



**Georgia Public Broadcasting**  
**Quarterly Issues/Programs Report**

**Radio**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter**  
**July -August - September**

**Top 5 Issues Addressed:**

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

## Representative Programs That Addressed Issues:

### 1. Politics

#### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

Weekdays, 9am and repeated at 2pm

As the Biden administration struggled to deal with issues from Afghanistan to the pandemic, Political Rewind continued to address how political issues affect residents of Georgia. Not only did the program address attempts to limit voting in future elections and the scrambling already underway for the 2022 campaigns, but it also addressed other topics, particularly attempts to increase the number of COVID-19 vaccinations, gun violence and racial animosities.

#### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

July 12, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today's program focused on a joint reporting project from Georgia Public Broadcasting and *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* which reviewed the use of ballot drop boxes in Georgia counties during the 2020 election.

In metro Atlanta's four most populated counties, more than 305,000 out of 547,000 absentee voters deposited their ballots in drop boxes. By comparison, a sample of 11 smaller counties across Georgia found 32% of absentee voters used drop boxes, with the rest delivered by the U.S. Postal Service.

Reporters found out how many people used drop boxes by obtaining ballot transfer forms from election officials, then spending over 90 hours entering data from thousands of handwritten forms into a spreadsheet. The forms showed how many ballots were collected daily from each drop box leading up to the Nov. 3 election.

Meanwhile, the latest campaign financial reports in races across the state reveal once again the staggering sums of money that now are commonplace in political campaigns — and a new Georgia law opens the door for the state's political leaders to rake in even more cash. We took a look at the latest fundraising reports and the powerful impact of money in politics with our panel.

After releasing his first campaign ad late last week, Gov. Brian Kemp traveled to Perry, Ga., over the weekend to launch his bid for reelection in front of an enthusiastic crowd. While Kemp faces an initial primary challenge, he is already taking steady aim at his presumed opponent, prominent Democrat, and former gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams.

Host Bill Nigut was joined by former Georgia Attorney General Sam Olens, former Congressman Buddy Darden, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Washington reporter Tia Mitchell and former political columnist Jim Galloway.

#### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 10, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*: New polling shows Herschel Walker is the best-liked of the potential field among both Republicans and Democrats running for the U.S. Senate next year. The recent survey suggests the former football star would be the strongest Republican against incumbent Sen. Raphael Warnock. But how does that dynamic change if Walker declares his candidacy?

Also, the special redistricting session of the Georgia legislature could include measures from Gov. Brian Kemp to fight crime in metro Atlanta, which is sure to be a top issue in his reelection campaign. However, Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan and Speaker of the House David Ralston told GPB News redrawing the state's political maps may leave little time for any other business this fall.

Host Bill Nigut and his guests, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* senior reporter Tamar Hallerman, Univision community empowerment director Mariela Romero, Republican strategist Julianne Thompson and Democratic State Representative Teri Anulewicz also discussed the Biden administration's growing criticism for what immigration advocates see as failures to address significant problems at the border.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 23, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm

On today's show: COVID-19 cases continue to rapidly escalate in Georgia. According to the state department of public health, nearly 7,000 new cases of COVID-19 infection were confirmed on Aug. 19. Meanwhile, 42% of Georgians are fully vaccinated, placing the Peach State among the lowest 10 states for percent of residents vaccinated. But on Friday, Gov. Kemp issued an executive order banning local authorities from establishing mask mandates for private businesses.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, Americans watched harrowing scenes as people attempted to board airplanes at the Kabul airport. Is the calamitous withdrawal from Afghanistan and the spiraling COVID numbers going to turn swing voters against Democrats in the 2022 midterms?

Those topics were discussed by Host Bill Nigut and his guests, former *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* political columnist Jim Galloway, *Savannah Morning News* editorial page editor Adam Van Brimmer, political science professor Dr. Audrey Haynes and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Managing Editor Leroy Chapman.

Another discussion involved President Donald Trump and his allies who appear to be citing a poll of Georgia GOP voters in an effort to convince former Sen. David Perdue to run against Kemp in the 2022 gubernatorial race. Perdue has so far expressed no interest, according to reporting, but it is the latest evidence of pushback against the Georgia governor from Trump supporters in the Republican party.

## **2. Health**

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 4, 2021. 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's *Political Rewind*: The spread of the delta variant combined with a low rate of vaccinations in Georgia are leading to a spike in cases of COVID-19 and hospitalizations here. Many residents expected a sense of normalcy to return, but now Georgia and the rest of the country is confronted with a new surge, with public health guidance that feels like yesterday's news. We assembled a panel of top public health experts to help demystify the state of the virus today.

Host Bill Nigut was joined by Dr. Rodney Lyn, Dean of the School of Public Health at Georgia State University, Dr. Jodie Guest, Professor of Epidemiology at Emory University, Dr. Benjamin Lopman, a Professor in the Department of Epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health, and Dr. Amber Schmidtke, Chair of the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics at the University of St. Mary.

