

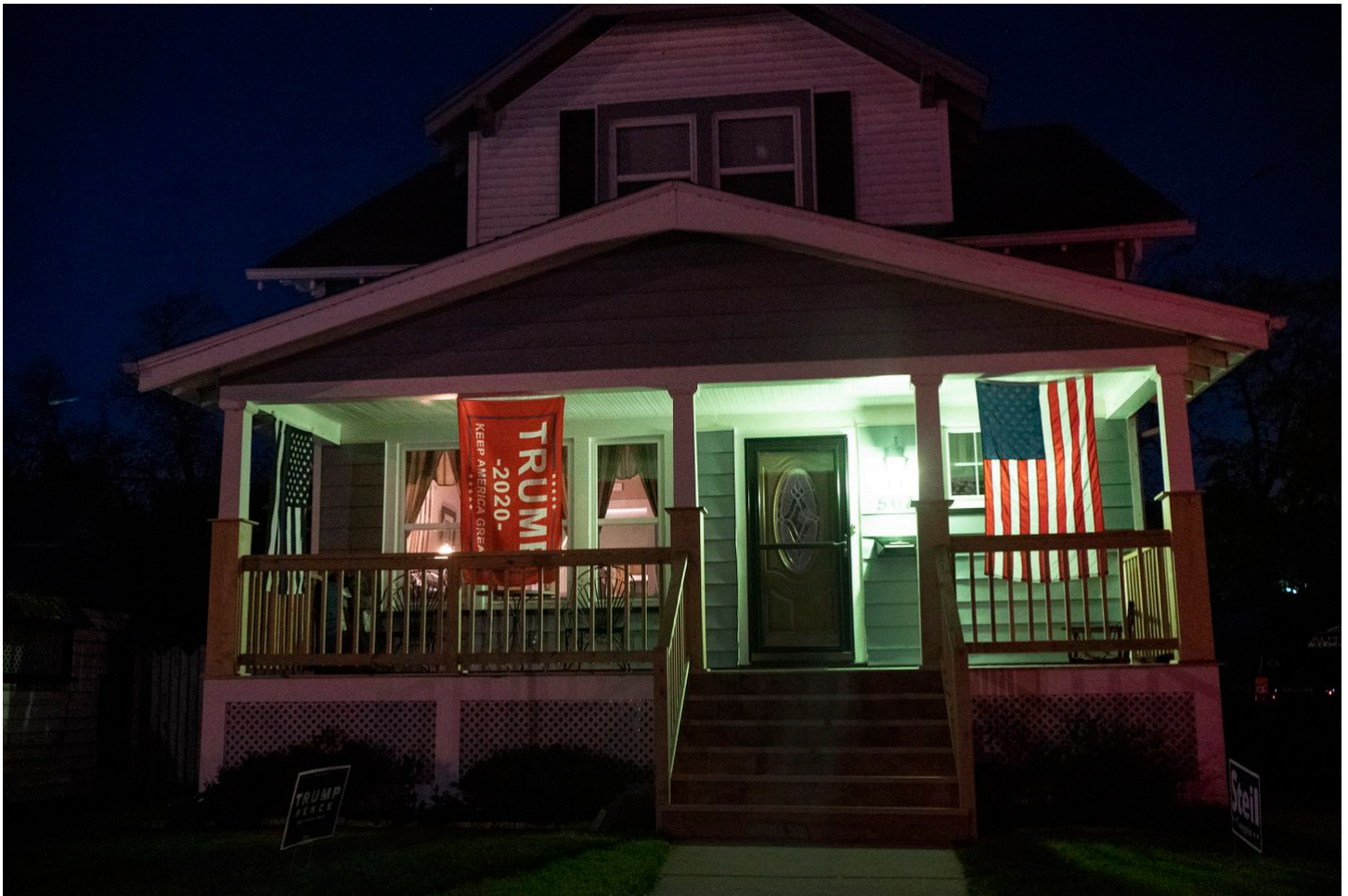
How do we fix this?

Half of us lived through these last four ugly miserable, destructive years and said, "Yes please, give me more of that." And even if Trump loses, they're not going anywhere.

By [Yvonne Abraham](#) Globe Columnist, Updated November 4, 2020, 1 hour ago

BREAKING

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A Trump flag and an American flag hung on the front porch of a home in Kenosha, Wis. Wong Maye-E/Associated Press

Right now, it looks like Democrat Joe Biden is likely to be our next president, if and when all of the votes are counted. But louder than ever the question

remains: Can he or anyone bring this oh-so-divisible nation together?

We aren't really one America, but two.

Remarkably, about half of the voters in this country lived through these last four ugly, miserable, destructive years and said, "Yes please, give me more of that."

So far, President Trump has won about 67 million votes — besting his 2016 tally. He won't end up winning the popular vote, of course. But that doesn't matter in this country. Our democracy, once an imperfect beacon for the world, has become grotesquely distorted. More than ever, [it is a monument to minority rule](#), enshrining inequality at the ballot box and in the electoral map. It bends to those with the least shame, who cynically exploit its weaknesses in the pursuit of unchecked power. This year, they somehow leveraged a deadly pandemic — rather than the president's incompetent and reckless response to it — to their advantage, too.

