate Professor of History University of Kentucky, David E. Hamilton, and Associate Professor of History University of Kentucky. "Herbert Hoover: Campaigns and Elections." Miller Center, August 1, 2017. <https://millercenter.org/president/hoover/campaigns-and-elections>.

³⁹ "Presidential Election of 1928." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1928_Election/.

⁴⁰ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. "Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South." *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

⁴¹ Day, David S. "Herbert Hoover and Racial Politics: The DePriest Incident." *The Journal of Negro History* 65, no. 1 (1980): y. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3031544>.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 9

wife and was just fulfilling an age-old tradition of inviting Black people to the White House. The unforeseen problem with the incident was Congressman DePriest capitalizing on his publicity and raising \$200,000 for the NAACP.⁴³ Because of the Southern Strategy, there was no way for the administration to effectively handle the incident as African Americans became more assertive in advocating for their rights.

In 1930, Hoover nominated Judge John J. Parker to the Supreme Court. Judge Parker was a racist and was rejected from the Supreme Court for remarking that Black political participation was an “evil...danger to both races... and is not desired by wise men...in North Carolina.”⁴⁴ Ironically, Herbert Hoover who won with Black support, helped purged African Americans from the party. Hoover also advocated replacing Black legislators with Lily-White Republicans and did nothing while the rest of the Lily-Whites unseated Black-and-Tans across the South. He even called for the removal of Benjamin Davis Sr. who controlled federal jobs in Georgia, Hoover claimed that it was because it was humiliating for White people to receive a job from a Black man.⁴⁵

The New Deal & Truman

With the Lily-White Movement purging Black Republicans from political participation, and the migration of African Americans to northern cities, Democrats turned their attention to the Black community. At first, Black Americans still saw the GOP as the lesser of two evils. The Great Depression disproportionately hurt African Americans as their jobs went to Whites after

⁴³ Ibid., 11

⁴⁴ “Senate Rejects Judge John J. Parker for the Supreme Court.” U.S. Senate: Senate Rejects Judge John J. Parker for the Supreme Court, February 26, 2021. <https://www.senate.gov/about/powers-procedures/nominations/judge-parker-nomination-rejected.htm>.

⁴⁵ Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 19. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

being laid off. In Baltimore, almost 33% of African Americans were unemployed in March 1931. President Hoover took a restrained approach to the economic crisis, and in line with the Lily-White ideology, he refused to be photographed with Black leaders, and disbanded the Black Tenth Cavalry.⁴⁶ Despite these issues, most African Americans stood with Hoover in the 1932 election.⁴⁷ Yet, Hoover lost to FDR overwhelmingly in the 1932 election. FDR won the support of Outer and Deep South states given Hoover's poor handling of the Great Depression. Black GOP National Convention delegates had decreased in Georgia from 69.7% in 1928 to 23.3% in 1932. Delegates in Alabama, Florida, and North Carolina were nonexistent.⁴⁸ The key to gaining Black support is through economic and social support, and not actively trying to hurt them. African Americans were hesitant when first supporting a Democrat. However, they supported FDR during his 1936 re-election campaign because of his economic programs, progressive cabinet, and his wife.

FDR's New Deal economic policies drew African Americans from the Republican Party. His policies under the Works Projects Administration included nondiscriminatory clauses.⁴⁹ These projects benefited African Americans as they had access to White and blue-collar jobs.⁵⁰ According to Oxford Research Encyclopedias, "By 1935, 30 percent of African Americans were recipients of New Deal relief programs, and many turned their political allegiances in these shifting times."⁵¹

⁴⁶ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 45. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

⁴⁷ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 14. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

⁴⁸ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. "Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South." *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

⁴⁹ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 46. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 46

An unofficial group of Black men who advised the President on race issues became known as the Black Cabinet. The Black Cabinet was a symbol more than it was a policy-making body, yet it helped gain Black votes for FDR.⁵² Also in 1936, Twenty-five Black Americans were elected to office, including Arthur W. Mitchell of Illinois, a former Republican who became the first Black person elected to the House of Representative as a Democrat.⁵³ One hundred Black Americans served in administrative roles in the New Deal, by the 1940s.⁵⁴

Eleanor Roosevelt advocated Black civil rights as she invited the President of the NAACP, Walter White,⁵⁵ to the White House and had a close friendship with civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune. When the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) forbade Marian Anderson to sing for an integrated audience in Constitution Hall in D.C., the First Lady arranged for her to sing for an integrated crowd of more than 75,000 people on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, helped organized the event on Easter Sunday in 1939. The reaction to the concert sparked a huge support for equal rights. After Eleanor resigned from the DAR, the organization invited Anderson to sing at Constitution Hall for a war-benefit concert. Anderson agreed, with the stipulation that the audience be integrated.

⁵¹ Murphy, Mary-Elizabeth B. "African Americans in the Great Depression and New Deal." Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History, November 19, 2020. <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistorical/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-632>.

⁵² Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 44. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

⁵³ "1936: Black Voters Leave the Party of Lincoln." Pro Quest, November 8, 2016.

<https://about.proquest.com/en/blog/2016/1936-Black-Voters-Leave-the-Party-of-Lincoln/>.

⁵⁴ Murphy, Mary-Elizabeth B. "African Americans in the Great Depression and New Deal." Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History, November 19, 2020. <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistorical/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-632>.

⁵⁵ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 14. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

With half of the sold-out audience being Black,⁵⁶ this symbolizes a turning point for the Democratic Party's relations with Black Americans.

Reliant on Southern electoral votes and aware of the power of Southern committee chairs in Congress, FDR was cautious about racial equality, as he refused to meet with NAACP leaders, gather votes for anti-lynching bills, and desegregate the armed forces.⁵⁷ FDR and Eleanor were in opposition to poll taxes and publicly advocated against them, but in the 1938 midterms, FDR lost some of his Democrat New Dealers and refused to speak out against them again.⁵⁸ FDR had his hands tied as he had to appeal to southern White voters to get his progressive legislation passed, and had promised Black Americans their full rights as US citizens.⁵⁹

Until this point, Black voters and the Republican Party had sometimes used each other for political and social advantage. During the late 1800s, Fauntroy writes. "Republicans wanted southern Black votes to secure their burgeoning political dominance...African Americans wanted protection from discrimination, the enforcement of the Reconstruction constitutional amendments and laws, and a greater share of freedom and equality."⁶⁰ As Topping expressed, "in 1932, African Americans had a choice between the party of the South or the Party of Lincoln; [and] in 1936, they could choose between the party of the New Deal or the party of the Great

⁵⁶Sandage, Scott, and Susan Stamberg. "Marian Anderson and Constitution Hall ." National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/marian-anderson-and-constitution-hall.htm>.

⁵⁷ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 46. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

⁵⁸ Walton, Hanes, Sherman C. Puckett, and Donald R. Deskins. "Chapter 22: African American Registration and Voting in the South, 1920–1944." In *The African American Electorate: A Statistical History*, edited by Walton, Hanes, Sherman C. Puckett, and Donald R. Deskins, 461-79. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2012. <http://dx.doi.org.ccl.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781452234397.n22>

⁵⁹ Farrington, Joshua D. Story. In *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP*, 19. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

⁶⁰ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 34. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

Depression.”⁶¹ This was the beginning of the shift that would continue throughout the decades. The reasons for the shift from the Republican Party to the Democrats included “interrelated racial, political, and economic concerns.”⁶² The Democrats began actively appealing to African Americans in 1936. The Democratic State Legislature in Pennsylvania passed “an equal rights bill which granted blacks access to all public hotels and restaurants in the Commonwealth,” according to Daphney Daniel in *How Blacks Became Blue: The 1936 African American Voting Shift from the Party of Lincoln to the New Deal Coalition*. Black Americans also seized employment opportunities offered by state and local Democrats in the North.⁶³ Democrats promised African Americans power and equality while the Republicans neglected the voting bloc and in turn paid the price as the constituency became a major factor in deciding elections between the 1930s and 1950s.⁶⁴

The Republican Party did try to win back the Black vote, but their attempts were tepid. The party could not reach a consensus on how they wanted to treat African Americans, as the base they were trying to appeal to were southern racists who wanted to keep segregation. Kansas Governor Alf Landon was an example. Landon was an outspoken civil rights advocate; he was the first modern Republican candidate to campaign for the Black vote. While he listened to the demands of the NAACP, he continued to do the bare minimum for African Americans as he only committed to a few of the demands for equality set forth by the NAACP.⁶⁵ Only 28% of African

⁶¹ Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 201. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 3

⁶³ Daniel, Daphney. “How Blacks Became Blue: The 1936 African American Voting Shift from the Party of Lincoln to the New Deal Coalition.” Digital Commons @ Salve Regina, April 2012, 11 https://digitalcommons.salve.edu/pell_theses/77/.

⁶⁴ Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 2. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

⁶⁵ Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 41. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

Americans supported Republican Alf Landon,⁶⁶ 71% of them had lost trust in the party due to the Great Depression and supported FDR's New Deal.⁶⁷ Black GOP National Convention delegates decreased in Georgia and Mississippi by almost 5%. According to Black Demographics, 44% of Black Americans were affiliated with the Democratic Party in 1936. African American's support for FDR's economic policies continued regardless of their dislike for the Democratic Party.⁶⁸

Truman established a Commission on Civil Rights upon ascending to the presidency after FDR's death,⁶⁹ although it was disbanded a year later in 1947. Before the November election, he desegregated the military in July 1948.⁷⁰ According to Jennifer Scanlon, with the help of civil rights activist and politician Anna Arnold Hedgeman, Truman received 90,000 votes in Harlem thanks to her work as director of the "National Citizens Committee for the Reelection of President Truman, the first organized effort to have African Americans influence a presidential race."⁷¹

In the 1948 presidential election, Thomas Dewey was expected to win. However, Truman won reelection by narrow margins thanks to Black voters.⁷² He received more than 75% of the Black vote.⁷³ GOP candidate Thomas Dewey had a good track record on civil rights legislation,

⁶⁶ "Black Party Affiliation." BlackDemographics.com, April 12, 2019. <https://blackdemographics.com/culture/black-politics/>.

⁶⁷ Topping, Simon. Story. In *Lincoln's Lost Legacy: The Republican Party and the African American Vote, 1928-1952*, 42. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 46

⁶⁹ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 25. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

⁷⁰ Evans, Farrell. "Why Harry Truman Ended Segregation in the US Military in 1948." History.com. A&E Television Networks, November 5, 2020. <https://www.history.com/news/harry-truman-executive-order-9981-desegregation-military-1948>.

⁷¹ Scanlon, Jennifer. "One Reason Why Blacks Rallied to Harry Truman in 1948." History News Network, April 9, 2016. <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/162309>.

⁷² Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 25. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

⁷³ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 26. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

however he did not use the Black vote to his advantage as he was warned to.⁷⁴ According to Simon Topping in “Never argue with the Gallup Poll: Thomas Dewey, Civil Rights and the Election of 1948,” “if Dewey had won Ohio, California and Illinois he would have become President. A shift of only 3,500 votes would have given Ohio to Dewey; with a shift of 16,500 votes, he would have won Illinois... A shift of 9,000 votes would have given him California... With a little more care on Dewey’s part, African Americans could have provided these votes.”⁷⁵ If the Republicans had secured 15% more African Americans, according to one estimate they would have won the presidency,⁷⁶ proving that the Black vote was emerging as a game-changing constituency. Majority of the Deep South states supported J. Strom Thurmond for president, he gained 39 electoral votes from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, and one vote from Tennessee. The rest of the Deep and Outer South went democratic for Truman.⁷⁷ Truman struggled with race relations as in private letters to his family, he referred to Eleanor as someone who stirred “up trouble between Whites and blacks.”⁷⁸

The 50’s and 60’s

Upon Truman deciding not to run in 1952, the Democrats nominated Governor of Illinois Adlai Stevenson to run for president. Stevenson chose John Sparkman from Alabama as his running mate.⁷⁹ Although Sparkman advocated for liberal policies such as public housing and

⁷⁴ Topping, Simon. ““Never Argue with the Gallup Poll”: Thomas Dewey, Civil Rights and the Election of 1948.” 179 Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2004. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/S0021875804008400>.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 180

⁷⁶ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 26. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

⁷⁷ “Presidential Election of 1948.” 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1948_Election/.

⁷⁸ Shogan, Robert. “MORE THAN A DREAM.” In *Harry Truman and the Struggle for Racial Justice*, 99–113. University Press of Kansas, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1c3sp6r.11>.

⁷⁹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Adlai E. Stevenson." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, July 10, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Adlai-E-Stevenson>.

increased funding to education and healthcare, he opposed civil rights.⁸⁰ Sparkman was a segregationist who opposed repealing the poll tax and Truman's bills to protect Black Americans from discrimination. The Democrats failed to receive an endorsement from civil rights groups as they did not believe Sparkman would advocate for their equality.⁸¹ Republican war hero Dwight Eisenhower chose Richard Nixon to be his running mate. As a Senator, Nixon supported civil rights for African Americans.⁸² Eisenhower won in a landslide putting an end to 20 years of Democratic control of the White House. The Deep South states still went Democratic as well as Outer South states, Arkansas and North Carolina.⁸³ Black GOP National Convention delegates in Georgia had shrunk from 48.3% in 1948 to 26.7% in 1952. Texas's delegates were now nonexistent and delegates in Florida fell 18%.⁸⁴ Eisenhower received 21% of the Black vote in the 1952 election, with the bulk of Republican voters being northern middle-class African Americans.⁸⁵

Eisenhower straddled his personal prejudices with his public efforts for racial equality. By 1952, the GOP had considered the northern Black vote to be lost, and that the value rested in southern White voters.⁸⁶ At this point, almost six million Black people had migrated to northern

⁸⁰ Webb, Samuel L. "John J. Sparkman." Encyclopedia of Alabama. Encyclopedia of Alabama, April 21, 2015. <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1441>.

⁸¹ Ibid.,

⁸² Black, Conrad. "Richard M. Nixon: A Life in Full." *Choice Reviews Online* 45, no. 12 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.45-6972>.

