

a political party unhinged from the truth

A Political Party Unhinged from the Truth: The Erosion of Democratic Norms

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Abstract: This article examines the phenomenon of a political party demonstrably unhinged from the truth, exploring its implications for democratic governance and societal stability. We analyze the various mechanisms employed by such parties to manipulate information, cultivate distrust in legitimate institutions, and suppress dissent. The consequences, ranging from the undermining of public trust to the potential for authoritarianism, are discussed in detail.

1. The Rise of "Truthiness" and the Decline of Fact-Based Discourse

The concept of "a political party unhinged from the truth" is not a new one, but its prevalence and sophistication have reached alarming levels in recent years. We live in an era increasingly characterized by "post-truth politics," where objective facts are less influential than appeals to emotion and personal belief. A political party unhinged from the truth thrives in this environment, prioritizing partisan advantage over accuracy and accountability. This phenomenon is fuelled by several factors including the proliferation of misinformation online, the erosion of traditional media gatekeeping, and the deliberate cultivation of distrust in established institutions. The ease with which false narratives can be amplified through social media presents a formidable challenge to democratic processes. A party that actively disregards verifiable facts undermines the very foundations of informed public debate and rational decision-making.

2. Mechanisms of Disinformation and Propaganda: How a Political Party Unhinged from the Truth Operates

A political party unhinged from the truth employs a range of sophisticated strategies to spread

disinformation and manipulate public opinion. These include:

The creation and dissemination of fabricated stories and evidence: This involves the deliberate production of fake news articles, manipulated images, and doctored videos.

The strategic use of social media platforms: Social media's algorithmic amplification can quickly spread false narratives to a wide audience, often bypassing traditional fact-checking mechanisms.

The targeting of specific demographics: Sophisticated data analytics can pinpoint vulnerable populations susceptible to specific types of misinformation, allowing for tailored propaganda campaigns.

The deliberate undermining of legitimate sources of information: This can involve attacking the credibility of reputable news organizations, academics, and scientific institutions.

The use of dog whistles and coded language: Subtle cues embedded in messaging allow for the dissemination of harmful ideas without explicitly stating them, making it harder to detect and counter.

The promotion of conspiracy theories: These narratives often serve to deflect blame and discredit legitimate criticism. A political party unhinged from the truth readily exploits the appeal of simple explanations for complex issues.

3. The Consequences: Erosion of Trust and the Threat to Democracy

The long-term consequences of a political party unhinged from the truth are profound and far-reaching. The most immediate impact is the erosion of public trust in institutions and the political process itself. When citizens lose faith in the ability of their government to provide accurate information, it becomes significantly more difficult to address pressing societal challenges. This distrust fuels political polarization, making compromise and collaboration increasingly difficult.

Furthermore, a political party unhinged from the truth often actively seeks to undermine democratic norms and processes. This can manifest in various ways, including:

The suppression of dissent: Critics are often targeted with smear campaigns, intimidation, and legal action.

The undermining of the electoral process: This can involve manipulating voting procedures, suppressing voter turnout among specific groups, or even denying election results.

The erosion of the rule of law: Attempts to delegitimize judicial institutions and law enforcement further undermine the foundations of democratic governance.

The normalization of authoritarian tendencies: A political party unhinged from the truth may gradually dismantle checks and balances, consolidating power and suppressing opposition.

4. Combating the Threat: Strategies for Preserving Truth and Democracy

Countering the influence of a political party unhinged from the truth requires a multi-faceted approach:

Promoting media literacy and critical thinking skills: Equipping citizens with the tools to identify misinformation is crucial.

Strengthening fact-checking initiatives: Independent fact-checkers play a vital role in exposing false

narratives and holding political actors accountable.

Improving social media algorithms: Social media platforms have a responsibility to mitigate the spread of disinformation.

Enhancing transparency and accountability in political communication: Stricter regulations on political advertising and campaign finance could help.

Supporting independent journalism: Investing in high-quality, investigative journalism is crucial for holding power accountable.

Civic engagement and participation: Active participation in democratic processes is vital to counter the influence of misinformation.

5. Conclusion: The Urgent Need for Action

The rise of a political party unhinged from the truth represents a significant threat to democratic institutions and societal well-being. The deliberate manipulation of information, the cultivation of distrust, and the undermining of democratic norms cannot be ignored. Addressing this challenge requires a concerted effort from individuals, institutions, and governments to promote media literacy, strengthen fact-checking mechanisms, and uphold democratic values. The future of democracy hinges on our ability to confront and overcome the corrosive effects of post-truth politics. Failing to act decisively risks jeopardizing the very foundations of our societies. The fight for truth and democratic governance is a constant battle, and one we cannot afford to lose.

