



Georgia Public Broadcasting
Quarterly Issues/Programs Report

Radio

January - February - March, 2022
1st Quarter

Top 5 Issues Addressed:

1. Politics
2. Education
3. Health
4. Economy
5. Racism

Representative Programs That Addressed Issues:

1. Politics

Political Rewind

GPB

Weekdays, 9am and repeated at 2pm

As Americans remain divided on a number of issues, *Political Rewind* continued to focus on the issues that face Georgians. These included the anniversary of the January 6th attack on the Capitol, the attempts to return to normal after 2 years of fighting COVID, the scrambling for the 2022 mid-term elections, the fight over school curriculums, skyrocketing prices, and the appointment of Ketanji Brown-Jackson as a candidate for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Political Rewind

GPB

January 5, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today's *Political Rewind* focused on several political issues facing the state as 2022 gets underway. Host Bill Nigut and his panel looked at Gov. Kemp's endorsement of "Constitutional Carry" for guns in advance of this year's legislative session. Kemp had campaigned on the issue in 2018, but the legislature has failed to act on the measure. Now, though, with an upcoming primary battle against former Sen. David Perdue, Kemp needs to appeal to the right wing of the Republican party with issues like this.

Also discussed, the continued threat of COVID in Georgia, with the state reporting over 60,000 cases in the first four days of the new year; Sen. Rafael Warnock continues his push to expand voting rights as he celebrates the anniversary of his surprise election; and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Managing Editor Leroy Chapman looked back on the newspaper's coverage of the attack on the U.S. Capitol a year earlier.

Joining Chapman on today's panel were *Axios Atlanta* reporter Emma Hurt, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reporter Greg Bluestein, and GPB Public Policy reporter Riley Bunch.

Political Rewind

GPB

January 25, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today's *Political Rewind* featured a visit from the powerful speaker of the Georgia House, Rep. David Ralston. Ralston chatted with host Bill Nigut and retired political reporter Jim Galloway about what he would like to see happen in the upcoming legislative session.

Ralston also talked about the upcoming Gubernatorial race. While refusing to offer an endorsement, Ralston said Gov. Brian Kemp did a good job managing the state through the COVID pandemic. He also said a contentious Republican primary will do little to unify the party.

While some Republicans are making it a priority to address the teaching of “critical race theory” in Georgia schools, Ralston said there was a lot of confusion as to exactly what “critical race theory” is.

Ralston also addressed attempts to break the Buckhead community away from the city of Atlanta and his priority to address mental health resources in the state. The speaker said he wants to take mental health crisis response out of the hands of law enforcement.

Political Rewind

GPB

February 28, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm

On today’s *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut welcomed special guest, former Sen. Sam Nunn to discuss events in Ukraine as Russians invaded the country. As an expert on defense issues when he served in the Senate, Nunn outlined the diplomatic objectives he thinks need to be reached in negotiations between the Russians and Ukrainians.

Joining Nunn on today’s panel were retired political reporter Jim Galloway; Tetiana Lendiel, treasurer of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, Georgia Branch; and Chris Grant, a professor at Mercer University, who recently returned from a Fulbright Fellowship in Kiev.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 28, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm

Today’s *Political Rewind* looked at Donald Trump’s return to the state over the weekend for a rally in Commerce supporting candidates he has endorsed in the 2022 elections. GPB Politics reporter Stephen Fowler attended the rally and told guest host Kevin Riley about the former President’s continued assertion that he believes the election was stolen from him. The rally also included Senatorial candidate Herschel Walker, Gubernatorial candidate David Perdue, and former Rep. Jody Hice, who is running for Secretary of State.

Also discussed was recent legislation passed in the state Senate giving teachers a pay boost but also allowing parents to formally complain about books and materials they deem harmful. The group also discussed revelations that the wife of Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas engaged in a number of efforts to keep former President Donald Trump in power after losing the 2020 election.

Joining Riley and Fowler on today’s panel were GPB-TV “Lawmakers” host Donna Lowry, WRBL reporter Chuck Williams, retired politics reporter Jim Galloway and the chair of the Atlanta Press Club Board of Directors, Ken Foskett.