⁸³ "Presidential Election of 1952." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1952_Election/.

⁸⁴ Heersink, Boris, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. "Whiteness and the Emergence of the Republican Party in the Early Twentieth-Century South." *Studies in American Political Development* 34, no. 1 (2020): 10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0898588x19000208>.

⁸⁵ Salvatore, Susan. "Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights - NPS." National Park Service. Department of the Interior, 28, 2009. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf.

⁸⁶ Rigueur, Leah Wright. Essay. In *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power*, 27. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

cities.⁸⁷ Eisenhower believed equality would be resolved via slow gradualism. He wanted Black Americans to be patient. African Americans rejected that idea as well as the self-help policy decisions that were being made.⁸⁸ As Rigueur stated, “in private meetings with the NAACP during the 1952 campaign, Eisenhower promised to advance the cause of civil rights through legislation and enforcement...[however] the president resolutely opposed civil rights measures like the FEPC[Fair Employment Practices Committee], while his gradualist approach reinforced African Americans’ growing belief that Republicans were disinterested in civil rights.”⁸⁹ Then in 1954, the *Brown v Board of Education* decision overturned segregation in public schools. Although, a timetable for desegregation had not been outlined in the ruling,⁹⁰ Eisenhower had a constitutional responsibility to enforce the decision. He sent federal troops to Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas to oversee the desegregation of the school.⁹¹ According to Chester J Pach Jr., “Eisenhower’s action was significant as it was the first time since Reconstruction that a President had sent military forces into the South to enforce federal law.”⁹²

In 1957, Eisenhower signed the first civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. The bill authorized the prosecution of individuals who violated the 15th Amendment but failed to provide federal protection for voting rights which African Americans had been granted but were barred from exercising. Then, in 1960, he signed a second civil rights legislation which clarified some

⁸⁷ Mock, Brentin. “It’s Time to Stop Calling It ‘The Great Migration.’” Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, July 4, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-04/why-we-should-stop-calling-it-the-great-migration>.

⁸⁸ Salvatore, Susan. “Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights - NPS.” National Park Service. Department of the Interior, 28, 2009. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 28

⁹⁰ “What Was Brown v. Board of Education?” NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, October 7, 2021. <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/landmark-brown-v-board-education/>.

⁹¹ Pach, Chester J. “Dwight D. Eisenhower: Domestic Affairs.” Miller Center, May 29, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs>.

⁹² Ibid.,

of the small advances in the previous bill.⁹³ The real importance of the bills was that they provided the foundation for the 1964 Civil Rights Act passed by Lyndon B Johnson.⁹⁴ In his first tenure, he appointed E. Frederic Morrow to be the White House Officer for Special Projects. Morrow was assigned to address civil rights issues within the administration. What he found during his time in the administration can be summed up as calling attention to the fact that Black people have continued to gravitate towards candidates who promise them social and economic benefits.⁹⁵ This revelation would remain true throughout the late 20th century. Eisenhower continued to placate to White southerners when they complained about the civil rights changes being made.⁹⁶ Candidates refusing to provide African Americans with social, economic, and political equality in order to appeal to White voters created two problems. The first was that White people expect to be accommodated for in all aspects of life. The second was the perpetuation of White supremacy, as the needs of African Americans is consistently not put before theirs.

The Final Straw

The election of 1960 was the last time Republicans got a substantial share of the Black vote. While Black voters remained supportive of Nixon because of the civil rights legislation he advocated for in the 50's, John F Kennedy did a better job in gaining Black support.⁹⁷ Kennedy consistently supported African Americas during his campaign, he sympathized with their

⁹³ Ibid.,

⁹⁴ "Civil Rights Act of 1957, September 9, 1957." Iowa Culture. University of Maryland Law Library, January 29, 2019. <https://iowaculture.gov/history/education/educator-resources/primary-source-sets/right-to-vote-suffrage-women-african/civil-rights-act-1957>.

⁹⁵ Salvatore, Susan. "Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights - NPS." National Park Service. Department of the Interior, 29-30, 2009. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf.

⁹⁶ Pach, Chester J. "Dwight D. Eisenhower: Domestic Affairs." Miller Center, May 29, 2020. <https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs>.

⁹⁷ Whalen, Thomas J. "How the GOP Lost the African-American Vote." Wbur Cognoscenti. WBUR, August 30, 2016. <https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2016/08/30/democrats-black-voter-support-thomas-j-whalen>.

struggle and assisted in getting Martin Luther King Jr. released from jail after he was arrested during a sit-in. He even went the extra mile by calling Coretta Scott King who was worried about her husband. Kennedy received 68% of the Black vote, marking the last time Black voters would support a Republican candidate by more than 15%.⁹⁸ Kennedy won all of the Deep and Outer South states, except Tennessee and Florida.⁹⁹

The Republican Party's decision to have Barry Goldwater face Lyndon B Johnson in the 1964 presidential election proved to be the last straw for Black voters. Goldwater voted against the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹⁰⁰ Although Dr. King claimed that Goldwater was not a racist, King declared in July 1964 that "Mr. Goldwater articulates a philosophy which gives aid and comfort to the racists," he later remarked in October 1964 that, "the principles of states' rights advocated by Mr. Goldwater diminish us and would deny to Negro and White alike, many of the privileges and opportunities of living in American society."¹⁰¹ This disparagement led to Black voters supporting LBJ. This election represents the end of the ideological shift of the Republican Party as all Deep South States went red for Goldwater and the Outer States went blue for LBJ. In the 1964 election, Black support for the GOP plummeted from 32% to 6%. It never recovered.¹⁰² Fauntroy explains that LBJ's commitment to passing the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts drew Black voters away from the GOP.¹⁰³

Winning Back the Vote

⁹⁸ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

⁹⁹ "Presidential Election of 1960." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1960_Election/.

¹⁰⁰ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 50. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹⁰¹ "Goldwater, Barry M." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute. Stanford University, August 4, 2020. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/goldwater-barry-m>.

¹⁰² Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 57

As Fauntroy recalls, there were four major ways the Republican Party tried to win back Black Voters. The first consisted of public policy initiatives such as the Philadelphia Plan during the Nixon Administration.¹⁰⁴ This attempt failed because the public policies never focused on Black voters' main issue, social justice.¹⁰⁵ The second involved political activities to target Black voters.¹⁰⁶ The third were compromises made between Black interest groups and the Republican Party. The fourth were Black organizations who were actively trying to bring in African American voters.¹⁰⁷ The third and fourth ways failed because of a lack of funding for the Black organizations and lack of a coordinated effort.¹⁰⁸

Modern Presidents and Promises to Black Voters

The election of 1968 came on the heels of the assassinations of Dr. King and JFK. Republican Richard Nixon ran against his Vice-President Herbert Humphrey. According to Kenneth O'Reilly in *Nixon's Piano*, before the election Nixon paid respects to Dr. King's family and during his second trip to Atlanta, he promised "to increase the number of black-owned businesses if elected."¹⁰⁹ Nixon's advisers encouraged him to appeal to White voters, despite his anti-racist roots, Nixon saw the opportunity to turn a minority party into a majority party, according to O'Reilly, and employed a familiar southern strategy to rally the support of White voters.¹¹⁰ Only 15% of Black voters supported Nixon in 1968.¹¹¹ Nixon lost the South to Segregationist George Wallace. The Governor of Alabama, Wallace was supported by the KKK

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 61

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 88

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 62

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 61-62

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 88

¹⁰⁹ O'Reilly, Kenneth. "Nixon's Piano." Internet Archive. Free Press, January 1, 1995. <https://archive.org/details/nixonspianopresi00orei/page/279/mode/1up>.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.,

¹¹¹ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

and advocated against racial change.¹¹² In the 1968 election, majority of the Deep South states went to Wallace apart from South Carolina, but he pulled ahead in Arkansas.¹¹³ With Nixon's popularity because of his success in foreign affairs, he was reelected by a landslide in 1972.¹¹⁴ He won 13% of the Black vote during this election.¹¹⁵

Republican President Gerald Ford advocated for ending racial discrimination. He increased funding for civil rights activities by a billion dollars over the course of three years and implemented Executive Order 11246, which prohibited discrimination in federally assisted construction projects and federal contracts.¹¹⁶ But, he only received 15% of the Black vote in 1976.¹¹⁷ Black Americans supported Jimmy Carter in the 1976 presidential election. Carter's southern ties helped him carry the Deep and Outer South. Black voters enthusiastically supported Carter given the poor economy, Carter's promise to sign a Full Employment Bill, an impressive Get out the Vote campaign that registered and mobilized Black voters, and their recent declaration of loyalty to the Democratic Party given the Goldwater incident.¹¹⁸

Due to the Iranian hostage crisis and a declining economy, Republican California Governor Ronald Reagan won the 1980 presidential election in a landslide,¹¹⁹ despite only

¹¹² "George Wallace Inaugurated as Alabama Governor." History.com. A&E Television Networks, July 21, 2010. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/george-wallace-inaugurated-as-alabama-governor>.

¹¹³ "Presidential Election of 1968." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1968_Election/.

¹¹⁴ "Presidential Election of 1972." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1972_Election/

¹¹⁵ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹¹⁶ "Black Americans." Ford Library Museum. Ford Library Museum. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/factbook/black.htm>

¹¹⁷ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹¹⁸ STONE, CHUCK. "Black Political Power in the Carter Era." *The Black Scholar* 8, no. 4 (1977): 10. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41066097>.

¹¹⁹ "Presidential Election of 1980." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1980_Election/.

receiving 12% of the Black vote.¹²⁰ He was endorsed by the KKK but waited three weeks before rejecting the endorsement.¹²¹ Reagan carried every Deep and Outer South state except Georgia. After receiving his party's nomination, he pledged to "the protection and enforcement of the civil rights of Black Americans," according to the National Review.¹²² After entering office, Reagan advocated that civil rights legislation created reverse discrimination. He secretly tried to overturn civil rights polices without being labeled a racist. He withdrew funding from civil rights parts of the bureaucracy so they could not enforce to examine the civil rights laws.¹²³ While Reagan signed the legislation that made Martin Luther King Jr Day a national holiday, he did so reluctantly as he knew his decision not to sign it would be overturned by Congress.¹²⁴ Reagan's presidency solidified the GOP's opposition to racial equality and welfare programs as he implemented the southern strategy.

After Reagan's two terms, George H.W. Bush was elected to the presidency. His Democratic challenger, Michael Dukakis, faced a terrible campaign setback and H.W Bush ran on the economic and international success of Reagan.¹²⁵ During the election, Willie Horton, a Black prisoner released on a furlough program, raped a White woman in Massachusetts. An ad created by the H.W. Bush campaign made Dukakis, the current Governor of Massachusetts, look

¹²⁰ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 32

¹²² Skinner, Kiron K. "Ronald Reagan and the African American." National Review. National Review, July 29, 2020. <https://www.nationalreview.com/2011/02/ronald-reagan-and-african-american-kiron-k-skinner/>.

¹²³ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 96. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹²⁴ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 106. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹²⁵ "Presidential Election of 1988." 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. https://www.270towin.com/1988_Election/.

soft on crime. The ad was racist and led to the race-based politics that continues to haunt Democrats.¹²⁶ In 1988, H.W Bush only received 10% of the Black vote.¹²⁷

After this, the Black vote for the Republican Party never rose more than 15%. In 1996, Bob Dole received 12% of the Black vote.¹²⁸ In 2000, George W. Bush received 9% of the Black vote, and 11% in 2004. John McCain received 4% of the Black vote in 2008. Mitt Romney received 6% of the Black vote in 2012.¹²⁹

Black GOP Candidates

In 1968, Brooke was the first Black Republican elected to the Senate by popular vote in Massachusetts. Brooke represented the original ideals of the GOP. He advocated for affirmative action, public housing bills, and investing in minority-owned businesses. As the ideology of the Republican Party shifted, Brooke worked with the Democrats in the House and Senate. In 1987, he was defeated by Democrat Paul Tsongas.¹³⁰

In some situations, Black GOP candidates are running in districts where they have no chance of winning. The “sacrificial lambs” were brought to the slaughter by the Republican Party so they can appear anti-racist.¹³¹ Between 1998 and 2004, 64 Black Republicans won the GOP nomination to run in the congressional election cycle. All but one of those candidates lost, and over half lost by more than 25 percentage points.¹³² Republican leadership failed to

¹²⁶ Baker, Peter. “Bush Made Willie Horton an Issue in 1988, and the Racial Scars Are Still Fresh.” The New York Times. The New York Times, December 4, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/us/politics/bush-willie-horton.html>.

¹²⁷ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 56. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 56

¹²⁹ “How Groups Voted in 2012.” Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. Cornell University. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-2012>.

¹³⁰ “Brooke, Edward William, III.” History, Art & Archives. US House of Representatives: . Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/9905>.

¹³¹ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 75. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 76

adequately support the Black candidates as they did the White ones. While the Black Republicans may not do well among Black voters because of their history with the GOP, Black Republicans should also be well marketed to White voters. Notable victims of the lack of GOP support were Herman Cain and Dylan Glenn.

Herman Cain ran in the Republican primary for a Georgia Senate` seat in 2004. His White opponents tried to paint him as a moderate Republican. Cain struggled to establish how conservative he was as he argued for affirmative action and the right to an abortion only when the mother's life is threatened.¹³³ Cain won 26.2% of the vote and came in second. Herman Cain ran a short-lived campaign to be the Republican nominee for the 21012 Presidential election. He exited the race because he received four sexual harassment accusations from women. Although, he lost support because he lied about it, not because of the actions themselves.¹³⁴

In 2011, he estimated that he would receive a third of the Black vote to face President Obama in the election.¹³⁵ Cain spoke about Black Americans being brainwashed if they voted for a Democrat and that they were "over" having a first Black President.¹³⁶ Cain suffered from the Republican paradox as he struggled to advocate advancement for Black Americans and seem conservative enough for the Republican Party. He could not have called African Americans "brainwashed" and expected to do well among Black voters. But if he advocated for affirmative

¹³³ "Three Republicans Battling for Spots in Georgia's Likely Senate Runoff." AccessNorthGA. The Associated Press, March 27, 2004. <https://archive.ph/20120529192838/http://new.accessnorthga.com/detail.php?n=172858>.