FAQs:

1. What are the key characteristics of a political party unhinged from the truth? Key characteristics include a disregard for verifiable facts, the deliberate spread of misinformation, the undermining of legitimate institutions, and the use of propaganda to manipulate public opinion.
1. How does social media contribute to the spread of disinformation by such parties? Social media's algorithms amplify misleading narratives, enabling rapid and widespread dissemination, often bypassing traditional fact-checking mechanisms.
1. What are the long-term consequences of eroding public trust in institutions? Eroding public trust leads to political polarization, hinders effective governance, and can create fertile ground for authoritarian tendencies.
1. What role do conspiracy theories play in the strategies of such parties? Conspiracy theories provide simple, appealing explanations for complex issues, diverting attention from legitimate criticisms and furthering distrust.

1. How can individuals protect themselves from misinformation? Developing critical thinking skills, verifying information from multiple reputable sources, and being aware of biases are crucial.
1. What is the role of fact-checking organizations in combating disinformation? Fact-checkers play a vital role in identifying and exposing false narratives, holding political actors accountable, and informing the public.
1. What legislative actions can be taken to counter the spread of disinformation? Legislation could focus on greater transparency in political advertising, regulating social media platforms, and enforcing stronger penalties for deliberate disinformation campaigns.
1. How can education contribute to combating the spread of misinformation? Education focused on media literacy and critical thinking skills equips citizens to identify and analyze information critically.
1. What is the role of international cooperation in addressing this global challenge? International cooperation is essential in sharing best practices, coordinating efforts to combat disinformation campaigns, and promoting shared standards for online content moderation.

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a political party unhinged from the truth: Unhinged Michelle Malkin, 2013-02-05

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a political party unhinged from the truth: Conscience of a Conservative Jeff Flake, 2017-08-01 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “A thoughtful defense of traditional conservatism and a thorough assault on the way Donald Trump is betraying it.”—David Brooks, in his New York Times column In a bold act of conscience, Republican Senator Jeff Flake takes his party to task for embracing nationalism, populism, xenophobia, and the anomalous Trump presidency. The book is an urgent call for a return to bedrock conservative principle and a cry to once again put country before party. Dear Reader, I am a conservative. I believe that there are limits to what government can and should do, that there are some problems that government cannot solve, and that human initiative is best when left unfettered, free from government interference or coercion. I believe that these ideas, tested by time, offer the most freedom and best outcomes in the lives of the most people. But today, the American conservative movement has lost its way. Given the state of our politics, it is no exaggeration to say that this is an urgent matter. The Republican party used to play to a broader audience, one that demanded that we accomplish something. But in this era of dysfunction, our primary accomplishment has been constructing the argument that we’re not to blame. We have decided that it is better to build and maintain a majority by using the levers of power rather than the art of persuasion and the battle of ideas. We’ve decided that putting party over country is okay. There are many on both sides of the aisle who think this a good model on which to build a political career—destroying, not building. And all the while, our country burns, our institutions are undermined, and our values are compromised. We have become so estranged from our principles that we no longer know what principle is. America is not just a collection of transactions. America is also a collection of ideas and values. And these are our values. These are our principles. They are not subject to change, owing to political fashion or cult of personality. I believe that we desperately need to get back to the rigorous, fact-based arguments that made us conservatives in the first place. We need to realize that the stakes are simply too high to remain silent and fall in line. That is why I have written this book and am taking this stand. —Jeff Flake

