

Trump Loyalists Preview Strategies To Upend 2024 Election



05-10-2024 ~ *Not just challenging voters' credentials in battleground states. But attacking every step in running elections.*

As the 2020 presidential election entered its final stretch, Christina Bobb was not just covering it as a TV newswoman for the pro-Donald Trump One America News Network (OANN). The tall, dark-haired, clear-speaking ex-marine and lawyer was working to overturn it.

Bobb believed that Democrats and election officials colluded to fabricate thousands of voter registrations, illegal voters, forged ballots, and finessed the vote count until Joe Biden was the victor in 2020's battleground states.

Yet it was Bobb and Trump loyalists who were feverishly plotting and pushing to alter the presidential election's outcome, as she detailed in her 2023 book, [*Stealing Your Vote: The Inside Story of the 2020 Election and What it Means for 2024*](#).

Publicly, Bobb kept reporting for OANN. Under the radar, she "joined" Rudy Giuliani and others in Trump's orbit who pursued ways to nullify the results. She wrote that she was on the call with Trump when he urged Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger to "[find 11,780 votes](#)." Bobb said that she coordinated "the litigation efforts in Arizona, Michigan, and New Mexico," including, apparently, a slate of fake Electoral College members who forged and sent paperwork to Congress certifying that Trump had won Arizona.

In April, Bobb and [17 others](#) were [indicted](#) on multiple felonies in that electoral hijacking scheme by Arizona Attorney General Kristin Mayes, a Democrat. Only weeks before, on the same day Trump secured the 2024 Republican nomination, Bobb was [named](#) the Republican National Committee's senior counsel for election

integrity. Beyond the surreal twist that a politico indicted for attempting to overturn a swing state's presidential vote will now lead a national party's efforts to police elections, Bobb's book previews the lawfare and conspiratorial mindset that is already shadowing 2024's presidential election.

In her book, Bobb complained about "inflated" voter rolls, "ballot trafficking," and "ballot harvesting," which are conspiratorial pejoratives that imply fabricating voters, forging ballots, and stuffing ballot boxes. As States Newsroom [reported](#) in April 2024, the RNC and its allies have already sued in five states—including Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Nevada—to challenge their voter rolls' accuracy, and, in turn, voters' credentials. In Georgia, a Republican bill empowering mass challenges of voter registrations was signed into law on May 7. (The American Civil Liberties Union has vowed to [sue](#) to block last-minute voter purges.)

Bobb's book also targeted the way that elections are run. She disparaged "centralized" counting operations ("makes cheating easier") and complained of local election officials "removing" Republican workers and restricting GOP's observers ("so that they could cheat"). She said that Democrats will spread "misinformation" ("an information war against the American people"), run "out the clock" after Election Day, and collude with the media to change "the Narrative."

"The media and the Left insist that there were *no crimes* committed, and they love to point to the courts, claiming that all charges of criminal activity have been proven wrong," she wrote of 2020. "The real story, however, is quite different."

The real story of 2020's finale, contrary to Bobb's assertions, was that Trump loyalists would not accept his defeat and were running blind. They presented their "evidence" to courts overseen by Democratic and Republican judges and [lost every substantive legal challenge](#). Their evidence—sworn statements by individuals who claimed they had witnessed misdeeds and voter fraud—was not deemed credible and was rebutted by factual evidence provided by experienced and informed experts.

Nonetheless, Bobb's belief that hidden hands are again plotting to steal votes is not just taken as an article of faith in Trump circles. It is emblematic of a new development in the GOP's "election integrity" circles, which Mimi Marziani, a political science and election law professor at the University of Texas at Austin,

recently [characterized](#) as “throwing the kitchen sink” at elections officials, the courts, and the public.

In recent years, these self-taught grassroots Trump activists—who distrust almost everyone who has run an election, [including Republicans](#)—have discovered the details of election administration. These are the often-repetitive steps, procedures, and technologies used in elections. The activists assume the worst will happen at any point. They distrust almost everything about every stage in the process.

As Marziani recently [told](#) Votebeat’s Texas reporter, “They’re not actually trying to have a different person elected... They’re trying to set some sort of precedent to destabilize free and fair elections.”

“If someone really wants to interfere with our elections, they will find a way to accomplish that,” wrote Erica in April, the curator of the Election Education channel on Telegram, a platform favored by Trumpers. “The security measures the election officials repeat over and over are a false sense of security when we can’t verify any of them for ourselves.”

Telegram’s ‘Election Education’

That online comment hardly seems threatening. But what I found on the channel, which leaders of national groups seeking to defend 2024’s elections said they had not seen via emails, was stunning. Bobb’s book puts forth broad conspiracies and talking points. The Election Education channel has weaponized the details beyond anything I have seen.

I have studied and covered voting rights, election administration, voting system technology, election procedure, and disinformation for two decades. This winter, I worked for nearly two months as a county election official during California’s presidential primary, where I had an up close look at many of the practices targeted by Bobb and her fellow travelers. I understand the frustrations of not getting timely, easily understood explanations and evidence about what happened in any close election. I’ve faced many tight-lipped officials as a journalist.

But the Election Education channel is a repository that catalogs the fine print of running elections and sows doubt about almost everything. It is filled with scores of graphic charts that put forth almost every imaginable conspiracy. It makes hundreds of blunt accusations that are difficult to unwind and begin to respond

to—because running an election isn't so simple.