¹³⁴ Bacon, Perry, and Dan Eggen. "Herman Cain Faces Sexual Harassment Allegations from Fourth Woman." The Washington Post. WP Company, November 8, 2011. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/herman-cain-faces-sexual-harassment-allegations-from-fourth-woman/2011/11/07/gIOA8mZOxM_story.html.

¹³⁵ Michael Muskal, "Herman Cain Says He Can Win a Third of Black Vote in 2012," Los Angeles Times (Los Angeles Times, September 27, 2011), <https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-xpm-2011-sep-27-la-pn-herman-cain-black-vote-20110927-story.html>.

¹³⁶ Shahid, Aliyah. "Herman Cain, 2012 GOP Presidential Hopeful: Black Voters 'Brainwashed' into Supporting Liberals." nydailynews.com. New York Daily News, January 10, 2019. <https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/herman-cain-2012-gop-presidential-hopeful-black-voters-brainwashed-supporting-liberals-article-1.952275>.

action or other programs that benefited Black Americans, then he risked losing the support of the conservative party. This catch 22 is the main challenge of being a Black Republican.

Dylan Glenn twice sought a US House seat as he ran in 2000 and 2004 in the state of Georgia.¹³⁷ In 2000 he raised almost as much money as the incumbent Sanford Bishop, which is an impressive feat for a first-time challenger.¹³⁸ In 2004, however, he lost his primary. Despite having the support of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, he did not have the support of state Republicans.¹³⁹ National GOP leaders will advocate for Black Republicans, but sometimes the support falls through as the state GOP leaders fail to support the candidates as seen with Cain in Georgia. The party could have done more to help but allowed Cain to fall short.¹⁴⁰

In later years the US saw a rise in Black Republican candidates. J. Kenneth Blackwell and Lyn Swann ran for Governor in Ohio and Pennsylvania respectively. Michael Steele in Maryland and Keith Butler in Michigan ran for the Senate, and Sherman Parker ran for the House in Missouri. All but Parker lost, however, we see a shift in the way the GOP is approaching Black candidates as Blackwell, Swann, and Steele won their party nominations.

In 1990, Gary Franks became the first Black Republican to serve in the House for almost 60 years. Unlike Brooke, Franks aligned with the GOP's values. He opposed affirmative action and supported welfare reform that included less government assistance.¹⁴¹

JC Watts from Oklahoma accompanied Franks to the 104th Congress, which was the first time Republicans were in control in 40 years. Watts ran on a conservative agenda, he supported

¹³⁷ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 78. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹³⁸ "OpenSecrets." OpenSecrets.org. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.opensecrets.org/politicians/elections.php?cycle=2016&cid=N00002674&type=I>.

¹³⁹ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 78. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹⁴⁰ Fauntroy, Michael. "African American Republican Congressional Candidates: A Typology." *Phylon (1960-)* 55, no. 1 & 2 (2018): 55. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26545021>.

¹⁴¹ "Franks, Gary A.," History, Art & Archives (US House of Representatives), accessed December 4, 2021, <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/13411>.

the death penalty, welfare reform, and school prayer. With the elections of both Franks and Watts, the GOP hoped more African Americans would vote Republican in future elections.¹⁴² Unlike Watts, Franks repeatedly got into fights with the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC),¹⁴³ and failed to work with the NAACP the way Watts did.¹⁴⁴

Mia Love of Utah is the first Black person to be elected to Congress from Utah and the first Black woman elected as a Republican. During her tenure, similar to Franks, Love had been critical of the CBC. However, she warmed up to them and became the only Black Republican on the caucus. Love voted with her fellow Republicans, she voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and supported the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. In 2018, she lost her seat to Salt Lake County's Democratic mayor Ben McAdams.¹⁴⁵

Black Republican Will Hurd represented the 23rd district of Texas from 2015 to 2021. During his tenure he was seen as a bipartisan member of Congress. He was the only Black Republican while in office but in January 2021 two more took his place.¹⁴⁶ In true bipartisan fashion he voted against both the articles of impeachment against Trump,¹⁴⁷ but voted in favor of the LGBTQ Equality Act in 2019.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² "Watts, Julius Caesar, Jr. (J. C.)." History, Art & Archives. US House of Representatives. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/23468>.

¹⁴³ "Franks, Gary A.," History, Art & Archives (US House of Representatives), Accessed December 4, 2021, <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/13411>.

¹⁴⁴ "Watts, Julius Caesar, Jr. (J. C.)." History, Art & Archives. US House of Representatives. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/23468>.

¹⁴⁵ "Love, Ludmya Bourdeau (MIA)," History, Art & Archives (US House of Representatives:), accessed December 4, 2021, <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/15032411201>

¹⁴⁶ Emma Green, "The Texas Republican Asking His Party to Just Stop," The Atlantic (Atlantic Media Company, May 11, 2021), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/will-hurd-future-republican-party/618843/>.

¹⁴⁷ Weiyi Cai and K. K. Rebecca, "Impeachment Results: How Democrats and Republicans Voted," The New York Times (The New York Times, December 18, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/18/us/politics/trump-impeachment-vote.html?mtrref=en.wikipedia.org&gwh=46C2378613B8820F3275C1948D0F4F17&gwt=pay&assetType=PAYW> [ALL](#).

¹⁴⁸ Authors Sam Sanchez and Sam Sanchez, "San Antonio Congressman Will Hurd, a Republican, Voted in Favor of the Equality Act," Out in SA, May 20, 2019, <https://outinsa.com/san-antonio-congressman-will-hurd-a-republican-voted-in-favor-of-the-equality-act/>.

Black Republican Burgess Owens is a congressman representing Utah's 4th district. Similar to Walker he is a former NFL player, he played 10 seasons for the New York Jets and the Oakland Raiders.¹⁴⁹ In May 2021, he introduced bills that would limit Critical Race Theory being taught in schools. According to a press release from his office, the resolution, "highlights the dangers of teaching CRT in U.S. schools, underlines the systemic racism and damaging philosophy within this prejudicial ideological tool."¹⁵⁰

Byron Donalds is a Black Republican representing Florida's 19th district. He is a Trump supporter who claims he was denied entry into the CBC for being a conservative.¹⁵¹ During the COVID-19 Pandemic he refused to wear a mask and get the vaccine, this resulted in him contracting the virus in October 2020. He also denies systemic racism exists in the US today, although he believes it was a problem 100 years ago.¹⁵²

Some of these Black Republicans are less controversial than others, however their label as a Republican influenced how they acted in Congress and how they were treated by their Black Democrat counterparts. The most notable modern Black Republican is Tim Scott.

Tim Scott was appointed by South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley in 2013, retained his seat in 2014, and was elected to a full six-year term in 2016.¹⁵³ He has also served one term for

¹⁴⁹ "About," Representative Burgess Owens (House of Representatives, February 22, 2021), <https://owens.house.gov/about>.

¹⁵⁰ "Owens Introduces Legislation to Combat Critical Race Theory." *Representative Burgess Owens*. House of Representatives, May 14, 2021. Owen's Office. <https://owens.house.gov/media/press-releases/owens-introduces-legislation-combat-critical-race-theory>.

¹⁵¹ Virginia Chamlee, "Newly Elected Republican Rep. Byron Donalds Goes Viral for CNN Exchange about Racism and Trump," PEOPLE.com, June 11, 2021, <https://people.com/politics/newly-elected-republican-lawmaker-byron-donalds-goes-viral-for-cnn-exchange/>.

¹⁵² Daniels, Eugene, Krystal Campos, and Michael Cadenhead. "Meet Byron Donalds, Florida's Third-Ever Black Republican in Congress." POLITICO. POLITICO, April 26, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/04/26/byron-donalds-new-117th-congress-freshman-members-diversity-2021-484444>.

¹⁵³ "SENATORS OF THE UNITED STATES 1789–Present A Chronological List of Senators since the First Congress in 1789." *Senate Historical Office*, January 20, 2021. <https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/chronlist.pdf>.

the U.S House, representing South Carolina's 1st district from 2011-2013. Scott is a man of firsts, “the first African-American senator from South Carolina, the first African-American senator to be elected from the Southern United States since 1881...and the first African-American Republican to serve in the U.S. Senate since Edward Brooke.”¹⁵⁴ In 2016, Scott received 8% of the Black vote while the Democratic challenger received 90%.¹⁵⁵ During his tenure, Scott declined to join the Congressional Black Caucus.¹⁵⁶ While there was a shift in the parties nationally, the shift in Georgia happened later and was more gradual as Georgia Democrats worked to hold on to their conservative values.

¹⁵⁴ Deutsch, Lindsay. “Political Firsts: How History Was Made This Midterm Election.” USA Today. Gannett Satellite Information Network, November 5, 2014. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/11/05/historical-firsts-from-the-election/18523511/>.

¹⁵⁵ “2016 Election Results: South-Carolina Exit Polls - CNN.” CNN. A Warner Media Company, November 9, 2016. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls/south-carolina/senate>.

¹⁵⁶ Dirner, Cullen. “Tim Scott Will Not Join Congressional Black Caucus: ‘My Campaign Was Never About Race.’” ABC News. ABC News Network, December 2, 2010. <https://abcnews.go.com/thenote/2010/12/tim-scott-will-not-join-congressional-black-caucus-my-campaign-was-never-about-race.html>.

Chapter 2: Georgia

Georgia was the last of the original thirteen colonies in the United States to be founded, and it remains the largest state to the east of the Mississippi. Georgia had the most amount of slave plantations of any other state in the southern United States. The state embodied economic dependence on slavery and was the home of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s.¹⁵⁷ During Reconstruction, political and racial tensions were high as the Freedman's Bureau and the KKK impacted Georgia's postwar years. As the state prepared to be readmitted into the Union, the General Assembly expelled 27 elected Black Republicans from their seats,¹⁵⁸ they were reseated after lobbying the federal government, but were then attacked and killed by the KKK between 1868 and 1870.¹⁵⁹ In 1908, Georgians legally disenfranchised Black voters upon realizing their political power. According to the *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, "an amendment to the state constitution established literacy and property requirements to supplement the poll tax, effectively barring voting by Blacks, and many poor Whites as well. This disfranchisement, along with legislatively mandated racial segregation of public facilities, defined the Jim Crow era that would prevail in Georgia and the South for more than half a century."¹⁶⁰ While Georgia has had more publicly elected officials than any other state, until 2020, it had one of the lowest turnout rates

¹⁵⁷ "Georgia." History.com. A&E Television Networks, November 9, 2009. <https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/georgia>.

¹⁵⁸ Cobb, James and John Inscoc. "Georgia History." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last modified Sep 30, 2020. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/georgia-history-overview/>

¹⁵⁹ Drago, Edmund. "Black Legislators during Reconstruction." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last modified Sep 24, 2020. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/black-legislators-during-reconstruction/>

¹⁶⁰ Cobb, James and John Inscoc. "Georgia History." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last modified Sep 30, 2020. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/georgia-history-overview/>

across the nation.¹⁶¹ In 2020, with new voting strategies and the actual implementation of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, 68% of voting eligible voters submitted a ballot.¹⁶²

Voting in Georgia

Georgia's primaries are open, meaning those who were eligible to vote in the general may vote in the primary. During the primary, voters tell workers at the polling place which party's ballot they would like to use.¹⁶³ Georgia and Louisiana are the only two states that hold runoffs for general elections.¹⁶⁴ Runoffs take place when candidates fail to get at least 50% of the vote in the general election. Most races require a plurality, meaning they get more percentage of the votes than the other candidates. But in Georgia candidates must receive a majority of votes to be declared the winner. The legitimacy of the runoff is often contested because many believe that it discriminates against female and minority candidates.

According to the Eisenhower Online Library,

In 1957, President Eisenhower sent Congress a proposal for civil rights legislation. The result was the Civil Rights Act of 1957, which established the Civil Rights Section of the Justice Department and empowered federal prosecutors to obtain court injunctions against interference with the right to vote. It also established a Federal Civil Rights Commission with authority to investigate discriminatory conditions and recommend corrective measures.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Howard, Robert M. 2017. *Politics in Georgia* (version Third edition.) Third ed. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2232507>.

¹⁶² <http://www.electproject.org/2020g>

¹⁶³ Howard, Robert M. 2017. *Politics in Georgia* (version Third edition.) Third ed. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2232507>.

¹⁶⁴ "Runoff Election." Ballotpedia. Accessed December 4, 2021. https://ballotpedia.org/Runoff_election.

¹⁶⁵ "Civil Rights Act of 1957." Civil Rights Act of 1957 | Eisenhower Presidential Library. National Archives. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/civil-rights-act-1957>.