a political party unhinged from the truth: Unhinged Omarosa Manigault Newman,

2018-08-14 The former Assistant to the President and Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison in the Trump White House provides a jaw-dropping look into the corruption and controversy of the current administration. Few have been a member of Donald Trump's inner orbit longer than Omarosa Manigault Newman. Their relationship has spanned fifteen years—through four television shows, a presidential campaign, and a year by his side in the most chaotic, outrageous White House in history. But that relationship has come to a decisive and definitive end, and Omarosa is finally ready to share her side of the story in this explosive, jaw-dropping account. A stunning tell-all and takedown from a strong, intelligent woman who took every name and number, *Unhinged* is a must-read for any concerned citizen.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *Chaos in the Liberal Order* Robert Jervis, Francis J. Gavin, Joshua Rovner, Diane N. Labrosse, 2018-07-17 Donald Trump's election has called into question many fundamental assumptions about politics and society. Should the forty-fifth president of the United States make us reconsider the nature and future of the global order? Collecting a wide range of perspectives from leading political scientists, historians, and international-relations scholars, *Chaos in the Liberal Order* explores the global trends that led to Trump's stunning victory and the impact his presidency will have on the international political landscape. Contributors situate Trump among past foreign policy upheavals and enduring models for global governance, seeking to understand how and why he departs from precedents and norms. The book considers key issues, such as what Trump means for America's role in the world; the relationship between domestic and international politics; and Trump's place in the rise of the far right worldwide. It poses challenging questions, including: Does Trump's election signal the downfall of the liberal order or unveil its resilience? What is the importance of individual leaders for the international system, and to what extent is Trump an outlier? Is there a Trump doctrine, or is America's president fundamentally impulsive and scattershot? The book considers the effects of Trump's presidency on trends in human rights, international alliances, and regional conflicts. With provocative contributions from prominent figures such as Stephen M. Walt, Andrew J. Bacevich, and Samuel Moyn, this timely collection brings much-needed expert perspectives on our tumultuous era.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *Rigged* Mollie Hemingway, 2021-10-12 FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE #1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER *JUSTICE ON TRIAL* Stunned by the turbulence of the 2020 election, millions of Americans are asking the forbidden question: what really happened? It was a devastating triple punch. Capping their four-year campaign to destroy the Trump presidency, the media portrayed a Democratic victory as necessary and inevitable. Big Tech, wielding unprecedented powers, vaporized dissent and erased damning reports about the Biden family's corruption. And Democratic operatives, exploiting a public health crisis, shamelessly manipulated the voting process itself. Silenced and subjected, the American people lost their faith in the system. *RIGGED* is the definitive account of the 2020 election. Based on Mollie Hemingway's exclusive interviews with campaign officials, reporters, Supreme Court justices, and President Trump himself, it exposes the fraud and cynicism behind the Democrats' historic power-grab. Rewriting history is a specialty of the radical left, now in control of America's political and cultural heights. But they will have to contend with the determination, insight, and eloquence of Mollie Hemingway. *RIGGED* is a reminder for weary patriots that truth is still the most powerful weapon. The stakes for our democracy have never been higher.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *The Republican Noise Machine* David Brock, 2005 Bestselling author David Brock documents the most important political development of the last thirty years: How the Republican Right has won political power and hijacked public discourse in the United States. Over the last several decades, the GOP has built a powerful media machine—newspapers and magazines, think tanks, talk radio networks, op-ed columnists, the FOX News Channel, Christian Right broadcasting, book publishers, and high-traffic Internet sites—to sell conservatism to the public and discredit its opponents. David Brock's penetrating analysis of news stories, from the disputed 2000 presidential election to the war in Iraq to the political battles of 2004, reveals that this booming right-wing media market is largely based on bigotry, ignorance, and

emotional manipulation closely tied to America's long-standing cultural divisions and the buying power of anti-intellectual traditionalists. Writing with verve and deep insight, Brock reaches far beyond typical bromides about media bias to produce an invaluable account of the rise of right-wing media and its political consequences.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *All the Truth Is Out* Matt Bai, 2014-09-30 Now a major motion picture *The Front Runner* starring Hugh Jackman An NPR Best Book of the Year In May 1987, Colorado Senator Gary Hart—a dashing, reform-minded Democrat—seemed a lock for the party's presidential nomination and led George H. W. Bush by double digits in the polls. Then, in one tumultuous week, rumors of marital infidelity and a newspaper's stakeout of Hart's home resulted in a media frenzy the likes of which had never been seen before. Through the spellbindingly reported story of the Senator's fall from grace, Matt Bai, Yahoo News columnist and former chief political correspondent for *The New York Times Magazine*, shows the Hart affair to be far more than one man's tragedy: rather, it marked a crucial turning point in the ethos of political media, and the new norms of life in the public eye. *All the Truth Is Out* is a tour de force portrait of the American way of politics at the highest level, one that changes our understanding of how we elect our presidents and how the bedrock of American values has shifted under our feet.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *The Party Is Over* Mike Lofgren, 2012-08-02 The New York Times bestselling exposé of what passes for business as usual in Washington today There was a time, not so very long ago, when perfectly rational people ran the Republican Party. So how did the party of Lincoln become the party of lunatics? That is what this book aims to answer. Fear not, the Dems come in for their share of tough talk— they are zombies, a party of the living dead. Mike Lofgren came to Washington in the early eighties—those halcyon, post-Nixonian glory days—for what he imagined would be a short stint on Capitol Hill. He has witnessed quite a few low points in his twenty-eight years on the Hill—but none quite so pitiful as the antics of the current crop of legislators whom we appear to have elected. Based on the explosive article Lofgren wrote when he resigned in disgust after the debt ceiling crisis, *The Party Is Over* is a funny and impassioned exposé of everything that is wrong with Washington. Obama and his tired cohorts are no angels but they have nothing on the Republicans, whose wily strategists are bankrupting the country one craven vote at a time. Be prepared for some fireworks.