The graphics include topics such as: “Ballot Harvesting Hot Spots,” “Known Election Fraud Maneuvers,” “Election Observer Tips,” “Take-Aways from 2020 Elections,” “What Could Possibly Happen to a Mail-In Ballot?” “Bring Election Accountability to Your Local Elections Office,” “Why Aren't Change of Addresses Being Updated in the Voter Rolls?” “Our Elections are Under Attack!” and “Voter Authentication Not Required When Voting by Mail.”

The channel's messages are not unique in Trump land. They are signs of our polarized, tribal, and political times. The channel's curators believe they are educating Trump's base. Their most popular posts are regularly seen by tens of thousands of viewers, according to Telegram's counter. But they are blissfully unaware of what they do not know. In contrast, the longer I have been around elections, the more I have realized how much more there is to know.

For example, below the assertion that anyone who wants to interfere will find a way is a chart entitled, “Election Fraud Work-Arounds: The Art of Cheating Without Getting Caught.” It is one of 50 graphics posted so far in 2024, has been viewed by 26,000 people, and bluntly lists a half-dozen scenarios to cheat to “Pass Post-Election Audits,” “Pass Logic and Accuracy Tests,” “Add Late Ballots to the Count,” and “Use Uncertified Systems.”

These technicalities are steps that occur during the set-up and running of elections. Like all propaganda, their assertions start with a thread of truth. A factual process or procedure or an election record or computer system is cited. But the messages and messengers invariably go on to assume that specific steps will be secretly sabotaged.

For example, under “Add Late Ballots to the Count”—which implies that Democrats or colluding officials are stealing votes—are six conspiratorial scenarios. One might “alter or don't require [a] USPS [Post Office] time stamp.” One might “use ‘blank’ ballots later to vote” or “backfill the votes via adjudication [a process where officials review ballots if there's more than one vote in a single contest to ascertain the voter's intent].” One might “alter chain-of-custody records [concerning the handling and inventorying of ballots].” One might exploit the “ballot curing period [when voters can correct mistakes or return to an election office with more identifying information] to insert votes” or “use early

votes to calculate how many more ballots are needed to win.”

Accusations like these sow doubts. It is virtually impossible to factually respond to people who say that no matter what evidence is presented, that something invisible is happening elsewhere to corrupt the process. But that’s their mindset.

“Election fraud does not require the assistance of election staff,” said a chart entitled, *How an Election can be Stolen without Poll Worker’s Knowledge*. “Poll workers can do everything right and still have the election stolen from them. There are people in this world who will stop at nothing to gain or maintain power.”

How Impactful Might This Be?

As a longtime journalist, I don’t criticize individual citizen activists. But I can’t help but notice the blind spots in this movement and its methodology.

Bobb’s assertions and Election Education’s graphics are not just overclaiming and propagandist. They are also not fully knowledgeable about their topics and targets. One can notice what is not mentioned. They never say how many voters or votes might be affected in their latest conspiratorial scenario. They never mention what steps, security measures, bureaucratic redundancies, observer scrutiny, and time crunches would prevent their feared subterfuge from pragmatically occurring. They are self-taught and unaware of their shortcomings—unintentionally, or perhaps more cynically, they are aware and don’t care.

This winter, I learned things as an election official that I had not known until I worked on the inside. Election administration is not easily understood nor is it often well-explained. That encourages propaganda. But an absence of understanding does not mean the process is implicitly corrupt and untrustworthy. Today’s voting systems are not black boxes. They are filled with data and voter- and ballot-centered evidence that is—and can be—repeatedly verified.

But Trump’s base doesn’t want to believe that he lost in 2020 and might lose again in 2024. That mindset raises some big questions about their latest messaging. Will efforts such as the Election Education channel’s targeting and disparaging of the process’s fine print and the officials who run elections lead to protests and unrest this fall? There are only several dozen swing counties in all of the swing states. It doesn’t take more than a few dozen protesters to show up at a

single site, call the media, and be noisy and disruptive.

But succeeding as a propagandist is not the same as being better-informed and smarter about the electoral process. Nor does it mean Trumpers will be pursuing better-informed legal challenges after Election Day—should a statewide or federal election come down to a margin of several thousand votes.

When asked about potential impacts in 2024, several former officials who are involved in defending elections said that they had not heard of the Telegram channel. One was wary of giving the channel too much attention, as GOP activists have a history of hyping their vigilantism and then barely showing up on Election Day, and afterward.

Apparently, the channel is being tracked by some disinformation watchers. The channel's curator has posted that one contractor working with election officials has tagged some of its posts. But that surveillance only seems to stiffen the belief of Trumpers that Democrats and many officials are plotting against them. And they think they know how.

On April 28, Election Education asked readers how they thought 2024 would be stolen. "What is your theory on how elections are stolen in your neck of the woods? We know they are all possible, but curious what you think the biggest factor is," it said.

Nearly 4,800 people replied. That's more respondents than most national polls. "Mail-in ballots," replied 30 percent. "Machine vote flips," said 22 percent. "Injecting votes using dirty voter rolls," said 17 percent. "Machine is set for certain outcome," said 10 percent. Their answers were seen by 16,500 viewers.

A few days later, a new graphic appeared. "They are INFLATING the voter rolls because they know we have been STUDYING the MACHINES! Do NOT get BLINDSIDED." Below, it said, "Remember, there are multiple ways they can accomplish their goal of stealing an election."

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