The Civil Rights Section brought forth a case in which a registrar, J.G Raines, was actively discriminating against Black voters. According to historian Susan Salvatore in a study about Civil Rights in America, “Raines turned down otherwise qualified black applicants because they mispronounced certain words [on literacy tests].”¹⁶⁶ In *United States vs Raines*, the court ruled that discriminating against Blacks at the polls was a violation of the 15th Amendment; however, any “legislation designed to deal with such discrimination is ‘appropriate legislation.’ This case decision brought about the creation of the Election Law Study Committee (ELSC) in 1957.¹⁶⁷

The ELSC created new literacy tests that were harder than the previous ones. A committee member, Peter Zack Geer commented that “the White voters of Georgia will be willing to put up with some inconveniences to see that illiterate black voters don't get on the registration lists.”¹⁶⁸ Given that the Governor and other Georgia state leadership were segregationists, they approved all legislation created to disenfranchise Black voters. Cases were made that the new literacy tests would harm White voters as well, but in counties with more African American voters, the literacy tests harmed Black people the most.¹⁶⁹

In 1963, State Representative Denmark Groover introduced the proposal for run-off elections. As a segregationist, he was worried about African Americans growing political strength. He had lost an election five years prior to a candidate who had garnered the Black vote by a five-to-one margin. He blamed his loss on “Negro bloc voting.” According to Joshua Holzer, Whites fear Black bloc voting because “the White vote could be split among several different candidates, while African Americans could – in theory – vote as a single bloc for an

¹⁶⁶ Salvatore, Susan. “Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights - NPS.” National Park Service. Department of the Interior, 35, 2009.

https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 35

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 35-36

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 36

African American candidate, who could end up winning with the most votes overall.”¹⁷⁰ With run-off elections, even if the White voters are split between candidates, they still have the opportunity to unite together during the run-off to defeat the Black candidate.¹⁷¹ For example, “In 1978 James Clyburn, Commissioner of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission, won forty three percent of the vote in the Democratic primary for South Carolina's Secretary of State. Despite this strong support, he lost the nomination to a White opponent in the ensuing runoff,” this review by William Simpson shows that a run-off allows for prejudiced voting because White candidates get a second chance at voting against the Black candidate.¹⁷² Groover openly spoke about the need for majority vote in order to suppress Black voters. According to Susan Salvatore in “Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights,” he expressed that “We have got to go to the majority vote because all we have to have is a plurality and the Negroes and the pressure groups and special interests are going to manipulate this State and take charge if we don't go for the majority vote.” The proposal passed the State House and Senate, 150 to 37 and 47 to 0.¹⁷³ Run-offs would later prove to not be as advantageous as they thought considering the Ossoff-Perdue Senate election in 2020.

The late John Dunne, who served as an Assistant US Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, said the run-off system in Georgia had “a demonstrably chilling effect on the ability of Blacks to become candidates for public office.” Georgia elected its first African

¹⁷⁰ Holzer, Joshua. “A Brief History of Georgia's Runoff Voting – and Its Racist Roots.” *The Conversation*, October 13, 2021. <https://theconversation.com/a-brief-history-of-georgias-runoff-voting-and-its-racist-roots-150356>.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*,

¹⁷² William Simpson, “The Primary Runoff: Racism's Reprieve,” *University of North Carolina Law Review*, 359-360 (North Carolina Law Review, January 1, 1987), <https://scholarship.law.unc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3068&context=nclr>.

¹⁷³ Salvatore, Susan. “Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights - NPS.” National Park Service. Department of the Interior, 28, 2009. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf.

American US Senator in 2020, however, Georgians have yet to elect a Black governor, lieutenant governor, or secretary of state.¹⁷⁴ In Georgia from 1970-1984, Black candidates who were front runners in the primary, only won runoff races 50% of the time when they opposed a White candidate and White candidates beat Black candidates 84% of the time.¹⁷⁵ Proving the original purpose of the run-off was working.

Yellow-dog Democratic Stronghold becomes GOP stronghold

Yellow Dog Democrats referred to loyal voters in the South who voted for the Democratic Party. According to the old joke, Southern Democrats declared their love for the party by saying “I’d vote for a yellow dog if he ran on the Democratic ticket.”¹⁷⁶

Georgia’s shift from Democrat to Republican came after the nation’s ideological sorting of the Republican and Democratic parties. According to the Black brothers in *The Rise of Southern Republicans*

“‘Southern political institutions,’ as V. O. Key Jr. demonstrated, were deliberately constructed to subordinate ‘the Negro population and, externally, to block threatened interferences from the outside with these local arrangements.’ By protecting White supremacy, southern Democrats in Congress institutionalized massive racial injustice for generations. Eventually, the Civil Rights movement challenged the South’s racial status quo and inspired a national political climate in which southern Democratic senators could no longer kill civil rights legislation.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Holzer, Joshua. “A Brief History of Georgia’s Runoff Voting – and Its Racist Roots.” *The Conversation*, October 13, 2021. <https://theconversation.com/a-brief-history-of-georgias-runoff-voting-and-its-racist-roots-150356>.

¹⁷⁵ Howard, Robert M. 2017. *Politics in Georgia* (version Third edition.) Third ed. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2232507>.

¹⁷⁶ “Yellow Dog Democrat.” *Political Dictionary*, December 1, 2021. <https://politicaldictionary.com/words/yellow-dog-democrats/>.

¹⁷⁷ Black, Earl, and Merle Black. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*, Harvard University Press, 2003. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=3300485>.

As Hastings Wyman concluded: “The Democratic Party is seen as the party advancing the interests of African-Americans and the GOP is seen as, well, I wouldn't say 'looking out for White people,' but looking out for the country as a whole. Southerners feel left out of the Democratic Party, and nobody likes to feel left out.”¹⁷⁸

In presidential elections, Georgia voted Democratic from 1868 to 1960. In 1964, Georgia switched to support Republican Barry Goldwater over LBJ as Georgians disapproved of the Civil Rights Act.¹⁷⁹ Goldwater won with 54% in GA against LBJ.¹⁸⁰ From 1972 to 2020, with the exception of Georgian Democrat Jimmy Carter and Arkansas Democrat Bill Clinton, Georgia supported the Republican Presidential nominee.¹⁸¹

Georgia was the last Deep South State to complete its shift from Democratic to Republican. Many White Georgians had a hard time of letting go of the Democratic Party,¹⁸² the same party that had advocated for states' rights and segregation. However, as the LBJ signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, White Georgians began to shift to the GOP. According to *The Calculus of Realignment: The Rise of Republicanism in Georgia*, “only a fraction of southern Whites actually *identified* themselves as Republicans in 1964. ‘Republicans in the South called themselves Goldwater Republicans—not Republicans.’”¹⁸³ Many White Georgians supported Goldwater as they looked to uphold White supremacy and decrease the growth of the urban

¹⁷⁸ Johnson, Patrik. “Republican America: How Georgia Went 'Red'.” The Christian Science Monitor. The Christian Science Monitor, July 15, 2004. <https://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0715/p01s02-uspo.html>.

¹⁷⁹ “Georgia Presidential Election Voting History.” 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.270towin.com/states/georgia>

¹⁸⁰ Fauntroy, Michael K. Story. In *Republicans and the Black Vote*, 51. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2008.

¹⁸¹ Gollum, Mark. “Why Republicans Can No Longer Count on Georgia's 16 Electoral Votes .” CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, November 8, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/georgia-demographic-shift-vote-democrat-republican-1.5794314>.

¹⁸² Gilliland, Jason W. “The Calculus of Realignment: The Rise of Republicanism in Georgia, 1964-1992.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 96, no. 4 (2012): 414. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43855869>.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 420

regions in Georgia.¹⁸⁴ Eventually, rural and suburban White voters united under the Republican Party.¹⁸⁵ Meanwhile Black voters continued to support the Democrats and LBJ's legislation.¹⁸⁶

Bo Callaway was elected to Congress as the first Republican Representative from Georgia since Reconstruction.¹⁸⁷ As he ran in a predominantly rural district, he promised to repeal the Civil Rights Act.¹⁸⁸ After one term in Congress he ran for Governor against Lester Maddox. Maddox was also a segregationist like Callaway and was also disliked by Black Georgians.¹⁸⁹ While Callaway did well in the urban and suburban vote, he lost to Maddox because he failed to appeal to rural voters, he did not advocate for evangelicals or show blunt racism the way Maddox did.¹⁹⁰

From 1964 until 2002, Georgia maintained a Democratic governor. In 1994, Zell Miller began supporting Democratic positions on issues such as welfare reform and education. But his advocacy for the removal of the confederate flag on Georgia's state flag was a notable stance that White southerners did not support. His successor, Roy Barnes, replaced the state flag as it promoted segregation. He received a large backlash as the new flag was considered to be ugly.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 416

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 414

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 421

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 421

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 423

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 424

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 426

¹⁹¹ Copeland, Larry. "Georgia Leaders Try to Skip Controversy in Flag Vote." USA today. Gannett Satellite Information Network, March 2, 2004. http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2004-03-02-flag_x.htm.

Rural White voters ¹⁹² strongly supported Sonny Perdue as he won the seat in 2002 with 51.3% of the vote.¹⁹³ Since then, Georgia has continued to elect Republican governors.

Georgia selected a Class 3 Republican for the US Senate in 1992. This election represents the shift from Democrat to Republican with the run-off system at the center. Democrat incumbent Wyche Fowler led in the general election, beating Republican candidate Paul Coverdell by 30,000 votes. Overall Black political participation had dropped from 25% in 1986 to 19% in 1992.¹⁹⁴ But because a Libertarian candidate got 3% of the vote a run-off was required, the candidate drained votes that Coverdell would actually have received.¹⁹⁵ This was the first run-off since 1964. Fowler was at risk of losing Black support so he tried to appeal to liberal Black women, rural White women, and the LGBTQ community.¹⁹⁶ Coverdell won the run-off by 16,000 votes and became the second Republican Georgia US Senator.¹⁹⁷ Coverdell had been able to garner support from “middle and upper-income metropolitan Whites, but he also ran well in rural and small-town counties with large White populations in the northern and southeastern parts of the state.”¹⁹⁸ As the Democrats controlled the state legislature they were

¹⁹² Welker, Kristen, Hallie Jackson, Phil McCausland, and Emma Margolin. “Donald Trump Taps Former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue as Secretary of Agriculture.” NBCNews.com. NBCUniversal News Group, January 19, 2017. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/donald-trump-taps-georgia-gov-sonny-perdue-secretary-agriculture-n708651>.

¹⁹³ Christian, Nichole M. “THE 2002 ELECTIONS: SOUTH; GEORGIA.” The New York Times. The New York Times, November 7, 2002. <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/11/07/us/the-2002-elections-south-georgia.html>.

¹⁹⁴ Black, Earl, and Merle Black. The Rise of Southern Republicans, Harvard University Press, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=3300485>. 300

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/11/05/us/the-1992-elections-state-by-state-south.html>

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.,301

¹⁹⁷ “GA US Senate - R Primary.” Our campaigns. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.ourcampaigns.com/RaceDetail.html?RaceID=207813>.

¹⁹⁸ Black, Earl, and Merle Black. The Rise of Southern Republicans, Harvard University Press, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=3300485>. 302

infuriated with Coverdell's victory, after the run-off, they altered the requirements "so that a candidate only had to win 45 percent of the vote in a general election to avoid a runoff."¹⁹⁹

Georgia's last remaining Democratic senator was Max Cleland. In 1996, Cleland and multi-millionaire Guy Millner ran for the US Senate. Even though the Republicans had never held the Class 2 Senate seat for Georgia the race was close.²⁰⁰ Cleland maintained his seat with 49% to 48% thanks to the new run-off requirement and gained 88% of the Black vote. The Republican candidate won 91% of conservative White Republicans and 82% of moderate to liberal White Republicans. Cleland did very well among Black women as 9/10 voted for him. Only 56% of White women voted for the Democrat. Georgian women seemed to be "unenthusiastic about the GOP's harder edges, particularly its stands on abortion, social spending and education," according to Merle and Earl Black.²⁰¹ As Democratic leaders in Georgia began shifting their ideologies, Black voters noticed and began voting accordingly. As mentioned in the *Rise of the Southern Republicans*, "the higher black populations in the Deep South states generally established an important Democratic advantage. If Democratic candidates could defeat Republicans by nine to one or nineteen to one among black voters, Republican nominees required well over three-fifths of the White vote while Democrats needed less than two-fifths of the White vote in order to achieve statewide majorities."²⁰²

The 2002 midterm proved to be the turning point as Democrats not only lost the gubernatorial election in Georgia, but Senator Cleland, the State Speaker of the House, and

¹⁹⁹ Tharpe, Jim. "Runoff System A Southern Relic." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, November 9, 2009. <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/runoff-system-southern-relic/Ibbyj1S5WTqsAEpGdQJrqL/>.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.,

²⁰¹ Black, Earl, and Merle Black. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*, Harvard University Press, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=3300485>. 311

²⁰² Ibid.,195

Majority Leader.²⁰³ Cleland was a moderate but was also pro-choice and against drilling in ANWR.²⁰⁴ In the months leading up to the election, Cleland lost his lead when Saxby Chambliss ran an ad that made voters question Cleland's patriotism and judgement in regard to the war in Iraq despite him having lost his legs and an arm while in the line of duty.²⁰⁵ Chambliss gained 45.9% of the vote and defeated Cleland.²⁰⁶

In 2005, Glenn Richardson became the first Republican Speaker of the House in Georgia since 1868. He was handpicked by newly elected Governor Sonny Perdue to serve in House leadership a few years prior.²⁰⁷ Georgia has had a Republican Speaker since. In 2005, with a newly acquired control over the state legislature the Republicans reversed the run-off requirement back to a majority rule.²⁰⁸

Current day Georgia

The early 21st century consists of the last shift to the Republicans. With the election of Sonny Perdue, more Republicans were elected to historically held Democratic positions such as Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State.²⁰⁹ Racial politics proved to be important in current

²⁰³ Johnson, Patrik. "Republican America: How Georgia Went 'Red'." The Christian Science Monitor. The Christian Science Monitor, July 15, 2004. <https://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0715/p01s02-uspo.html>.

²⁰⁴ "Georgia Senator Max Cleland." On the Issues. Accessed December 4, 2021. https://www.ontheissues.org/senate/Max_Cleland.htm.

²⁰⁵ Crowley, Michael. "The Democrats' Favorite Victim." Slate Magazine. Slate, April 2, 2004. <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2004/04/the-democrats-favorite-victim.html>.

²⁰⁶ Black, Earl, and Merle Black. The Rise of Southern Republicans, Harvard University Press, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=3300485>. 311

²⁰⁷ "Glenn Richardson State Senate." Glenn Richardson for State Senate. Accessed December 4, 2021. <http://www.glennrichardson.com/about.html>.

²⁰⁸ Tharpe, Jim. "Runoff System A Southern Relic." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, November 9, 2009. <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/runoff-system-southern-relic/Ifbyj1S5WTqsAEpGdQJrql/>.