Dr. Lyn said vaccinations against COVID-19 remain a clear way of protecting health and curbing the virus' spread. "The most effective strategy is to increase vaccination rates," he said. "We've known for many months that was the priority and that remains the priority."

Instances of breakthrough infections of COVID-19, where vaccinated individuals become sick, are being reported. But public health officials say the data shows vaccines remain effective at keeping people from getting infected by COVID and keep symptoms mild if they do get sick.

"The breakthrough cases are not common, and so we want to make sure we understand the data," Dr. Guest said. "So, out of over 4 million fully vaccinated people in our state, 4,908 have had a breakthrough case since January of 2021. That is 0.12%."

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 27, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

The COVID-19 vaccines have been crucial to protecting health as the latest surge of infections continues to roll across Georgia and other states. Despite their efficacy in limiting the spread and severity of illness, there are many stories of people who refuse to be vaccinated.

The challenges faced by today's vaccines are not new. The history of vaccines dates back centuries. While the development of vaccines to protect against deadly diseases like smallpox, polio, yellow fever, and others are among the greatest achievements in medical science, challenges confronted vaccine advocates throughout history.

On today's program, host Bill Nigut and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* columnist Patricia Murphy explored the fascinating history of vaccines with one of the genuine heroes of global health, Dr. Bill Foege. Foege is a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and as a young public health doctor he devised and led the campaign that eradicated smallpox.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

September 13, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Monday on *Political Rewind*: Private businesses across Georgia face the prospect of a new federal rule requiring workplace mandates of vaccinations for workers.

President Joe Biden announced the order last week. It would require federal employees and contractors to be fully vaccinated and create new OSHA guidelines requiring private companies with more than 100 workers to mandate vaccines for employees.

The move is sparking a showdown on the political stage. Gov. Brian Kemp joined several other Republican governors in denouncing the order as an example of government overreach. They say they will sue to block the mandate.

Former *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* columnist Jim Galloway said Biden might have done Republican governors a favor by giving them an issue to galvanize their voters.

"Kemp is now free to express himself as vociferously as he wants to about the overreach of federal power," Galloway said. "But if this mandate works, [Kemp] can sit there and claim victory. So, he gets to have his cake and eat it, too."

Galloway was joined by Tifton mayor Julie Smith, University of Georgia Political Science professor Dr. Audrey Haynes and Democratic state representative Mary Margaret Oliver in today's discussion with host Bill Nigut.

Also discussed: faculty and students at more than a dozen Georgia public universities are planning a series of demonstrations protesting the lack of mask mandates on university system campuses.

Plus, a new poll suggests that the new Texas abortion law is sparking a backlash among Democratic women voters. Access to health care and equitable treatment are among their top priorities in the 2022 election cycle.

### **3. Education**

#### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

July 1, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today's *Political Rewind* focused on education. As the Peach State seeks a new permanent chancellor for its public universities and colleges, leaders of North Carolina's public university system found themselves embroiled in a national debate over race, journalism, and academic freedom.

The attention came after trustees of the University of North Carolina system initially denied tenure to journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones. Hannah-Jones is a Pulitzer prize-winning reporter known for her work on the *New York Times' 1619 Project*. The initiative sought to study the lasting legacy of slavery in U.S. society, but conservatives criticized the projects for its focus on structural racism. On June 30, the university's trustees voted to give tenure to the reporter after mounting pressure to reconsider their decision.

In Georgia, Sonny Perdue is seeking the top position over the state's system of public universities and colleges. The former Georgia governor and Agricultural Secretary under President Donald Trump told reporters he would bring "stability" during a period of "cultural revolution" in Georgia's public institutions of higher education.

Perdue also said he would like to promote conservative values if chosen to be chancellor. Perdue's comments, and the debate over tenure for Hannah-Jones, is spurring debate about academic freedom over education curriculum.

This topic and more were discussed by host Bill Nigut and his guests: University of Georgia Professor of Political Science, Dr. Audrey Haynes, Morehouse University Professor of Political Science, Dr. Adrienne Jones, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* editor Kevin Riley and Donna Lowry, host of GPB-TV's *Lawmakers* program.

#### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 9, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today, host Bill Nigut and his panel discussed how state officials continue to resist the establishment of statewide procedures for mitigating the possible spread of COVID-19 in schools. Cases are rising as students head back to classrooms for their first weeks of classes.

In Atlanta, public schools will begin offering vaccines to middle and high school students aged 12 and older next week.

Also discussed, a weekend gathering of Republicans at a major event in Floyd County highlighting the dominant grasp Donald Trump continues to have on the Georgia GOP. Candidates for office echoed the false sentiment that the state's presidential election was fraudulent and vowed to oppose local mask mandates.

Today's panelists included University of West Georgia Professor of Political Science, Dr. Karen Owen, Georgia State University Political Science Professor Dr. Amy Steigerwalt and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Washington reporter Tia Mitchell.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

September 14, 2021. 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's *Political Rewind*: Students, faculty, and staff on 20 Georgia public college campuses are protesting to demand stronger COVID-19 protections. Demonstrators say the Board of Regents' refusal to require masks on campus is endangering the health of workers and students on Georgia college campuses.