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So far, this race has been playing out as some of us expected, and feared: The votes as yet uncounted are more likely to favor Biden, so Trump has declared premature victory, thrown doubt upon the valid mail-in votes we always knew would take days to count, and set his army of dirty tricksters to work in the hopes of convincing friendly judges to throw out as many of those votes as possible.

This would probably not be happening if the Biden rout foretold by some had materialized. Republicans [spent years engineering the conditions that got us here](#), bringing cases and enacting laws that [effectively disenfranchised](#) hundreds of thousands of Americans. For example, the US Supreme Court kneecapped the Voting Rights Act, which liberated Republicans in Georgia and other states to make voting harder for those most likely to support Democrats;

Republicans in Florida [defied the will of the voters](#), denying former felons the right to cast ballots even after voters approved a constitutional amendment to give them that right; Trump installed a loyalist to lead the US Postal Service, which then [failed to deliver thousands of mail-in ballots on time](#); leading up to this election, Republicans in swing states closed polling places and brought a blizzard of [lawsuits designed to cut off Democratic voters](#). They also [refused to allow](#) mail-in ballots to be counted before Nov. 3 in several crucial states, a move making possible the false and dangerous “election fraud” narrative Trump is now pushing. These are matters not of opinion, but of historical record.

So yes, Biden needed massive voter mobilization to overcome all of that before Wednesday morning. It had to be a blowout, because the bar for Democrats to win is way higher than it is for Republicans, and too many people in this country are fine with that.

Of course, it should have been a blowout. It was one thing for 63 million Americans to vote for Trump in 2016. For even more voters to choose him now, having seen him in action for four years, is just astounding, and dispiriting.

These are people who embrace [bald-faced racism](#), or they don't think it's a deal-breaker. They're OK with [kids being separated from their parents at the border](#), or they don't think it's a deal-breaker. They are fine with the President of the United States cozying up to [murderous dictators](#) — even at the expense of our own citizens, [including soldiers](#) — or they don't think it's a deal-breaker. They are satisfied with the fact that their president [avoids paying his own taxes](#), and uses theirs to [fund a reelection campaign](#) that somehow blew through a billion dollars, or they don't think it's a deal-breaker.

They are at peace with the fact that 230,000 people have died of a virus the president refuses to contend with — or they don't think it's a deal breaker.

There have been plenty of calls already for Democrats to do some soul-

searching to discover why so many voters who could have chosen them instead chose a man who has forced the country to live with his chaos, cruelty and xenophobia for four years.

Souls require searching, but it's not Democrats — who stood for unity, inclusion, and against our basest instincts — who should be the ones to do it.

Of course, many Trump voters live in a world untouched by self-reflection, happy in the alternate reality conjured by the president, his propagandist media, and a vast web of conspiracy theorists poisoning the populace, unchecked by amoral billionaires like Rupert Murdoch and Mark Zuckerberg.

Those voters subscribe to that alternate reality because, in it, they are not racist or unpatriotic or hateful in the least for supporting the president. Instead, they are making informed decisions based on the only "facts" they will acknowledge.

They have been my faithful, relentless correspondents for more than four years, the moorings that once tethered them to the real world fraying further with every passing day.

In that world, Trump has drained the swamp (his administration has been a [conflict-of-interest carnival](#), a fact documented by watchdogs, whistle-blowers, and myriad resignations). He has brought North Korea to heel (the country's weapons program [appears to have advanced unchecked](#)). He has single-handedly saved the economy (he actually [inherited a robust recovery from the previous administration](#), and it is ailing now). The Mueller report proves Trump is innocent when it comes to Russian interference, and everything since then has proved his critics are dangerously corrupt and belong in prison. In this world, [the wall](#) has been built, the Middle East has been solved, and [coal is back](#) and better than ever. And that's before we get to QAnon or Hunter Biden's laptops.

"Why you ignore all of his accomplishments is clearly bias and racism or

maybe you just live under a rock," wrote one fan.

From another: "The corruption in the government needs to be cleaned up. He is not a politician..He has done more to get things done. He did what he said he would do and pleased the voters who elected him."

Even if, by some stroke of good fortune, Trump loses the presidency and concedes defeat, he will not go away. He will simply move his show from the White House to an even more lucrative venue, and his fans will still hang on his every word, embracing his easy, empty solutions for their very real problems, rejecting the harder ones that would actually make a difference.

Watching the massive voting lines over the last couple of weeks, and the piles of ballots arriving by mail, it was tempting to think that, in spite of himself, Trump had unified Americans at last. It was easy to wish that what we were seeing was this country remembering its values, and recoiling from him.

We now know what it really meant: We're more vehemently, and dangerously, divided than ever.

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While the election is still a toss-up, paths to victory are emerging for each candidate, particularly in three key states: Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. One of the candidates will ultimately win at least two of these three states, and that will likely seal a White House victory.