2. Education

Political Rewind

GPB

February 4, 2022. 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today’s *Political Rewind*: host Bill Nigut and his panel looked at attempts by Republican state lawmakers to direct education in public schools.

During this year’s legislative session, GOP members have worked to remove “critical race theory” from Georgia schools, even though it is not currently taught. They have also discussed the banning of books that some parents consider “obscene,” and stopping transgender students from participating in athletics. Gov. Brian Kemp has also proposed a parental “bill of rights” which he says will increase

transparency and parental participation in schools, but critics counter will have a chilling effect on teachers thanks to increased surveillance.

The governor also has made changes to the Board of Regents, who govern the state's public universities and colleges. Many believe those changes were made to help appoint former Governor Sonny Perdue to the vacant Chancellorship.

Panelists on today's program included Emory University professor of Political Science, Dr. Andra Gillespie; *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* politics reporter Patricia Murphy; and Rene Alegria, CEO of *Mundo Hispanico Digital*.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 4, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut and his panel discussed the upcoming vote in the Georgia House on the first in a series of GOP-sponsored bills to limit how teachers can talk about race and the U.S. history of bigotry. The bill is sponsored by state Rep. Will Wade, a Republican from Dawsonville, who got the language of the bill from the influential conservative think-tank Heritage Foundation. It is one of multiple bills circling the General Assembly concerning how teachers do their jobs. House Bill 1178, also known as the "Parental Bill of Rights," would give parents more control over curriculum and is supported by Gov. Brian Kemp. Teachers say they feel "under attack" by Republican-led efforts to ban discussions of race and racism in Georgia classrooms.

Today's panel included *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* politics reporter, Patricia Murphy; Emory University professor of Political Science, Dr. Andra Gillespie; and Georgia State University Political Science professor, Dr. Amy Steigerwalt.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 29, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*, guest host Tamar Hallerman of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* led a discussion on the current status of education bills in the state General Assembly. She was joined by Atlanta Journal-Constitution state education reporter Ty Tagami; Georgia Association of Educators President Lisa Morgan; and Republican strategist Brian Robinson.

The group looked at how pandemic restrictions and inflamed rhetoric in the lead-up to the 2022 elections are spurring division on education. Gov. Brian Kemp is scheduled to sign a bill that allows parents to exempt their children from school mask mandates.

Also taking center stage during this legislative session are bills targeting transgender issues. One bill would ban schools from allowing transgender girls from participating in sports that align with their gender identity unless there is no equivalent sport offered by the school. Another bill would ban private schools from discussing "sexual orientation" or gender identity in primary grade levels.

Other bills focused on banning "critical race theory" even though the subject is not currently taught in Georgia schools, and voucher legislation that would allow more parents "school choice."

3. Health

Political Rewind

GPB

January 4, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

With the start of a new year, *Political Rewind* took a moment to look at the current state of the COVID pandemic in Georgia. Host Bill Nigut was joined by Dr. Carlos del Rio, Executive Associate Dean of the Emory School of Medicine & Grady Health System; GPB Senior Health Care reporter Ellen Eldridge; and Tamar Hallerman, senior reporter for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

On December 30th, the Georgia Department of Public Health reported a record 17,923 new cases of COVID, and experts predict a surge of cases from the Omicron variant will peak later in January. Dr. del Rio said it is important to remain on guard for this highly transmissible variant.

Eldridge has spoken to a number of new parents who are concerned that their young children are not yet allowed to receive the COVID vaccine. Dr. del Rio said the best way to protect children under five is to vaccinate the people around them. He also said it is important to protect yourself and your family by wearing the correct type of mask.

Meanwhile, reporter Hallerman said shifting information about COVID and how to counteract its spread are a sign scientist are learning how to best tackle the virus and end the pandemic.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 25, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut and his panel looked at the status of mental health legislation that House Speaker David Ralston has called the most important issue of the session. The bi-partisan bill passed the Georgia House by a huge margin, but now the bill is facing pushback from far-right detractors. The bill aims to require insurance companies to cover mental health care the same way physical care is covered. The federal government enacted a law in 2008 that aimed to require parity, but anecdotal evidence has shown it is not in Georgia.