Acting Chancellor Teresa MacCartney has defended the state's mask-optional policy, claiming that mandates cause divisions on campuses.

Host Bill Nigut discussed the issue with Editor-in-Chief of *The Current*, Margaret Coker, GPB public policy reporter Riley Bunch, and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reporters Tamar Hallerman and Tia Mitchell.

The group also discussed a new poll of Georgia GOP voters which shows Herschel Walker with a commanding lead in the race to find a Republican opponent for incumbent U.S. Senator Raphael Warnock. The poll gives Walker a lead of almost 70 points against his closest rival, Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black. Can anything stop the former football star from winning the nomination?

In other polling news, Atlanta mayoral candidates Felicia Moore and Kasim Reed are in a virtual dead heat in a poll conducted for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. However, a plurality of Atlanta voters say they remain undecided less than three months until the election.

## **4. Economy**

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

July 21, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On today's special edition of *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut was joined by best-selling author and consumer advocate, Clark Howard. They discussed how the pandemic has had a profound impact on our buying habits — from how we shop for groceries to the services we use to stream new movies at home; from the sticker shock that awaits us as we shop for a new (or even used) car to the soaring price of houses. Also, as the travel industry is slowly coming back to life, Howard discussed if you could feel safe booking a cruise and whether we should want to fly on an airplane with every seat filled.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

August 2, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Concern about the resurgence of COVID-19 in Georgia is growing as the summer break draws to a close. Schools begin to open this week and businesses are contemplating bringing their workers back to offices, but is the outbreak of the delta variant threatening the return to pre-pandemic ways of life? How is Gov. Brian Kemp responding to the new threat of COVID?

Those were some of the topics addressed on today's show. Host Bill Nigut was joined by Morehouse College Professor of Political Science, Dr. Adrienne Jones, University of Georgia Political Science Professor, Dr. Charles Bullock, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Managing Editor Leroy Chapman, and former political columnist Jim Galloway.

Also discussed, congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. allowed a federal eviction moratorium to expire over the weekend. A recent U.S. Census Bureau survey estimates between 159,365 and 344,035 Georgians are “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to be evicted due to lack of payment.

Renters now face immediate removal from their homes amid a surge in COVID-19 cases, although in DeKalb County, a judge issued an order temporarily protecting the renters in her county. Our panel looked at the looming crisis.

## 5. Racism

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

July 7, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Among the topics on today’s *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut and his panel discussed a new Department of Agriculture report showing how Black farmers were systemically denied funds as they struggled to keep their businesses alive during the pandemic. Georgia’s black farmers were particularly hard-hit.

On the panel today were Republican strategist Edward Lindsey, Emory University Political Science Professor Dr. Andra Gillespie, Democratic state representative Mary Margaret Oliver and former political columnist Jim Galloway.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

July 30, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

Today on *Political Rewind*, guest host Patricia Murphy, columnist with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Emory University Political Science professor Dr. Andra Gillespie talked with special guest Clint Smith, author of the new book, *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*. Smith has traveled across the country talking to people about sites that memorialize — or distort — their link to the legacy of slavery. Throughout his tour of monuments and landmarks, he offered an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation’s collective history, and the way we view our own identities.

"The thing about symbols and iconography and names is that they're not just symbols," Smith said. "They are reflective of the stories that people tell, and those stories shape the narratives that communities carry. And those narratives shape public policy and public policy shapes the material conditions of people's lives."

Smith took listeners to Juneteenth celebrations in Galveston, Texas, the old Manhattan slave port of New York City and Confederate army graveyards in Virginia.

Sometimes moving, other times deeply troubling, *How the Word Is Passed* is a critical look at the way America remembers its history and the role our memories play in shaping our present and our future.

### **Political Rewind**

*GPB*

September 10, 2021, 9am and repeated at 2pm.

On a special edition of *Political Rewind*, host Bill Nigut was joined by *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* columnist Patricia Murphy to speak with Honorée Jeffers, author of *The Love Songs of W.E.B. DuBois*--a big-hearted epic leading readers through the generational history of an African American family with deep roots in Georgia. Jeffers, a National Book Award-nominated poet, tells the story through rich characters and their family ties, from Creek Indian ancestors, through the wrenching years of slavery and to their eventual emergence as members of the Black professional class.

Influential Black intellectual W.E.B. DuBois is present throughout the novel. Jeffers said she wanted DuBois' love of Southern Black communities to be the glue binding the threads of her story together.

"I wanted that love to be the spine of the novel," Jeffers said, "So that when we move through different, very difficult moments — historical moments — you would always know that we will return to that love."

It is a story filled with joy and sorrow, with Georgia at its center. The novel's vivid characters reflect on their ties to the South, with one character noting it is hard to believe one can ache for a place when it hurt you so badly.

"I cried when I wrote those words, because I do ache for the South," Jeffers said. "There's a feeling that those of us who grew up in the South have, and we do ache for that place."