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a political party unhinged from the truth: *The War Before the War* Andrew Delbanco, 2019-11-05 A New York Times Notable Book Selection Winner of the Mark Lynton History Prize Winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award Winner of the Lionel Trilling Book Award A New York Times Critics' Best Book Excellent... stunning.—Ta-Nehisi Coates This book tells the story of America's original sin—slavery—through politics, law, literature, and above all, through the eyes of enslavedblack people who risked their lives to flee from bondage, thereby forcing the nation to

confront the truth about itself. The struggle over slavery divided not only the American nation but also the hearts and minds of individual citizens faced with the timeless problem of when to submit to unjust laws and when to resist. The War Before the War illuminates what brought us to war with ourselves and the terrible legacies of slavery that are with us still.

a political party unhinged from the truth: Frederick Douglass David W. Blight, 2020-01-07
* Selected as One of the Best Books of the 21st Century by The New York Times * Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in History * "Extraordinary...a great American biography" (The New Yorker) of the most important African American of the 19th century: Frederick Douglass, the escaped slave who became the greatest orator of his day and one of the leading abolitionists and writers of the era. As a young man Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) escaped from slavery in Baltimore, Maryland. He was fortunate to have been taught to read by his slave owner mistress, and he would go on to become one of the major literary figures of his time. His very existence gave the lie to slave owners: with dignity and great intelligence he bore witness to the brutality of slavery. Initially mentored by William Lloyd Garrison, Douglass spoke widely, using his own story to condemn slavery. By the Civil War, Douglass had become the most famed and widely travelled orator in the nation. In his unique and eloquent voice, written and spoken, Douglass was a fierce critic of the United States as well as a radical patriot. After the war he sometimes argued politically with younger African Americans, but he never forsook either the Republican party or the cause of black civil and political rights. In this "cinematic and deeply engaging" (The New York Times Book Review) biography, David Blight has drawn on new information held in a private collection that few other historians have consulted, as well as recently discovered issues of Douglass's newspapers. "Absorbing and even moving...a brilliant book that speaks to our own time as well as Douglass's" (The Wall Street Journal), Blight's biography tells the fascinating story of Douglass's two marriages and his complex extended family. "David Blight has written the definitive biography of Frederick Douglass...a powerful portrait of one of the most important American voices of the nineteenth century" (The Boston Globe). In addition to the Pulitzer Prize, Frederick Douglass won the Bancroft, Parkman, Los Angeles Times (biography), Lincoln, Plutarch, and Christopher awards and was named one of the Best Books of 2018 by The New York Times Book Review, The Wall Street Journal, The Boston Globe, The Chicago Tribune, The San Francisco Chronicle, and Time.

a political party unhinged from the truth: True Crimes and Misdemeanors Jeffrey Toobin, 2020-08-04 From CNN chief legal analyst and bestselling author Jeffrey Toobin, a real-life legal thriller about the prosecutors and congressional investigators pursuing the truth about Donald Trump's complicity in several crimes--and why they failed. Donald Trump's campaign chairman went to jail. So did his personal lawyer. His long-time political consigliere was convicted of serious federal crimes, and his national security advisor pled guilty to others. Several Russian spies were indicted in absentia. Career intelligence agents and military officers were alarmed enough by the president's actions that they alerted senior government officials and ignited the impeachment process. Yet despite all this, a years-long inquiry led by special counsel Robert Mueller, and the third impeachment of a president in American history, Donald Trump survived to run for re-election. Why? Jeffrey Toobin's highly entertaining definitive account of the Mueller investigation and the impeachment of the president takes readers behind the scenes of the epic legal and political struggle to call Trump to account for his misdeeds. With his superb storytelling and analytic skills Toobin recounts all the mind-boggling twists and turns in the case--Trump's son met with a Russian operative promising Kremlin support! Trump paid a porn star \$130,000 to hush up an affair! Rudy Giuliani and a pair of shady Ukrainian-American businessmen got the Justice Department to look at Russian-created conspiracy theories! Toobin shows how Trump's canny lawyers used Mueller's famous integrity against him, and how Trump's bullying and bluster cowed Republican legislators into ignoring the clear evidence of the impeachment hearings. Based on dozens of interviews with prosecutors in Mueller's office, Trump's legal team, Congressional investigators, White House staffers, and several of the key players, including some who are now in prison, True Crimes and Misdemeanors is a revelatory narrative that makes sense of the seemingly endless chaos of the

Trump years. Filled with never-before-reported details of the high-stakes legal battles and political machinations, the book weaves a tale of a rogue president guilty of historic misconduct, and how he got away with it.

a political party unhinged from the truth: The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump Bandy X. Lee, 2019-03-19 As this bestseller predicted, Trump has only grown more erratic and dangerous as the pressures on him mount. This new edition includes new essays bringing the book up to date—because this is still not normal. Originally released in fall 2017, *The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump* was a runaway bestseller. Alarmed Americans and international onlookers wanted to know: What is wrong with him? That question still plagues us. The Trump administration has proven as chaotic and destructive as its opponents feared, and the man at the center of it all remains a cipher. Constrained by the APA's "Goldwater rule," which inhibits mental health professionals from diagnosing public figures they have not personally examined, many of those qualified to weigh in on the issue have shied away from discussing it at all. The public has thus been left to wonder whether he is mad, bad, or both. The prestigious mental health experts who have contributed to the revised and updated version of *The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump* argue that their moral and civic duty to warn supersedes professional neutrality. Whatever affects him, affects the nation: From the trauma people have experienced under the Trump administration to the cult-like characteristics of his followers, he has created unprecedented mental health consequences across our nation and beyond. With eight new essays (about one hundred pages of new material), this edition will cover the dangerous ramifications of Trump's unnatural state. It's not all in our heads. It's in his.