²⁰⁹ Bluestein, Greg. "Stacey Abrams Is Running for Georgia Governor in 2022." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, December 1, 2021. <https://www.ajc.com/politics/politics-blog/breaking-stacey-abrams-is-running-for-georgia-governor-in-2022/VRUXXJSQWBBAXAZQZV72FLP4LM/>.

day elections such as in the 2018 Georgia Governor election between Democrat Stacey Abrams and Republican Brian Kemp.

Since 2005, Georgia has remained red across its legislative trifecta. Abrams, who served in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2007-2017, came close to disrupting that trifecta. In the 2018 Democratic primary, Abrams ran for Governor against Stacey Evans. She won,²¹⁰ making her the first Black woman to be a major party's nominee for governor.²¹¹ Abrams lost the general election to Secretary of State Brian Kemp. She got 48.8% vs Kemp's 50.2%, narrowly missing a run-off election. This was the closest governor's race in Georgia since 1966.²¹²

According to CNN exit poll data, 30% of the voters were Black and of those, 93% supported Abrams in the race. Black women accounted for 16% of the vote and over 95% voted for Abrams. Both White men and women overwhelmingly supported Kemp, garnering over 70% for both identities.²¹³ In her "not concession" speech after the election she accused Kemp of abusing his position of Secretary of State to make it harder for people to vote. Abrams claimed there were "long lines at voting sites, closed polling stations, and the cancellation of hundreds of thousands of voter registrations." Her campaign was unable to find the evidence necessary to corroborate these claims in court.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Catanese, David. "A Tale of Two Staceys in Georgia." US News, May 21, 2018.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/the-run/articles/2018-05-21/georgias-race-for-governor-pits-one-stacey-against-another>.

²¹¹ Bradner, Eric. "Stacey Abrams Wins Democratic Primary in Georgia. She Could Become the Nation's First Black Woman Governor." CNN Politics. CNN. Cable News Network, May 23, 2018.

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/22/politics/georgia-governor-race-stacey-abrams/index.html>.

²¹² Greg Bluestein, Tia Mitchell. "Abrams Ends Run for Governor against Kemp." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, November 17, 2018. <https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/kemp-holds-steady-lead-over-abrams-state-prepares-certify-vote/WI5zxjHjLNR2WbvcEBVYWL/>.

²¹³ "2018 Midterms: Exit Polling." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2018/exit-polls/georgia>.

²¹⁴ Greg Bluestein, Tia Mitchell. "Abrams Ends Run for Governor against Kemp." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, November 17, 2018. <https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/kemp-holds-steady-lead-over-abrams-state-prepares-certify-vote/WI5zxjHjLNR2WbvcEBVYWL/>.

Before running for Governor in 2018, Abrams co-created the New Georgia Project, which focuses on getting people of color to vote, especially those who had not previously done so before. Abrams released *The Abrams Playbook*, a memo written in 2019, which predicted the importance of Georgia voters in the 2020 election cycle. The memo called for Democrats to invest in Georgia, appeal to White and voters of color, and provide the voting infrastructure “such as running a small-scale provisional ballot chase after primary night to test operations. Train staff and volunteers by running GOTV in the primary election with the same structure and velocity as you will need to for the general election.”²¹⁵ Establishing Democratic strongholds in Georgia's growing suburbs, registering new voters, and making sure the electorate could get to the polls proved to be a gamechanger in Georgia. In the two years after her 2018 loss, her organizations registered more than 800,000 new voters.²¹⁶ Other organizations listened to Abrams and invested in the Peach State. Such as The Democratic Super PAC Priorities USA.²¹⁷ Abrams announced on December 1, 2021, that she will be challenging Kemp to the Governorship in the 2022 race. This is another opportunity to examine how well she reduced voter suppression in Georgia²¹⁸ and if the state can continue going blue.

In 2020, for the first time since 1992, a Democrat won Georgia's electoral votes.²¹⁹ Joe Biden won Georgia with 49.5% of the vote as many urban regions got bluer during the Trump-

²¹⁵ Abrams, Stacey, and Lauren Groh-Wargo. “The Abrams Playbook - Fair Fight.” Fair Fight, September 9, 2019. <https://fairfight.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/TheAbramsPlaybook.pdf>.

²¹⁶ King, Maya. “How Stacey Abrams and Her Band of Believers Turned Georgia Blue.” POLITICO. POLITICO, November 8, 2020. <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/08/stacey-abrams-believers-georgia-blue-434985>.

²¹⁷ Bacon, Perry. “How Georgia Turned Blue.” FiveThirtyEight. FiveThirtyEight, November 18, 2020. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-georgia-turned-blue/>.

²¹⁸ Brown, Hayes. “Stacey Abrams' Run for Georgia Governor Will Test GOP Voter Suppression.” MSNBC. NBCUniversal News Group, December 2, 2021. <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/stacey-abrams-run-georgia-governor-will-test-gop-voter-suppression-n1285261>.

²¹⁹ “Georgia Presidential Election Voting History.” 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.270towin.com/states/georgia>.

Era.²²⁰ Many Republican counties that shifted blue in 2016 remained blue such as Gwinnett, Cobb and Henry.²²¹ While Fayette and Cherokee counties still went Republican in 2020 their margins were smaller than during the 2016 election.²²² According to the *Urban Institute*, “Trump won Fayette with a 19-point margin in 2016 but that margin shrunk to 6 points in 2020.”

Biden owes some of his victory in Georgia to the suburbanization of counties. Since the early 2000s, the population of the Atlanta metropolitan region has grown profusely, it now contains about two-thirds of the state’s population. The Atlanta suburbs have become home to a racially diverse electorate and college-educated professionals who are more likely to vote Democrat.²²³

The increase in Black, Latino, and Asian American voters in the Atlanta metro area also helped turn Georgia blue. Between 2016 and 2020, there was a 25% increase in registered Black voters, an 18% increase for Latino registered voters, and a 12% increase for Asian registered voters.²²⁴ According to Vi Nguyen, organizations such as Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta helped register Asian American voters, and “Asian Americans represented over 30,000 first-time voters and voted for Joe Biden at a 2:1 margin.”²²⁵

²²⁰ Bacon, Perry. “How Georgia Turned Blue.” FiveThirtyEight. FiveThirtyEight, November 18, 2020. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-georgia-turned-blue/>.

²²¹ Frey, William H. “Biden's Victory Came from the Suburbs.” Brookings. Brookings, November 13, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/bidens-victory-came-from-the-suburbs/>.

²²² “Georgia Presidential Election Voting History.” 270toWin.com. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.270towin.com/states/georgia>.

²²³ Nijman, Jan. “Georgia's Political Shift – A Tale of Urban and Suburban Change.” Urban Studies Institute. The Conversation, November 9, 2020. <https://urbaninstitute.gsu.edu/2020/11/09/georgias-political-shift-a-tale-of-urban-and-suburban-change/>.

²²⁴ Noe-Bustamante, Luis, and Abby Budiman. “Black, Latino, Asian Adults Key to Georgia Registered Voter Increase since 2016.” Pew Research Center. Pew Research Center, December 21, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/21/black-latino-and-asian-americans-have-been-key-to-georgias-registered-voter-growth-since-2016/>.

²²⁵ Nguyen, Vi, “Asian American Voting During the 2020 Elections: A Rising, Divided Voting Group” (2021). *CMC Senior Theses*. 2646. https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/2646

The impact of racial politics carried into the 2021 Georgia Senate run-off. The race featured Democrat Jon Ossoff versus incumbent Republican David Perdue and a special election between Democrat Raphael Warnock and incumbent Republican Kelly Loeffler. According to CNN exit poll data, 92% of Black voters supported Ossoff, and only 71% of White voters supported Perdue. Ossoff did slightly better among female voters with 55%. 96% of Black women voted for Ossoff, while 87% of Black men voted for Ossoff. Perdue got majorities for both White male and female identities. Ossoff carried the urban area of Georgia which only accounts for 24% of the state's electorate. While Perdue won both the rural and suburban areas of the state.²²⁶

For the special election, 93% of Black voters supported Warnock, and 71% of White voters supported Loeffler. Warnock did slightly better than Loeffler among female voters as well with 54% to 53%. Warnock did better among Black men than Ossoff, gaining 90%, but did slightly worse with Black women, only getting 95% of their vote. Nearly the same amount of White male and female voters supported Perdue and Loeffler. 18% of Black women responded to this survey as compared to only 12% of Black men, and 33% of White women voted compared to 28% of White men, showing that women in general are more likely to vote. Warnock did similarly well in the urban areas of Georgia as Ossoff, but they did not come as close in rural areas.²²⁷

Ironically, Perdue did better in the general election than the run-off. In the first round, Perdue received 49.73% of the vote compared with Ossoff's 47.95%.²²⁸ If not for a need to

²²⁶ "Georgia 2020 Senate Special Runoff Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/senate-special-election-runoff/georgia>.

²²⁷ "Georgia 2020 Senate Special Runoff Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/senate-special-election-runoff/georgia/51>.

²²⁸ "Georgia 2020 Senate Election Results." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/results/state/georgia/senate>.

achieve a majority in Georgia, the Republicans would be in control of the Senate, even if Warnock had still won. The switched from plurality to majority ended up backfiring on the GOP.

In 2018, Abrams won 70% of the urban vote, but lost the suburban vote to Kemp by 13%. However, just two years later, Ossoff came within 2% of winning the suburban vote and Warnock won the vote by almost 10%.²²⁹ Counties like Gwinnett, the state's largest suburban country,²³⁰ helped give Warnock the edge he needed. Gwinnett had a 5% Black population thirty years ago and now it is 30% with almost 940,000 residents. Warnock becoming the state's first Black Senator and being a Reverend in the former Martin Luther King Jr's church helped him gain support from White suburban women.²³¹

The history of party politics and disenfranchisement in Georgia sets the stage for Black Republicans like Herschel Walker to attempt to return Georgia to its conservative values.

²²⁹ "Georgia 2020 Senate Special Runoff Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/senate-special-election-runoff/georgia/51>.

²³⁰ Cobb, James . "Commentary: Why a Key Georgia County Flipped from Red to Blue-and What It Means for Democrats." Fortune. Fortune, December 29, 2020. <https://fortune.com/2020/12/27/georgia-election-2020-gwinnett-county-flipped/>.

²³¹ Clark, Dartunorro. "Georgia's Diversifying Suburbs Could Be Boon for Democrats in the Senate Runoffs." NBCNews.com. NBCUniversal News Group, January 5, 2021. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/georgia-s-diversifying-suburbs-could-be-boon-democrats-senate-runoffs-n1252293>.

Chapter 3: Herschel Walker

Herschel Walker has key advantages in the Georgia Republican 2022 Senate race as he prepares to run against Democratic U.S. Senator Raphael Warnock in 2022. Although aspects of his personal life may be problematic, his football career is not. He won a Heisman Trophy in 1982 for his performance in junior year at the University of Georgia and went to play in the NFL for 12 seasons playing for the Cowboys, Vikings, Eagles, and Giants.²³²

Trump Endorsement

Walker has the support of former President Donald Trump, potentially making him the Republican electorate's top choice to be their candidate in 2022.²³³ Walker and Trump have been friends for almost 40 years, since Walker played for Trump's United States Football League team the New Jersey Generals.²³⁴ Walker has backed Trump consistently, even commenting that the 2020 Presidential election was victim of mass fraud and faulty Georgia ballots. As reported by CNN, Walker has spread conspiracy theories about the election on FOX News,²³⁵ commenting after the 2020 election that "I can guarantee you; Joe Biden didn't get 50 million people voting for him. But yet people think that he's won this election."²³⁶ Many Georgia Republican voters believe that Donald Trump should be President, as David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler both supported Trump by claiming there was mismanagement and corruption in

²³² "Herschel Walker Running for U.S. Senate in Georgia." The Athletic, August 24, 2021.

<https://theathletic.com/news/herschel-walker-running-for-us-senate-in-georgia/ydYauY4PVong>.

²³³ Cillizza, Chris. "Analysis: A Herschel Walker Candidacy Is a Total Nightmare for Senate Republicans." CNN. Cable News Network, August 25, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/24/politics/herschel-walker-senate-republicans/index.html>.

²³⁴ Rubashkin, Jacob. "Georgia Senate: Between the Parties." Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 7.

²³⁵ Dale, Daniel. "Fact Check: Georgia Candidate Herschel Walker Is a Serial Promoter of False 2020 Conspiracy Theories." CNN. Cable News Network, August 28, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/28/politics/fact-check-herschel-walker-2020-election-january-6/index.html>.

²³⁶ Episode. *Justice with Judge Jeanine*. San Francisco, CA: Fox News, December 27, 2020.

https://archive.org/details/FOXNEWSW_20201227_220000_Justice_With_Judge_Jeanine/start/2700/end/2760

Georgia’s election system. As reported by NBC, “Their claim lacks any specificity or description of evidence of actual fraud...On Thursday, Georgia finished a hand recount of ballots in the state showing Joe Biden had indeed won presidential race.” Given the sycophantic nature of Republican lawmakers and the lies they spread to their electorate it will be in Walker’s best interest to continue supporting Trump. Nevertheless, Walker has shown that he is not willing to blindly follow Trump. The former president called for the GOP electorate to not vote in 2022 and 2024 if the election fraud from 2020 is not solved. Walker challenged this notion by stating that everyone should go vote. While he appreciates the endorsement, Walker affirms that this is his race and that he will do things the Hershel Walker way.²³⁷ Having an endorsement by the former Republican president and being an athletic star in Georgia gives him an edge over the other Republican candidates.²³⁸

Football

Southerners take their football very seriously. The game has changed the way the South operates. Socially, football helped integrate schools, as coaches wanted Black students on their teams. Politically, in the Southeastern Conference (SEC), two-thirds of former players went on to become governors or US Senators. Alabama’s Republican Senator Tommy Tuberville is a retired football coach.²³⁹ In Georgia specifically, Sonny Perdue played for the Georgia Bulldogs and the

²³⁷ Schnell, Mychael. “Herschel Walker Seeks Distance from Trump on GOP Refusing to Vote in 2022, 2024.” TheHill. The Hill, October 20, 2021. <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/577608-herschel-walker-seeks-distance-from-trump-on-gop-refusing-to-vote>.

