

Making Waves for Democracy  
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Notes (highlights)

“Politics is the art and science of moving energy.”

Kamala Harris (KH) has reassembled the Obama coalitions – reenergized them – based on identities (Black women, white dudes, seniors, unions, etc.). This coalition adds great strength to the Democratic Party, likely neutralizing effects of such things as protests during the Democratic Convention.

We have been under the spell of the Trump vortex, and we’ve been reacting to it – we have Trump in our heads. In 2020, Democrats won on fear and dread. Now we need emotion, HOPE and JOY – which Kamala Harris has brought into the race. This embrace of hope and joy may be related to the aftermath of the pandemic. We all first needed the trusting hand of Joe Biden, but now are moving to a future of hope and joy.

“Overdogs” take power by:

- Taking away the right to vote, get rid of organizations (the bases of power for opponents, like Planned Parenthood)
- Psychological strategies that confuse the opponent
- “Divide and conquer” – the most important strategy. For example, the moral panic about trans kids, affirmative action, school curricula - breaks apart natural allies, leads them to fight with one another.

“Underdogs” can win primarily through unity.

Humor is important to undermine authoritarianism. Kamala Harris and Tim Walz are using humor in a lovely way that makes Donald Trump and JD Vance seem smaller. It is important to expose the “con” of the MAGA Republicans. A strong party, and building coalitions, can sustain debate rather than splitting/dividing allies.