Today's panel included Emory University Professor of Political Science, Dr. Andra Gillespie; Clark Atlanta Political Science Professor Dr. Tammy Greer; and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* politics reporter Patricia Murphy.

4. Economy

Political Rewind

GPB

January 18, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut spoke with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Farah Stockman, author of *American Made: What Happens to People When Work Disappears*. In the book, Stockman follows the fate of three Americans in the Rust Belt who were abandoned by a manufacturing economy relocating to cheaper labor overseas. Shannon, John, and Wally each come from different backgrounds, but each derive a sense of identity from their work at a steel ball bearing plant in Indianapolis. So, what happens when the factory closes down?

Stockman's telling of the story is an earnest and unflinching closeup of the connection between labor, identity, class, and politics against the backdrop of the shifting sands of the American political landscape.

Political Rewind

GPB

February 15, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's *Political Rewind*, a conversation about new efforts to help Americans lift themselves out of poverty. Guaranteed basic income initiatives are popping up across the country. Two new programs in Georgia seek to provide impoverished residents with a stable flow of income over one year. Can these programs help tackle inequity?

Joining host Bill Nigut were Atlanta City Councilmember Amir Farokhi; Kyle Wingfield, CEO and President of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation; and Tamar Hallerman, Senior Reporter for The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Georgia is among the top fifteen states with the highest economic racial inequality when looking at income. And the city of Atlanta leads the nation in income inequality and lack of economic mobility.

Former Atlanta mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms started a guaranteed basic income program in her last week in office. Another program will launch and include residents of Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward neighborhood.

However, critics of the guaranteed income programs say recipients lose eligibility to other benefits. They argue the structure of our entire welfare system is predicated on the idea that recipients are not working full time. If they were, they would not qualify for a lot of benefits in many cases.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 9, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*, leaders on both sides of the aisle in Georgia are working to relieve pain at the pump. Gov. Brian Kemp and Sen. Raphael Warnock both want to halt gas taxes as prices climb. Kemp proposes to suspend the state's motor fuel taxes which would bring gas prices down over twenty-nine cents a gallon. Warnock, meanwhile, wants to halt the Federal gasoline tax which would chop eighteen cents off gas prices. AAA currently reports gasoline prices in Georgia sit at \$4.16 per gallon, nine cents below the national average.

Host Bill Nigut discussed these proposals to help the pocketbooks of Georgians with *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* politics reporter Greg Bluestein, GPB News Public Policy reporter Riley Bunch and Clark Atlanta Political Science Professor Dr. Tammy Greer.

5. Racism

Political Rewind

GPB

February 23, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's edition of *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut and his panel discussed the guilty verdicts in the hate crime trial of three white men convicted of murdering Ahmaud Arbery. GPB-Savannah reporter Benjamin Payne covered the trial and gave his first-hand account as the verdicts were announced. While the three men were found guilty of violating Arbery's civil rights, they are also facing a civil case filed by the victim's family.

In addition to Payne, today's panel include Dr. Amy Steigerwalt, Professor of Political Science at Georgia State University; *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* political reporter Greg Bluestein; Emory University Professor of Constitutional Law, Fred Smith; and Leroy Chapman, Managing Editor of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

The group also discussed the 1912 racial cleansing in Forsyth County where white residents set fire to Black-owned businesses and churches which drove out the entire Black population of the county. They debated whether such history would be able to be taught in Georgia schools if conservative state legislators succeed in outlawing the teaching of racial history in state schools.

Political Rewind

GPB

March 7, 2022, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*: a look at the case of Clarence Henderson. Henderson was convicted and sentenced to death not once, but three times for the 1948 murder of 22-year-old Buddy Stevens, an Army veteran and son of a well-known Carrollton, Georgia, family. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reporter Chris Joyner said the strange story of Henderson and Stevens had been part of his life since he began his career in newspapers more than 20 years ago. And now, he is turned it into a fascinating book: *The Three Death Sentences of Clarence Henderson*.

Joyner joined host Bill Nigut and former political reporter Jim Galloway to discuss the deeply-researched book which exposes how the politics of race played out in gubernatorial politics and more. And along the way, we learn about communists and Klan members in Georgia, too.