²³⁸ Greenwood, Max. “Herschel Walker to Make First Public Appearance since Entering Senate Race at Georgia Football Game.” TheHill. The Hill, September 10, 2021. <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/571681-herschel-walker-to-make-first-public-appearance-since-entering-senate-race>.

²³⁹ Adams, Jessalyn. “‘We Need a Different Voice!’ Tommy Tuberville Says It's Time to Send Real People to Washington D.C.” CBS 42. CBS 42, March 4, 2020. <https://www.cbs42.com/news/politics/your-local-election-hq/we-need-a-different-voice-tommy-tuberville-says-its-time-to-send-real-people-to-washington-d-c/>.

team continued to support him when he became Governor in 2006.²⁴⁰ The merit and status that comes with being associated with football will carry a candidate far in the South. Walker is among the greatest college football players of all time. Among his accomplishments were: leading the Georgia Bulldogs to a 12-0 record and national championship in 1980, beating Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl 17-10 in 1981, and setting 41 Georgia, 16 SEC and 11 NCAA records, due to this Georgians may think they owe their votes to Walker.²⁴¹

Mental Illness and Abuse Claims

Nevertheless, many challenges with Walker have come to light as he tries to assert himself as a serious candidate. Walker was diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder, which can be defined by Psychiatry.org as having “overwhelming experiences, traumatic events and/or abuse that occurred in childhood.”²⁴² Walker has been very transparent about his mental illness throughout his life. He wrote a book called *Breaking Free* in which he opened up about his struggles with the disorder. He wrote about his treatment, wanting to remove mental health stigmas, and his connection veterans because of their PTSD recovery process.²⁴³ Republicans can use this material to their advantage in spinning Walker’s story. Many Democrats have attempted to end the stigma regarding mental health by coming forward about the disorders they face on a

²⁴⁰ Everson, Darren. “What the Rise of Southern Football Says about America.” The Wall Street Journal. Dow Jones & Company, December 6, 2008. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB122843720586081461>.

²⁴¹ “The 150 Greatest Players in College Football’s 150-Year History.” ESPN. ESPN Internet Ventures, January 13, 2020. https://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/page/cfb150players/the-150-greatest-players-college-football-150-year-history.

²⁴² Wang, Philip. “What Are Dissociative Disorders?” American Psychiatric Association. American Psychiatric Association (, August 2018. <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/dissociative-disorders/what-are-dissociative-disorders>.

²⁴³ Slodysko, Brian, and Bill Barrow. “As Herschel Walker Eyes Senate Run, a Turbulent Past Emerges.” AP NEWS. Associated Press, July 23, 2021. <https://apnews.com/article/lifestyle-sports-nfl-college-football-coronavirus-pandemic-5e2875eec11e93f9a3bf1fc859137ff8>.

daily basis.²⁴⁴ This is the perfect time to have Walker spearhead mental health reform and use his past to the Republican advantage.

In his book, Walker recalls playing Russian roulette. He claims that he did not want to die but “looked at mortality as the ultimate challenge.” He chased down a man who was late in delivering his car. He was set on killing the man, but a Christian bumper sticker made him change his mind. This is the moment he decided to seek professional help.²⁴⁵

Walker also has a history of abuse claims from his ex-wife Cindy Grossman, and ex-girlfriend Myka Dean. AP reports on the abusive behavior displayed by Walker throughout his marriage. Before Grossman filed for divorce in 2001, he had held a gun to her head. After the separation he repeatedly threatened her and her family and displayed stalker behavior. Walker denied these claims, but Grossman got a protective order barring him from carrying a gun for a period of time. Similar to his ex-wife, Walker also threatened to blow his ex-girlfriend’s head off after she threatened to end their long-term relationship. Myka Dean made the alleged threats in 2012, but no charges were filed against Walker. Dean did not want to give an official statement for fear of harming Walker’s publicity but was ultimately forced to by the responding officer. Her family were also unaware of the threats and issued a statement supporting Walker. The former football player also denied that he ever threatened Dean.²⁴⁶

Business Endeavors

Walker founded Renaissance Man Food Services in 2002 where, according to their website, they produce “quality poultry, pork and bakery products to the retail and food service

²⁴⁴ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/politicians-admit-mental-health-struggles>

²⁴⁵ Slodysko, Brian, and Bill Barrow. “As Herschel Walker Eyes Senate Run, a Turbulent Past Emerges.” AP NEWS. Associated Press, July 23, 2021. <https://apnews.com/article/lifestyle-sports-nfl-college-football-coronavirus-pandemic-5e2875eec11e93f9a3bf1fc859137ff8>.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.,

marketplace.” According to the AP report, after his book was released his staff and managers were blindsided by the negative publicity, but they ultimately decided to stick with him. From the AP report:

“In repeated media interviews, Walker claimed his company employed hundreds of people, [including] a chicken processing division in Arkansas and grossed \$70 million to \$80 million annually in sales. However, when the company applied for a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan last year, it reported just eight employees...Walker’s business associates [also] testified in the same case that he doesn’t own chicken processing plants...they described him as a licensing partner who lends his name to the enterprise — not unlike the kind of deals his friend Donald Trump has used to expand his brand for decades.”

Walker has also been called an unreliable business partner and has faced multiple lawsuits for not correctly billing companies and providing promised funding. Walker denies all claims of wrongdoing on his part with his company.²⁴⁷

Walker in Politics

Walker acks political experience. Not only has Walker never been a candidate before in a local, state, or federal election, but he has also not lived in Georgia since his football days.²⁴⁸ Senate races are brutal, Warnock and Ossoff extensively campaigned around the Peach State, and this election will be expensive because it may decide the Senate majority. Walker lived in Texas after retiring from the NFL and he recently moved to Georgia and registered to vote. Normally such candidates get hit with carpetbagging claims, but celebrities can get away with it.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.,

²⁴⁸ Cillizza, Chris. “Analysis: A Herschel Walker Candidacy Is a Total Nightmare for Senate Republicans.” CNN. Cable News Network, August 25, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/24/politics/herschel-walker-senate-republicans/index.html>.

In the case of Alan Keyes, he had previously run for Senate in Maryland twice²⁴⁹ and lost to the Democratic candidates.²⁵⁰ In 2004, he was selected by the Republican State Central Committee to replace Jack Ryan as the Republican Senate nominee. His Democratic opponent was Barack Obama, making this race the first time both major party candidates for a US Senate seat were Black, Obama won by a landslide.²⁵¹ Prior to running for the US Senate seat, Hillary Clinton and her husband purchased a home in Chappaqua, New York.²⁵² Despite accusations of carpetbagging, she won the state by 12%²⁵³ against Republican candidate Rick Lazio.²⁵⁴ Because of Walker's football career, he may be presented with the same indulgence as Clinton as she related to the people and promised to give them what they wanted.²⁵⁵

Walker and African Americans

Given Walker's troublesome past it will be crucial that he sway some Black voters in Georgia. In February 2021, he testified in a House Judiciary subcommittee hearing against reparations. He said that a federal commission exploring proposals for reparations for Black Americans would deepen the divide between African Americans and other Americans.²⁵⁶ He

²⁴⁹ "1992 Presidential Election." Maryland State Board of Elections, February 16, 2001. https://elections.maryland.gov/elections/1992/results_1992/prepaa.html.

²⁵⁰ "1988 Presidential Election." Maryland State Board of Elections, July 24, 2001. https://elections.maryland.gov/elections/1988/results_1988/pregaa.html.

²⁵¹ Malbin, Michael J. "The Election after Reform : Money, Politics, and the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act ." Internet Archive. Lanham, Md. : Rowman and Littlefield, January 1, 1970. https://archive.org/details/electio_xxx_2006_00_4209/page/195/mode/2up.

²⁵² Nagourney, Adam. "With Some Help, Clintons Purchase a White House." The New York Times. The New York Times, September 3, 1999. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/09/03/nyregion/with-some-help-clintons-purchase-a-white-house.html>.

²⁵³ Gerth, Jeff. "Her Way : The Hopes and Ambitions of Hillary Rodham Clinton :." Internet Archive. New York : Little, Brown and Co., January 1, 1970. <https://archive.org/details/herwayhopesambit00gerth>. 212-213

²⁵⁴ Gerth, Jeff. "Her Way : The Hopes and Ambitions of Hillary Rodham Clinton :." Internet Archive. New York : Little, Brown and Co., January 1, 1970. <https://archive.org/details/herwayhopesambit00gerth>. 200 and 204

²⁵⁵ "Herschel Walker Running for U.S. Senate in Georgia." The Athletic, August 24, 2021. <https://theathletic.com/news/herschel-walker-running-for-us-senate-in-georgia/ydYauY4PVong>.

²⁵⁶ "Former NFL Player Herschel Walker Launches Senate Campaign Against Raphael Warnock." BET, August 25, 2021. <https://www.bet.com/news/national/2021/08/25/herschel-walker-raphael-warnock-senate-campaign.html>

asked many questions about the feasibility of reparations, such as where the money comes from? Who is considered to be Black? And how do we find out? These comments will come back to haunt him among Black voters if he wins the primary, especially considering 75% of African Americans want reparations for slavery. 83% of Black respondents to the poll say that slavery still affects them, Walker will have to answer to these respondents as he calls these payments divisive.²⁵⁷ According to the US Census Bureau, in 2019, 32.6% of Georgians are Black.²⁵⁸ The Black eligible voters in Georgia increased by 48% between 2000 and 2019 and grew to be 33% of the state's electorate.²⁵⁹ As the 2020 election and the elections in the 1950s and 1960s showed, Black voters can make a huge difference when they show up to the polls.²⁶⁰ Walker will do well if he is able to appeal to Black voters in Georgia.

Black voters do not usually support Black Republicans. In the case of Tim Scott, he only received 8% of the Black vote in 2016 against Black Democratic challenger Thomas Dixon. Dixon received 90% of the Black vote as he advocated to end racial profiling in South Carolina.²⁶¹ Scott won 77% of the White vote and did well among White voters with or without a college degree.²⁶² In Michigan, Black Republican John James ran against Democratic incumbent

²⁵⁷ Andrew, Scottie. "Nearly 75% of African Americans Support Reparations for Slavery. Only 15% of White Americans Do, a Poll Says." CNN. Cable News Network, October 28, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/28/us/reparations-poll-trnd/index.html>.

²⁵⁸ "U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts: Georgia; United States." U.S. Census Bureau, July 1, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/GA,US/PST045219>.

²⁵⁹ Budiman, Abby, and Luis Noe-Bustamante. "Black Eligible Voters Make up 48% of Growth in Georgia Electorate since 2000." Pew Research Center. Pew Research Center, December 21, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/15/black-eligible-voters-have-accounted-for-nearly-half-of-georgia-electorates-growth-since-2000/>.

²⁶⁰ Schouten, Fredreka. "Here's Why Voting Rights Activists Say Georgia's New Election Law Targets Black Voters." CNN. Cable News Network, March 27, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/26/politics/georgia-voting-law-black-voters/index.html>.

²⁶¹ Rindge, Brenda. "Thomas Dixon to Challenge U.S. Sen. Tim Scott ." The Post and Courier. Palmetto Politics, November 2, 2016. https://www.postandcourier.com/politics/thomas-dixon-to-challenge-u-s-sen-tim-scott/article_87c82adf-d680-568d-8ccf-200c7b2e8ee9.html.

²⁶² "2016 Election Results: South-Carolina Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls/south-carolina/senate>.

Gary Peters in 2020 for US Senate.²⁶³ Peters won 90% of the Black vote and James won 55% of the White vote. Peters had once represented the 14th district of Michigan which consists of a fair amount of the city of Detroit and had a Black population of 58%.²⁶⁴ Despite the Black vote supporting the Democratic candidate, the race was very close as Peters won by 1.7 percentage points.²⁶⁵ Supporting a Black Republican includes supporting conservative values which in the past has included cutting welfare programs that Black Americans benefit from.

²⁶³ Ehley, Brianna. "Gary Peters Wins Reelection in Michigan." POLITICO. POLITICO, November 5, 2020. <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/04/michigan-senate-election-results-2020-433579>.

²⁶⁴ Oosting, Jonathan. "Gary Peters Wins Incumbent Battle with Hansen Clarke in Michigan's 14th Congressional District." Michigan Live, August 8, 2012. https://www.mlive.com/politics/2012/08/gary_peters_wins_incumbent_bat.html.

²⁶⁵ Ehley, Brianna. "Gary Peters Wins Reelection in Michigan." POLITICO. POLITICO, November 5, 2020. <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/04/michigan-senate-election-results-2020-433579>.

Chapter 4: The Georgia 2022 Senate Race

Herschel Walker is the frontrunner to be the Republican nominee in Georgia's US Senate race in 2022. His major opponents are Gary Black, the state's current Agriculture Commissioner; Kelvin King, a US Air Force veteran and businessman; and Latham Saddler, a former Trump White House official and Navy SEAL.²⁶⁶ Even though Saddler worked for Trump, the former president still endorsed Walker.²⁶⁷ Like Walker, King is a Black Republican running in the primary, but he does not have the same fame. In August 2021, he traveled to all 159 counties in Georgia in 30 days.²⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Walker is still dominating Georgia polls. The closest competitor is Black, a conservative White man whose stumbled in polling when Walker entered the race. Black is the only statewide elected official in the race.²⁶⁹ Black has been more vocal than other opponents about Walker's liabilities; specifically, abuse claims made against his ex-wife and ex-girlfriend. According to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Black made comments about these accusations coming back to haunt the Republicans as "The question is whether [voters] learn it now or in the general election when it's too late for the GOP."²⁷⁰ According to Jacob Rubashkin in "Georgia Senate: Between the Parties", Democrats nor Republicans believe voters are aware of Walker's dark side, but the accusations will come to light after he wins the

²⁶⁶ "Georgia Senate Race 2022 Polls: Herschel Walker Well Positioned to Be the next Senator of Georgia." CrowdWisdom360, November 30, 2021. <https://crowdwisdom.live/us-politics/georgia-senate-race-2022-polls/>.