a political party unhinged from the truth: I Alone Can Fix It Carol Leonnig, Philip Rucker, 2021-07-20 The instant #1 New York Times bestseller | A Washington Post Notable Book | One of NPR's Best Books of 2021 The definitive behind-the-scenes story of Trump's final year in office, by Phil Rucker and Carol Leonnig, the Pulitzer-Prize winning reporters and authors of *A Very Stable Genius*. "Chilling." - Anderson Cooper "Jaw-dropping." - John Berman "Shocking." - John Heilemann "Explosive." - Hallie Jackson "Blockbuster new reporting." - Nicolle Wallace "Bracing new revelations." - Brian Williams "Bombshell reporting." - David Muir The true story of what took place in Donald Trump's White House during a disastrous 2020 has never before been told in full. What was really going on around the president, as the government failed to contain the coronavirus and over half a million Americans perished? Who was influencing Trump after he refused to concede an election he had clearly lost and spread lies about election fraud? To answer these questions, Phil Rucker and Carol Leonnig reveal a dysfunctional and bumbling presidency's inner workings in unprecedented, stunning detail. Focused on Trump and the key players around him—the doctors, generals, senior advisers, and Trump family members—Rucker and Leonnig provide a forensic account of the most devastating year in a presidency like no other. Their sources were in the room as time and time again Trump put his personal gain ahead of the good of the country. These witnesses to history tell the story of him longing to deploy the military to the streets of American cities to crush the protest movement in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, all to bolster his image of strength ahead of the election. These sources saw firsthand his refusal to take the threat of the coronavirus seriously—even to the point of allowing himself and those around him to be infected. This is a story of a nation sabotaged—economically, medically, and politically—by its own leader, culminating with a groundbreaking, minute-by-minute account of exactly what went on in the Capitol building on January 6, as Trump's supporters so easily breached the most sacred halls of American democracy, and how the president reacted. With unparalleled access, Rucker and Leonnig explain and expose exactly who enabled—and who foiled—Trump as he sought desperately to cling to power. A classic and heart-racing work of investigative reporting, this book is destined to be read and studied by citizens and historians alike for decades to come.

a political party unhinged from the truth: The Cruelty Is the Point Adam Serwer, 2021-06-29 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From an award-winning journalist at *The Atlantic*, these searing essays make a powerful case that "real hope lies not in a sunny nostalgia for American greatness but in seeing this history plain—in all of its brutality, unadorned by euphemism" (*The New*

York Times). NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY NPR • “No writer better demonstrates how American dreams are so often sabotaged by American history. Adam Serwer is essential.”—Ta-Nehisi Coates To many, our most shocking political crises appear unprecedented—un-American, even. But they are not, writes The Atlantic’s Adam Serwer in this prescient essay collection, which dissects the most devastating moments in recent memory to reveal deeply entrenched dynamics, patterns as old as the country itself. The January 6 insurrection, anti-immigrant sentiment, and American authoritarianism all have historic roots that explain their continued power with or without President Donald Trump—a fact borne out by what has happened since his departure from the White House. Serwer argues that Trump is not the cause, he is a symptom. Serwer’s phrase “the cruelty is the point” became among the most-used descriptions of Trump’s era, but as this book demonstrates, it resonates across centuries. The essays here combine revelatory reporting, searing analysis, and a clarity that’s bracing. In this new, expanded version of his bestselling debut, Serwer elegantly dissects white supremacy’s profound influence on our political system, looking at the persistence of the Lost Cause, the past and present of police unions, the mythology of migration, and the many faces of anti-Semitism. In so doing, he offers abundant proof that our past is present and demonstrates the devastating costs of continuing to pretend it’s not. *The Cruelty Is the Point* dares us, the reader, to not look away.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *The Death of Truth* Michiko Kakutani, 2018-07-17 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From the Pulitzer Prize-winning critic comes an impassioned critique of America’s retreat from reason We live in a time when the very idea of objective truth is mocked and discounted by the occupants of the White House. Discredited conspiracy theories and ideologies have resurfaced, proven science is once more up for debate, and Russian propaganda floods our screens. The wisdom of the crowd has usurped research and expertise, and we are each left clinging to the beliefs that best confirm our biases. How did truth become an endangered species in contemporary America? This decline began decades ago, and in *The Death of Truth*, former New York Times critic Michiko Kakutani takes a penetrating look at the cultural forces that contributed to this gathering storm. In social media and literature, television, academia, and politics, Kakutani identifies the trends—originating on both the right and the left—that have combined to elevate subjectivity over factuality, science, and common values. And she returns us to the words of the great critics of authoritarianism, writers like George Orwell and Hannah Arendt, whose work is newly and eerily relevant. With remarkable erudition and insight, Kakutani offers a provocative diagnosis of our current condition and points toward a new path for our truth-challenged times.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *Fantasyland* Kurt Andersen, 2017-09-05 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “The single most important explanation, and the fullest explanation, of how Donald Trump became president of the United States . . . nothing less than the most important book that I have read this year.”—Lawrence O’Donnell How did we get here? In this sweeping, eloquent history of America, Kurt Andersen shows that what’s happening in our country today—this post-factual, “fake news” moment we’re all living through—is not something new, but rather the ultimate expression of our national character. America was founded by wishful dreamers, magical thinkers, and true believers, by hucksters and their suckers. Fantasy is deeply embedded in our DNA. Over the course of five centuries—from the Salem witch trials to Scientology to the Satanic Panic of the 1980s, from P. T. Barnum to Hollywood and the anything-goes, wild-and-crazy sixties, from conspiracy theories to our fetish for guns and obsession with extraterrestrials—our love of the fantastic has made America exceptional in a way that we’ve never fully acknowledged. From the start, our ultra-individualism was attached to epic dreams and epic fantasies—every citizen was free to believe absolutely anything, or to pretend to be absolutely anybody. With the gleeful erudition and tell-it-like-it-is ferocity of a Christopher Hitchens, Andersen explores whether the great American experiment in liberty has gone off the rails. *Fantasyland* could not appear at a more perfect moment. If you want to understand Donald Trump and the culture of twenty-first-century America, if you want to know how the lines between reality and illusion have become dangerously blurred, you must read this book. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE SAN FRANCISCO

