

Abu-Ghazaleh Shares Insights from Bruce Stokes on the Upcoming 2024 US Election



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As the United States approaches the 2024 elections, a complex picture of public sentiment and perception is emerging from official US sources and national polls.

A striking aspect of the current political climate is the apparent gap in historical knowledge, with a significant portion of the electorate reportedly unaware of pivotal events such as the Civil War and the Great Depression. This lack of historical context may influence contemporary political and economic perspectives.

Economic indicators suggest a disconnect between public perception and reality. Despite data indicating that the national economy has not been in a recession since 2020, a substantial number of Americans believe otherwise. This sentiment is reflected in the misperception regarding stock market performance, with many under the impression that stocks have declined, whereas they have actually risen by 11% in 2024.

Inflation rates and their management are a contentious topic. There is a widespread belief that the current administration has seen a 50% inflation rate, a figure that contrasts with official statistics. The belief that presidential policies can directly control inflation persists, despite historical evidence suggesting the contrary. The disparity between the perception of personal financial health and the national economy is noteworthy. Many Americans view their personal

finances positively, yet regard the national economy unfavorably, indicating a possible influence of media narratives on public opinion.

Immigration policy remains a polarizing issue, with a significant portion of the population, influenced by certain media outlets, believing in an open-border policy that does not align with official immigration strategies. Similarly, crime rates, which official statistics show to be on the decline, are perceived by many to be increasing. This discrepancy highlights the role of media in shaping public perception and underscores the importance of cross-referencing multiple information sources for a balanced view.

The media landscape, as always, plays a pivotal role in shaping voters' views. The divergence in perceptions of reality among the electorate is often a product of their chosen news sources. In battleground states, where the election outcome is likely to be decided, economic nostalgia and other sentiments influenced by media narratives are prevalent.

The sentiments leading up to the 2024 US elections are an assortment of historical amnesia, economic misconceptions, and media-influenced opinions. It is essential for voters to seek information from a variety of sources to form a well-rounded understanding of the issues at hand. As the election nears, it will be crucial for the electorate to engage in informed discourse, bridging the gap between perception and reality to make decisions that will shape the future of the nation.

Bruce Stokes is the executive director of the Transatlantic Task Force and senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund. He was the director of Global Economic Attitudes at the Pew Research Center in Washington, DC, and is a former international economics columnist for the National Journal, a Washington-based public policy magazine. He is also a former senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.