²⁶⁷ Bluestein, Greg. "Navy Veteran Latham Saddler Enters US Senate Race against Warnock." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, April 15, 2021. <https://www.ajc.com/politics/politics-blog/navy-veteran-latham-saddler-enters-us-senate-race-against-warnock/VWX36JEXN5HPNOJRWSQYLR6VTA/>.

²⁶⁸ Fowler, Stephen. "GOP Senate Candidate Kelvin King Spreading His Message to All 159 Counties." Georgia Public Broadcasting, August 26, 2021. <https://www.gpb.org/news/2021/08/26/gop-senate-candidate-kelvin-king-spreading-his-message-all-159-counties>.

²⁶⁹ Rubashkin, Jacob. "Georgia Senate: Between the Parties." Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 7.

²⁷⁰ Bluestein, Greg. "Inside Gary Black's All-out Attacks against Herschel Walker." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 29, 2021. <https://www.ajc.com/politics/politics-blog/inside-gary-blacks-all-out-attacks-against-herschel-walker/TSJLLPGJVBB3RC4TZHHZAXSCVY/>.

primary nomination.²⁷¹ As of November 2021, Republicans are willing to support Walker.²⁷² In a survey of Republican primary voters in November 2021, Walker has 74% of the vote and his nearest opponent Gary Black, has 6%. It is unlikely there will be a Republican primary run-off for the 2022 Senate election.²⁷³

Major endorsements

GOP leaders were hesitant about Walker at first. Senators Mitch McConnell and John Thune expressed concerns about the allegations and his lack of experience. Texas Senator John Cornyn even said that while he would like the GOP to win the race he would have preferred someone else.²⁷⁴ By November 2021, the tides had turned as McConnell and Thune both endorsed Walker.²⁷⁵ Walker maintained the support of South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham,²⁷⁶ while the state's junior senator, Tim Scott, only endorsed Walker in early November.²⁷⁷

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich also announced his support for Walker. Gingrich represented Georgia's 6th district for over 20 years.²⁷⁸ Former Vice-Presidential candidate Sarah

²⁷¹ Rubashkin, Jacob. "Georgia Senate: Between the Parties." Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 7.

²⁷² Allison, Natalie. "Poll Shows Herschel Walker Far Ahead in Georgia Senate Primary." POLITICO. POLITICO, November 1, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/11/01/herschel-walker-georgia-senate-republican-primary-poll-518140>.

²⁷³ Ibid.,

²⁷⁴ LeVine, Marianne, and Burgess Everett. "GOP to Herschel Walker: Consider Staying on the Bench." POLITICO. POLITICO, July 30, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/07/30/herschel-walker-gop-senate-run-501696>.

²⁷⁵ Isenstadt, Alex. "Herschel Walker Gets McConnell's Blessing." POLITICO. POLITICO, October 27, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/27/herschel-walker-mitch-mcconnells-endorsement-517309>.

²⁷⁶ LeVine, Marianne, and Burgess Everett. "GOP to Herschel Walker: Consider Staying on the Bench." POLITICO. POLITICO, July 30, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/07/30/herschel-walker-gop-senate-run-501696>.

²⁷⁷ Walker, Herschel. "Honored to Have @SENATORTIMSCOTT's Endorsement. Tim Is a Champion for Criminal Justice Reform, School Choice, and Creating Opportunities for Every American. I Look Forward to Working with You to Win This Seat and Take Back the Senate! Pic.twitter.com/zQQc4CEYV1." Twitter. Twitter, November 8, 2021. <https://twitter.com/HerschelWalker/status/1457714881746980865>.

²⁷⁸ Greenwood, Max. "Gingrich Backs Herschel Walker in Georgia Senate Race." TheHill. The Hill, November 10, 2021. <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/580953-gingrich-backs-herschel-walker-in-georgia-senate-race>.

Palin also endorsed Walker, calling him the “most patriotic hero”²⁷⁹ These high-profile supporters say that Walker is the best candidate to defeat Warnock and will help GOP leadership take back the Senate.²⁸⁰

The GOP taking back the Senate

The candidate who has the greatest chance of defeating Warnock in 2022 is the candidate that Republicans think is worth supporting. According to Amanda Carpenter, despite a troubled past, “Herschel Walker, Eric Greitens, and Sean Parnell are all considered serious contenders to win the Republican nominations for Senate seats in, respectively, Georgia, Missouri, and Pennsylvania. Each of them has been accused of aggressively threatening and violating women in their lives.”²⁸¹ The Republicans are willing to brush off accusations of assault in order to ensure the victory of candidates who can put them in power. As Jill Filipovic writes, “Republicans are simply willing to accept abuse of women if it’s politically convenient.”²⁸²

But what Republicans fail to consider is whether these candidates will win against their Democratic opponents who do not have accusations against them. Republican Glenn Youngkin won the governorship of Virginia in 2021 by stressing parental control of education and other family values. Given the abuse claims, Walker would be hypocritical if he tried to run on the same theme. Walker’s strategy for defeating Warnock hinges on the perception that the Democrats have failed to uphold many of their campaign promises. That belief, together with his celebrity status as a football player from the south, makes him a viable contender.

²⁷⁹ Scholla, Kevin. “The Bear and the Bulldog: Sarah Palin Roars for ‘Most Patriotic Hero’ Herschel Walker.” Breitbart, November 13, 2021. <https://www.breitbart.com/sports/2021/11/13/palinherschel/>.

²⁸⁰ Isenstadt, Alex. “Herschel Walker Gets McConnell’s Blessing.” POLITICO. POLITICO, October 27, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/27/herschel-walker-mitch-mcconnells-endorsement-517309>.

²⁸¹ Carpenter, Amanda. “‘Family Values’ and the GOP Class of 2022.” The Bulwark, November 5, 2021. <https://www.thebulwark.com/family-values-and-the-gop-class-of-2022/>.

²⁸² Filipovic, Jill. “Both Parties Have Abusive Men in Office. Only One of Them Is Doing Something about It.” CNN. Cable News Network, May 8, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/08/opinions/republicans-dont-hold-abusive-men-to-account-filipovic/index.html>.

The political climate has Biden's approval ratings falling in Georgia. Biden's approval rating among suburban voters has fallen to -4, which is important considering suburban voters in the 2022 Senate race will make a large impact. Among suburban voters Warnock's approval ratings have fallen from 6 in the first quarter to 1 in the third quarter.²⁸³ Youngkin's win in Virginia suggests that Republicans can take advantage of the Democrats low approval ratings. The president's party usually loses seats in the midterm elections, though this pattern is less consistent with Senate races than with House races. In 2018, Donald Trump lost 40 Republican seats in the House, but gained two seats in the Senate.²⁸⁴ It is very likely that Republicans will take back the House.²⁸⁵ But Republicans do fear a repeat of the 2010 midterms in which they took the House but did not capture the Senate.²⁸⁶

The Republicans are trying to win back suburban women, but that is difficult when candidates such as Walker face abuse allegations. In 2021, however, Warnock only gained 51% of suburban women support.²⁸⁷ As compared to Biden who gained 54% of suburban women support in Georgia.²⁸⁸ Trump has continued to back nominees who have some type of domestic abuse accusations. This is a severe concern as one Republican Senator states "You can have the

²⁸³ Yokley, Eli. "Suburban Erosion Has Driven Biden's State-by-State Popularity Decline." Morning Consult, October 28, 2021. <https://morningconsult.com/2021/11/01/biden-approval-rating-state-level-suburban-voters/>.

²⁸⁴ "Seats in Congress Gained/Lost by the President's Party in Mid-Term Elections." The American Presidency Project. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California, October 29, 2018. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/statistics/data/seats-congress-gainedlost-the-presidents-party-mid-term-elections>.

²⁸⁵ Enten, Harry. "Analysis: History Says Biden and Democrats Probably Won't Recover by the Midterms." CNN. Cable News Network, November 13, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/13/politics/midterms-democrats-biden-analysis/index.html>.

²⁸⁶ Scherer, Michael, and Mike DeBonis. "Republicans Seek a U.S. Senate Takeover in 2022 but Struggle over Candidates." The Washington Post. WP Company, November 15, 2021. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/republicans-senate-candidates/2021/11/13/cbc574ee-43cf-11ec-9ea7-3eb2406a2e24_story.html.

²⁸⁷ "Georgia 2020 Senate Special Runoff Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/senate-special-election-runoff/georgia>.

²⁸⁸ "Georgia 2020 President Exit Polls." CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/president/georgia/21>.

best political environment, but it doesn't matter if you don't have good candidates.”²⁸⁹ While Walker can win the Republican primary nomination, he may not be able to win the general election.

Walker's Campaign Strategy

With the accusations against him, Walker's campaign strategy is crucial. He is running on the idea of uniting people as he views the Democratic Party has as a dividing wedge in Georgia. He calls himself a candidate for Democrats and Republicans alike and is attempting to appeal to the moderate Republicans in Georgia who abandoned Trump in the 2020 election.²⁹⁰ Yet Walker has attacked the Democratic Party by stating “We have the left really trying to destroy this country,” and that the left uses racism as a political tool to divide people.²⁹¹ If he faces Warnock in the general election, these comments might come back to haunt him. According to Rubashkin, “Walker has steered clear of outlining much specific policy other than broadly conservative notions of a smaller government and stronger military, preferring to talk about his upbringing and the adversity he's overcome in life.” Republicans are worried about Walker's rhetoric when it is time to answer questions about his abuse claims.²⁹² For the most

²⁸⁹ Bolton, Alexander. “Senate GOP Worries Trump Could Derail Bid for Majority.” TheHill. The Hill, November 8, 2021. <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/580351-senate-gop-worries-trump-could-derail-bid-for-majority>.

²⁹⁰ Bluestein, Greg. “'High Road?' Why Herschel Walker Is Trying a Different GOP Approach in Georgia.” The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 22, 2021. <https://www.ajc.com/politics/high-road-why-herschel-walker-is-trying-a-different-gop-approach-in-georgia/AJTOTVAX55C4TOG3YYDCTQAU7Q/>.

²⁹¹ Gillooly, Jon. “At Cobb GOP Breakfast, Herschel Walker Calls for Republican Unity; Says Left Can Get out of America.” Marietta Daily Journal, November 8, 2021. https://www.mdjonline.com/elections/at-cobb-gop-breakfast-herschel-walker-calls-for-republican-unity-says-left-can-get-out/article_a60ae4a6-3ff0-11ec-a1b0-8bacaea5a722.html.

²⁹² Rubashkin, Jacob. “Georgia Senate: Between the Parties.” Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 9.

part he is using his fame, fundraising capabilities, and Trump endorsement as his campaign strategy.²⁹³

Georgia is a toss-up after the 2021 election

The University of Virginia's (UVA) Crystal Ball reclassified Georgia's Senate race in 2022 as a tossup after Virginia's governor race. "Given the usual presidential party midterm drag, and the poor environment, our ratings are just too bullish on Democrats," says Larry Sabato,²⁹⁴ the founder of the Center for Politics at the UVA.²⁹⁵ Sabato attributed the change to Walker's front runner status. "Walker seems like a particularly risky choice in Georgia, assuming he wins the nomination — these moves are almost entirely about the environment."²⁹⁶ The "move" may refer to the way in which Walker is a celebrity and has the backing of Donald Trump which would help gain Republican support at a time when Democrats are falling in approval ratings.

If Walker wins the Republican primary, this will be the first time two Black men would compete for a Senate seat in Georgia. Warnock has raised \$22 million since winning the runoff in January, \$9 million of which came from the summer 2021 quarter where he topped all other congress members.²⁹⁷ In the same quarter, Walker only raised \$3.8 million, although he only started collecting donations on August 24, 2021.²⁹⁸ A University of Georgia student called for

²⁹³ Bluestein, Greg. "High Road? Why Herschel Walker Is Trying a Different GOP Approach in Georgia." The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 22, 2021. <https://www.ajc.com/politics/high-road-why-herschel-walker-is-trying-a-different-gop-approach-in-georgia/AJTOTVAX55C4TOG3YYDCTQAU7Q/>.

²⁹⁴ Darnell, Tim. "Georgia Senate Race Now a Tossup, According to UVA Crystal Ball." Capitol Hill, October 4, 2021. <http://capitol-beat.org/2021/11/georgia-senate-race-now-a-tossup-according-to-uva-crystal-ball/>.

²⁹⁵ "Larry J. Sabato." Center for Politics. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://centerforpolitics.org/staff/larry-j-sabato/>.

²⁹⁶ Darnell, Tim. "Georgia Senate Race Now a Tossup, According to UVA Crystal Ball." Capitol Hill, October 4, 2021. <http://capitol-beat.org/2021/11/georgia-senate-race-now-a-tossup-according-to-uva-crystal-ball/>.

²⁹⁷ Sollenberger, Roger. "The Warnock vs. Walker Race Promises to Be Ugly-and Well-Funded." The Daily Beast. The Daily Beast Company, October 20, 2021. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-raphael-warnock-v-herschel-walker-race-promises-to-be-uglyand-well-funded>.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.,

Warnock to do more campaigning, saying that students “have seen all sorts of Republican campaigning from “Run Herschel Run” stickers to “Vote Gary Black” posters, but [wonder] where are the Warnock buttons?”²⁹⁹ The student remarks on the 2% advantage that Warnock has over Walker in Fall 2021. That advantage can change in an instant. Warnock should not wait to start campaigning, especially as many Georgians will make up their mind early.³⁰⁰ While Warnock has done a lot in Georgia such as helping pass stimulus funds and infrastructure projects,³⁰¹ there are some Democratic campaign promises that still have yet to be fulfilled such as cancelling student loan debt, passing the Equality Act and the John Lewis for the People Act which would stifle voter suppression. The failure of the Democrats to take advantage of the House and Senate will be used against them by Republicans.

Black Voters shifting to Walker?