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a political party unhinged from the truth: *The Deep State* Mike Lofgren, 2016-01-05 The New York Times bestselling author of *The Party Is Over* delivers a no-holds-barred exposé of who really wields power in Washington Every Four years, tempers are tested and marriages fray as Americans head to the polls to cast their votes. But does anyone really care what we think? Has our vaunted political system become one big, expensive, painfully scripted reality TV show? In this cringe-inducing expose of the sins and excesses of Beltwayland, a longtime Republican party insider argues that we have become an oligarchy in form if not in name. Hooked on war, genuflecting to big donors, in thrall to discredited economic theories and utterly bereft of a moral compass, America's governing classes are selling their souls to entrenched interest while our bridges collapse, wages stagnate, and our water is increasingly undrinkable. Drawing on insights gleaned over three decades on Capitol Hill, much of it on the Budget Committee, Lofgren paints a gripping portrait of the dismal swamp on the Potomac and the revolution it will take to reclaim our government and set us back on course.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* Richard Hofstadter, 2008-06-10 This timely reissue of Richard Hofstadter's classic work on the fringe groups that influence American electoral politics offers an invaluable perspective on contemporary domestic affairs. In *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, acclaimed historian Richard Hofstadter examines the competing forces in American political discourse and how fringe groups can influence — and derail — the larger agendas of a political party. He investigates the politics of the irrational, shedding light on how the behavior of individuals can seem out of proportion with actual political issues, and how such behavior impacts larger groups. With such other classic essays as "Free Silver and the Mind of 'Coin' Harvey" and "What Happened to the Antitrust Movement?", *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* remains both a seminal text of political history and a vital analysis of the ways in which political groups function in the United States.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *A Higher Loyalty* James Comey, 2018-04-17 #1 New York Times Bestseller now in paperback with new material The inspiration for *The Comey Rule*, the Showtime limited series starring Jeff Daniels premiering September 2020 In his book, former FBI director James Comey shares his never-before-told experiences from some of the highest-stakes situations of his career in the past two decades of American government, exploring what good, ethical leadership looks like, and how it drives sound decisions. His journey provides an unprecedented entry into the corridors of power, and a remarkable lesson in what makes an effective leader. Mr. Comey served as director of the FBI from 2013 to 2017, appointed to the post by President Barack Obama. He previously served as U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, and the U.S. deputy attorney general in the administration of President George W. Bush. From prosecuting the Mafia and Martha Stewart to helping change the Bush administration's policies on torture and electronic surveillance, overseeing the Hillary Clinton e-mail investigation as well as ties between the Trump campaign and Russia, Comey has been involved in some of the most consequential cases and policies of recent history.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *Night of Camp David* Fletcher Knebel, 1965 The dilemma of a junior senator, who, while being groomed for the office of Vice President, discovers that the President is a paranoiac and shortly will have an important meeting with the Russians.

a political party unhinged from the truth: *Thank You for Your Servitude* Mark Leibovich, 2022-07-12 The #1 New York Times Bestseller "He's one of the best chroniclers of politics today."