Walker has said that progressives exploit racism to separate Americans and distract voters.³⁰² However, Nadia E. Brown acknowledges that “[B]lack Americans are “socially conservative but fiscally liberal,” and Walker espouses such conservative values such as cutting taxes and curbing abortion. According to Leah Wright Rigueur, Black Trump supporters are “likely to be a working-class or lower-middle-class black [men], over the age of 35, and interested in alternative approaches to addressing what ails Black America...these voters tend to be more receptive to core messages of self-determination, financial success as a function of hard

²⁹⁹ Barrett, Carson. “Opinion: Warnock Campaign Needs to Hit the Trail.” The Red and Black, October 26, 2021. https://www.redandblack.com/opinion/opinion-warnock-campaign-needs-to-hit-the-trail/article_36239dd0-333a-11ec-b05f-dbbf16dbef13.html.

³⁰⁰Ibid.,

³⁰¹ Rubashkin, Jacob. “Georgia Senate: Between the Parties.” Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 10.

³⁰² Gillooly, Jon. “At Cobb GOP Breakfast, Herschel Walker Calls for Republican Unity; Says Left Can Get out of America.” Marietta Daily Journal, November 8, 2021. https://www.mdjonline.com/elections/at-cobb-gop-breakfast-herschel-walker-calls-for-republican-unity-says-left-can-get-out/article_a60ae4a6-3ff0-11ec-a1b0-8baca5a722.html

work, and personal responsibility, especially when conveyed in a plainspoken, hypermasculine manner.”³⁰³ As a Black man who became a great football player and then started a business, he embodies the bootstraps mentality that prevails within the Republican Party and among many older Black men.

Walker will do better among Black men than Black women in the 2022 election. Black men are more conservative than Black women and will show support to Walker given what he represents. During Trump’s presidency 24% of Black men approved of his efforts, compared to 6% of Black women.³⁰⁴ In the 2020 election, 12 percent of Black men backed Trump, as compared with 6% of Black women. Leah Wright Rigueur writes that “men have been the drivers of Black support for the GOP for nearly a century.” In the presidential elections of 2008 and 2012, Black men overwhelmingly supported Obama, but in the last few years they have wandered back to the GOP. Rigueur continues by stating that Black men were able to see past Trump’s racism and focus on his “hypermasculine, anti-establishment, pro-capitalist rhetoric.” A similar strategy of overlooking bigotry may be applied to Walker as well, especially because Rigueur reports that Black men view both the Democratic and Republican parties as racist. The GOP appeals more to Black men because they are overt about it and stress that the current system does not “have their best interests in mind.”³⁰⁵

According to Rigueur, “for Black women, voting is an act of collectivism: They vote as an impenetrable bloc.” Black women do not vote for the Democrats blindly, but they believe that voting blue is the best way to make institutionalized change. The voting bloc will also work to

³⁰³ Coaston, Jane. “The Gender Gap in Black Views on Trump, Explained.” Vox. Vox, March 9, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/2020/3/9/21151095/black-women-trump-gop-conservatism-gap-2020>.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.,

³⁰⁵ Wright Rigueur, Leah. “The Major Difference between Black Male and Female Voters.” The Atlantic. Atlantic Media Company, November 21, 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2020/11/why-black-men-and-women-vote-so-differently/617134/>.

mobilize voters and push their agendas. Fair Fight Action, the New Georgia Project, and Black Voters Matter are all grassroots organizations founded by Black women.³⁰⁶ The stake Black women have in elections comes from their intersectional identity as a member of both the Black and female communities. Black men can benefit from the Republican Party because they tend to uphold the patriarchal structures that are in place, Black women will not. Black women have to be concerned about the issues that face Black people and women as they are a part of both. For example, Black women are fiscally liberal about policies such as health and child care. Black women have always voted with both their marginalized identities in mind as they voted reliably Republican prior to the 1970's.³⁰⁷

For all gender identities in the Black community, Rigueur wrote that “[h]ighlighting the racism of certain Republican candidates has never been enough to guarantee Black votes, and it’s certainly not a viable long-term outreach strategy when Black audiences are growing more disillusioned with both parties.”³⁰⁸ In this case, Herschel Walker has a good chance of gaining support from Black men. Walker’s rhetoric on racism and domestic abuse claims will be noticed by Black women, as having him as a representative would be harmful to more than just their community. While some Black men will be inclined to turn a blind eye because of their shared identity of being a man and not a politician. I predict Walker will see the support of 30% of Black male voters, as compared with the 10% who supported Kelly Loeffler. I also predict more Black women than Black men will vote in the Senate race, as seen in the 2021 runoff, where 59% of Black voters were women.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁶ Ibid.,

³⁰⁷ Coaston, Jane. “The Gender Gap in Black Views on Trump, Explained.” Vox. Vox, March 9, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/2020/3/9/21151095/black-women-trump-gop-conservatism-gap-2020>.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.,

³⁰⁹ “Georgia 2020 Senate Special Runoff Exit Polls.” CNN. Cable News Network. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/senate-special-election-runoff/georgia/6>.

The Impact White Voters will make

Walker will be favored by racist White voters looking for one of the good ones to support.³¹⁰ Black conservatives tend to do well among racist White voters. Republican Winsome Sears, won the lieutenant governor race in Virginia in 2021, becoming the first Black woman to hold the seat.³¹¹ According to political science professors Hakeem Jefferson and Michael Tesler, “Republicans are increasingly more likely than Democrats to hold prejudiced views of minorities, so Black Republicans like Sears often draw especially strong support from White Americans with otherwise anti-Black views simply because they draw most of their support from Republican voters.” The website *FiveThirtyEight* used Ben Carson’s 2016 presidential run as an example, as White voters who were more prejudiced against African Americans in politics supported Ben Carson, compared with the White voters who were less prejudiced against Black voters. Racist White voters are concerned that electing a Black Democrat means electing someone who will act in the best interests for Black people and Black people only. White voters believe Black Republicans do not run on the ideology of looking out for Black voters,³¹² especially considering the new Party of Lincoln is not overtly interested in protecting Black people’s interests.

In *the Journal of Politics*, Christopher F. Karpowitz, Tyson King-Meadows, J. Quin Monson, and Jeremy C. Pope found evidence that racist White voters prefer Black Republicans to White Republicans because it gives the racially resentful voter an opportunity to challenge the narrative that they are racist. If the Black Republican advocates an individualist ideology, in

³¹⁰ Kilgore, Ed. “Why White Racists Vote for Black Republicans.” *Intelligencer*. *Intelligencer*, November 12, 2021. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/why-White-racists-can-vote-for-black-republicans.html>.

³¹¹ Jefferson, Hakeem. “Why White Voters with Racist Views Often Still Support Black Republicans.” *FiveThirtyEight*. *FiveThirtyEight*, November 10, 2021. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-racist-White-voters-often-favor-black-republicans/>.

³¹² *Ibid.*,

other words the “pull yourself up by the bootstraps” mentality, racist White voters respond favorably because it opposes traditional democratic values.³¹³ The more that Black Republicans distance themselves from the ideals of Black Democrats the more support they gain from racist White voters.³¹⁴ This pattern helps explain Herschel Walker’s margin in the primary polls. White voters appreciate a Black candidate they can support, someone who is showing that he is not like other Black Americans. That attitude, together with his status as a football star, will rally much support from racially resentful voters. Rural White voters will not only support Walker when he wins the primary, but they will do so proudly as they will see him as the perfect candidate. White suburban voters will be the electorate that both sides need to appeal to, given the close margins in the runoff election, the impact Black candidates make on White voters, and the domestic abuse claims.

Warnock vs Walker

With Stacey Abrams throwing her hat into the ring for Governor, all eyes will be on Georgia. Democrats like the idea of an Abrams-Warnock partnership on the ballot. Abrams’ work in Georgia may make her more popular of a choice than Warnock, although Warnock can use her spotlight to his advantage. Republicans worry about the Gubernatorial election in Georgia in 2022 because former President Trump is disparaging the Kemp and is encouraging David Perdue to run against him in the primary. This showcase of lack of unity may hurt the Republican Party.³¹⁵

³¹³ Karpowitz, Christopher F., Tyson King-Meadows, J. Quin Monson, and Jeremy C. Pope. “What Leads Racially Resentful Voters to Choose Black Candidates?” *The Journal of Politics*, January 1, 2021. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/708952>.

³¹⁴ Jefferson, Hakeem. “Why White Voters with Racist Views Often Still Support Black Republicans.” *FiveThirtyEight*. FiveThirtyEight, November 10, 2021. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-racist-White-voters-often-favor-black-republicans/>.

³¹⁵ Rubashkin, Jacob. “Georgia Senate: Between the Parties.” *Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales* 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 9.

Warnock is at the epicenter of the modern Civil Rights Movement because he is a Reverend at Ebenezer Baptist Church where Martin Luther King Jr. was also a preacher.³¹⁶ Warnock has not hidden his disdain for racism in Georgia and has spoken out against voter suppression.³¹⁷ Warnock's fundraising capabilities are his strongest assets.³¹⁸ By the end of September 2021, Warnock had \$17 million in his war chest.³¹⁹ Democrats are confident in this race as Warnock has maintained an ethical image and is ahead of Walker in fundraising.³²⁰ Although Walker is a state hero in Georgia and is not expected to lose White Republican votes due to racism.³²¹ By the end of September 2021, he had \$2 million in his war chest.³²²

It is very likely that the 2022 Georgia Senate race will come down to Raphael Warnock versus Herschel Walker; however, it is also possible that party control of the Senate may come down to Georgia, again. Black voters will be crucial in determining if Democrats keep control of the Senate.

³¹⁶ Kilgore, Ed. "Why White Racists Vote for Black Republicans." *Intelligencer*. Intelligencer, November 12, 2021. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/why-White-racists-can-vote-for-black-republicans.html>.

³¹⁷ Barrow, Bill. "Warnock: GOP Voting Restrictions Resurrect 'Jim Crow Era'." *AP NEWS*. Associated Press, March 17, 2021. <https://apnews.com/article/race-and-ethnicity-georgia-voting-rights-elections-voter-registration-debcae867733d6b4ace9325d4e65fe7a>.

³¹⁸ Rubashkin, Jacob. "Georgia Senate: Between the Parties." *Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales* 5, no. 23 (December 3, 2021): 9.

³¹⁹ "Georgia Senate 2022 Race." *OpenSecrets*. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.opensecrets.org/races/summary?cycle=2022&id=GAS2>.

³²⁰ Pathe, Simone. "The 10 Senate Seats Most Likely to Flip in 2022." *CNN*. Cable News Network, November 12, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/12/politics/senate-race-rankings-november/index.html>.

³²¹ Kilgore, Ed. "Why White Racists Vote for Black Republicans." *Intelligencer*. Intelligencer, November 12, 2021. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/why-White-racists-can-vote-for-black-republicans.html>.

³²² "OpenSecrets." *OpenSecrets.org*. Accessed December 4, 2021. <https://www.opensecrets.org/races/summary?cycle=2022&id=GAS2>

Conclusion

Raphael Warnock's prospects are not as strong as Michael Steele thinks. The Party of Lincoln did fail to keep Black voters, and when they realized they were not going to be able to win them back they gave up. Despite the Lily-White Movement, the lack of resources to Black communities, and the refusal to allow them to exercise their Reconstruction amendment rights, Black voters remained loyal to the Republican Party for 100 years. What the Lily-Whites and Hoover failed to consider is what happens to the Black voters they kick out of the party? They underestimated Black Americans resilience and need to participate in the political process, thus driving them to support a party that did not actively try to harm them.

From the 1930s-60s, the Democrats and Republicans treated Black people the same. They both tried to appeal to the voting bloc but were willing to refuse them their rights if they saw it as political advantageous. This time frame represents a period of equilibrium as the Republicans became conservative and the Democrats became liberal. It is during this period that Black Americans emerge as deciding factors in elections.

As Michael Steele said during his Athenaeum talk, "Both parties are incompetent, and I have contributed to some of that incompetence." The paradox that existed in the Republican Party with trying to figure out how to support African Americans and appeal to White voters is the challenge with being a Black Republican. How does one advocate for Black issues while also embodying conservative values? In order to gain the support of prejudiced White voters, Black Republicans do not and cannot promote equality for African Americans, politically, socially, or economically. If they do, they are the same as the liberals. This was the challenge for Herman Cain, and it will be the same for Herschel Walker.

As Black voters drifted to the Democrat party, they championed economic and social policies that helped them, kept African Americans disenfranchised and refused progressive polices. Wanting to vote for a party that embodied their conservative values, Georgia shifted to the Republican Party, with the Black voting bloc suppressed and the rise of rural and suburban White voters, Georgia went red.

While Georgia repeatedly tried to suppress the vote of Black Americans, Black Georgians still prevailed in exercising their voting rights. Black political engagement increased in Georgia as their power as a decisive voting bloc was felt across the state. Will Walker split up the Black voting bloc? As a small but important share of Black men, mainly older Black men, will support Walker and Black women will support Warnock. Walker's abuse claims will not matter as much to Black men, but they will matter to suburban and Black women. Walker represents something people in Georgia have not seen in a long time, a conservative Black man, with the bonus of having a successful football career.

As of the November 2021 polls, it is likely that a GOP run-off will not be necessary. But there could be a run-off for the general election between Warnock and Walker. Walker's opponents in the primary do not come close to being viable challengers, which supports the notion that prejudiced White voters support Black candidates over White candidates.

The Democrats' poor approval ratings and the tendency for the incumbent president's party to lose congressional seats in the midterms, assists Walker's chances. While Walker could lose his election and the Republicans could pick up seats somewhere else and reclaim the Senate, all eyes will be on Georgia given it is a toss-up and the first time the two candidates for Senate were Black.

Black Women, the majority of Black men, and the majority of suburban White women will support Warnock, while rural White voters, racist White voters, and a small but significant portion of Black men will support Warnock. The race will be close, over 70% of White voters will support Walker, and the Black vote for Walker may rise to above 15%, but I predict Warnock will still win. It will be a challenging race as the Georgia electorate shifts according to the candidates and their beliefs and values. However, given the history of Black Americans and the Republican Party and the increase of minorities in urban cities in Georgia, I believe the Peach State will remain blue.

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