-Jake Tapper "This is a really funny book." -Kara Swisher "His writing is so damn good." -John Berman "Really fascinating...There are so many revelations." -Anderson Cooper "The new must read summer book." -Stephanie Ruhle From the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *This Town*, the eyewitness account of how the GOP collaborated with Donald Trump to transform Washington's "swamp" into a gold-plated hot tub—and a onetime party of rugged individualists into a sycophantic personality cult. In the early months of Trump's candidacy, the Republican Party's most important figures, people such as Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and Lindsey Graham, were united—and loud—in their scorn and contempt. Even more, in their outrage: Trump was a menace and an affront to our democracy. Then, awkwardly, Trump won. *Thank You for Your Servitude* is Mark Leibovich's unflinching account of the moral rout of a major American political party, tracking the transformation of Rubio, Cruz, Graham, and their ilk into the administration's chief enablers, and the swamp's lesser lights into frantic chasers of the grift. What would these politicians do to preserve their place in the sun, or at least the orbit of the spray tan? What would they do to preserve their "relevance"? Almost anything, it turns out. Trump's savage bullying of everyone in his circle, along with his singular command of his political base, created a dangerous culture of submission in the Republican Party. Meanwhile, many of the most alpha of the lapdogs happily conceded to Mark Leibovich that they were "in on the joke." As Lindsey Graham told the author, his supporters in South Carolina generally don't read *The New York Times*, and they won't read this book, either. All that cynicism, shading into nihilism, led to a country truly unhinged from reality, and to the events of January 6, 2021. It's a vista that makes the Washington of *This Town* seem like a comedy of manners in comparison. *Thank You for Your Servitude* isn't another view from the Oval Office: it's the view from the Trump Hotel. We can check out any time we want, but only time will tell if we can ever leave.

a political party unhinged from the truth: Last Best Hope George Packer, 2021-06-15 One of *The New York Times's* 100 notable books of 2021 [George Packer's] account of America's decline into destructive tribalism is always illuminating and often dazzling. —William Galston, *The Washington Post* Acclaimed National Book Award-winning author George Packer diagnoses America's descent into a failed state, and envisions a path toward overcoming our injustices, paralyses, and divides In the year 2020, Americans suffered one rude blow after another to their health, livelihoods, and collective self-esteem. A ruthless pandemic, an inept and malign government response, polarizing protests, and an election marred by conspiracy theories left many citizens in despair about their country and its democratic experiment. With pitiless precision, the year exposed the nation's underlying conditions—discredited elites, weakened institutions, blatant inequalities—and how difficult they are to remedy. In *Last Best Hope*, George Packer traces the shocks back to their sources. He explores the four narratives that now dominate American life: Free America, which imagines a nation of separate individuals and serves the interests of corporations and the wealthy; Smart America, the world view of Silicon Valley and the professional elite; Real America, the white Christian nationalism of the heartland; and Just America, which sees citizens as members of identity groups that inflict or suffer oppression. In lively and biting prose, Packer shows that none of these narratives can sustain a democracy. To point a more hopeful way forward, he looks for a common American identity and finds it in the passion for equality—the "hidden code"—that Americans of diverse persuasions have held for centuries. Today, we are challenged again to fight for equality and renew what Alexis de Tocqueville called "the art" of self-government. In its strong voice and trenchant analysis, *Last Best Hope* is an essential contribution to the literature of national renewal.

a political party unhinged from the truth: Suburban Warriors Lisa McGirr, 2015-06-02 In the early 1960s, American conservatives seemed to have fallen on hard times. McCarthyism was on the run, and movements on the political left were grabbing headlines. The media lampooned John Birchers's accusations that Dwight Eisenhower was a communist puppet. Mainstream America snickered at warnings by California Congressman James B. Utt that barefooted Africans were training in Georgia to help the United Nations take over the country. Yet, in Utt's home district of

Orange County, thousands of middle-class suburbanites proceeded to organize a powerful conservative movement that would land Ronald Reagan in the White House and redefine the spectrum of acceptable politics into the next century. *Suburban Warriors* introduces us to these people: women hosting coffee klatches for Barry Goldwater in their tract houses; members of anticommunist reading groups organizing against sex education; pro-life Democrats gradually drawn into conservative circles; and new arrivals finding work in defense companies and a sense of community in Orange County's mushrooming evangelical churches. We learn what motivated them and how they interpreted their political activity. Lisa McGirr shows that their movement was not one of marginal people suffering from status anxiety, but rather one formed by successful entrepreneurial types with modern lifestyles and bright futures. She describes how these suburban pioneers created new political and social philosophies anchored in a fusion of Christian fundamentalism, xenophobic nationalism, and western libertarianism. While introducing these rank-and-file activists, McGirr chronicles Orange County's rise from nut country to political vanguard. Through this history, she traces the evolution of the New Right from a virulent anticommunist, anti-establishment fringe to a broad national movement nourished by evangelical Protestantism. Her original contribution to the social history of politics broadens—and often upsets—our understanding of the deep and tenacious roots of popular conservatism in America.

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ones Adams saw in Steve Jobs when he invested in Apple decades ago. Win Bigly is a field guide for persuading others in any situation—or resisting the tactics of emotional persuasion when they’re used on you. This revised edition features a bonus chapter that assesses just how well Adams foresaw the outcomes of Trump’s tactics with North Korea, the NFL protesters, Congress, and more.

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a political party unhinged from the truth: Empire of Resentment Lawrence Rosenthal, 2020-09-08 From a leading scholar on conservatism, the extraordinary chronicle of how the transformation of the American far right made the Trump presidency possible—and what it portends for the future Since Trump's victory and the UK's Brexit vote, much of the commentary on the populist epidemic has focused on the emergence of populism. But, Lawrence Rosenthal argues, what

is happening globally is not the emergence but the transformation of right-wing populism. Rosenthal, the founder of UC Berkeley's Center for Right-Wing Studies, suggests right-wing populism is a protean force whose prime mover is the resentment felt toward perceived cultural elites, and whose abiding feature is its ideological flexibility, which now takes the form of xenophobic nationalism. In 2016, American right-wing populists migrated from the free marketeering Tea Party to Donald Trump's hard hat, anti-immigrant, America-First nationalism. This was the most important single factor in Trump's electoral victory and it has been at work across the globe. In Italy, for example, the Northern League reinvented itself in 2018 as an all-Italy party, switching its fury from southerners to immigrants, and came to power. Rosenthal paints a vivid sociological, political, and psychological picture of the transnational quality of this movement, which is now in power in at least a dozen countries, creating a de facto Nationalist International. In America and abroad, the current mobilization of right-wing populism has given life to long marginalized threats like white supremacy. The future of democratic politics in the United States and abroad depends on whether the liberal and left parties have the political capacity to mobilize with a progressive agenda of their own.

a political party unhinged from the truth: The Case for Trump Victor Davis Hanson, 2019-03-05 This New York Times bestselling Trump biography from a major American intellectual explains how a renegade businessman became one of the most successful -- and necessary -- presidents of all time. In *The Case for Trump*, award-winning historian and political commentator Victor Davis Hanson explains how a celebrity businessman with no political or military experience triumphed over sixteen well-qualified Republican rivals, a Democrat with a quarter-billion-dollar war chest, and a hostile media and Washington establishment to become president of the United States -- and an extremely successful president. Trump alone saw a political opportunity in defending the working people of America's interior whom the coastal elite of both parties had come to scorn, Hanson argues. And Trump alone had the instincts and energy to pursue this opening to victory, dismantle a corrupt old order, and bring long-overdue policy changes at home and abroad. We could not survive a series of presidencies as volatile as Trump's. But after decades of drift, America needs the outsider Trump to do what normal politicians would not and could not do.

a political party unhinged from the truth: Peril Bob Woodward, Robert Costa, 2023-01-03 The transition from President Donald J. Trump to President Joseph R. Biden Jr. stands as one of the most dangerous periods in American history. But as #1 internationally bestselling author Bob Woodward and acclaimed reporter Robert Costa reveal for the first time, it was far more than just a domestic political crisis. Woodward and Costa interviewed more than 200 people at the center of the turmoil, resulting in more than 6,000 pages of transcripts—and a spellbinding and definitive portrait of a nation on the brink. This classic study of Washington takes readers deep inside the Trump White House, the Biden White House, the 2020 campaign, and the Pentagon and Congress, with eyewitness accounts of what really happened. Intimate scenes are supplemented with never-before-seen material from secret orders, transcripts of confidential calls, diaries, emails, meeting notes and other personal and government records, making *Peril* an unparalleled history. It is also the first inside look at Biden's presidency as he began his presidency facing the challenges of a lifetime: the continuing deadly pandemic and millions of Americans facing soul-crushing economic pain, all the while navigating a bitter and disabling partisan divide, a world rife with threats, and the hovering, dark shadow of the former president.

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commentaries, including new up-to-the-minute material, TRUMP IS F*CKING CRAZY is essential reading for concerned citizens who—like Olbermann—refuse to normalize or accept our new political reality.

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they did not understand the complicated moral framework by which many conservatives would view Trump, leading evangelicals and one-issue voters to shed Republican orthodoxy if it delivered a Supreme Court that would undo *Roe v. Wade*. In this sweeping history, Peters details key junctures and episodes to unfurl the story of a revolution from within. Its architects had little interest in the America of the new century but a deep understanding of the iron will of a shrinking minority. With Trump as their polestar, their gamble paid greater dividends than they'd ever imagined, extending the life of far-right conservatism in United States domestic policy into the next half century.

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