Omnia Podcast: Democracy and Decision 2024 | The Future of Democracy (Ep. 6)

Stephanie Perry:

Hello and welcome to OMNIA, the podcast on all things Penn Arts and Sciences. This season we're taking a close look at the state of US democracy in the context of the 2024 election. I'm your host, Stephanie Perry, curious citizen, executive director of the Penn Program on Opinion Research and Election Studies, and a member of the NBC News decision desk team.

In today's episode, I'll talk with Roger Smith about Donald Trump's reelection, the implications of his second term as President and what the future of democracy may look like in the United States. Roger Smith is the Christopher H. Brown distinguished Emeritus professor of political science. He's the author or co-author of nine books, including Civic Ideals: Conflicting Citizenship in US History, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in history. Professor Smith served as Penn's Associate Dean of Social Sciences from 2014 to 2018, and as president of the American Political Science Association in 2018 to 2019.

Welcome to Democracy and Decision 2024, episode six, the Future of Democracy.

Stephanie Perry:

Rogers. Thank you so much for sitting down and talking with me today.

Rogers Smith:

Thank you for having me.

Stephanie Perry:

Before we get into the specifics of what a second Trump administration might look like, I'm wondering if you could talk a bit from your perspective, both as a scholar of constitutional law and also as a citizen, on what you make of Trump returning to the White House. Can you contextualize his reelection for us?

Rogers Smith:

Well, Trump's reelection does dramatize the point that many, many Americans for decades now have become more and more alienated and resentful against the established elites of both parties, and this anger and resentment as its sources in part in the fact that since the Reagan Revolution. Both parties moved toward neoliberal economic policies that did promote economic growth, but also great inequality with lots of working class and middle class Americans feeling left behind. The anger and resentment also reflect the fact that Americans have always had what I call multiple traditions, conflicting visions of who they are as a people, and it is just a reality that a lot of Americans since the nation's founding have felt that deep down this was fundamentally a nation that should be governed by white Christian men, propertied men. And for those who think that's the right natural order of things in America, the transformations demographically and culturally in recent decades have created anxieties and resentments that Trump also plays to, along with the economic concerns. And the depth of this anger and resentment combined with favorable memories of the first three years of the Trump administration allowed many Americans to put aside their concerns about Trump as an individual and embrace his vision of making America great again.

Stephanie Perry:

I think that we heard from so many voters saying things just like that, that they cared so much more about him as a leader than anything about his personality trait. So in many ways, Donald Trump is an unprecedented figure in American politics. However, I'm wondering if this election is similar to any other moments in US history in terms of social or political trends. Some have cited the election of President William McKinley in 1896 as a parallel to Trump's election in 2024. Can you give us some historical perspective on Trump's reelection?

Rogers Smith:

I can understand the comparison to McKinley because both McKinley and Trump offered tariffs as a means of protecting American industries and thereby providing jobs for American workers. And they both attracted some unexpected working class support through those promises. But in many ways, Trump is very different from William McKinley, and if I had to make a comparison with earlier elections, I would compare him much more with Andrew Jackson in 1828 who came in on allegations that the 1824 election had been stolen from him just the way that Trump has claimed that the 2020 election was stolen, and each represented a angry populist movement with a pretty racialized vision of America that, again, appealed to many who held on to that image of what America should be. And during his first administration, Trump celebrated Jackson as the president most like himself.

I'd also note however that he also remembers McKinley's immediate predecessor, Grover Cleveland, the only other president to be elected to nonconsecutive terms and why was Cleveland reelected. In part that's because in between his two elections, the Republicans tried to strengthen their support amongst African-Americans by putting through a new national voting rights bill that was to protect the voting rights of African-Americans. The Democrats denounced that as a force bill, and that was one reason that they rejected the Republicans in 1892 and elected Grover Cleveland. Similarly, many Americans feel that efforts to secure civil rights for all have gotten out of hand and are creating discrimination against whites, especially conservative white men in their view, and people who think that voted not just massively but very passionately for Donald Trump.

Stephanie Perry:

The last time you were featured on the OMNIA podcast, it was right after the attack on the Capitol on January 6th, 2021. I think many people felt then, including many Republican members of Congress like Senators Lindsey Graham and Mitch McConnell, that Trump had finally crossed a line that would end his political career, and yet January 6th proved to not be a deal breaker for a lot of the electorate in this election. Can you talk about why this moment may not have been as consequential as maybe we thought four years ago?

Rogers Smith:

It is stunning in many ways that a president who stood by for hours while the capitol was invaded by his supporters was not more profoundly discredited by that. And in trying to make sense of it, I focus, like lots of people do, on the structure of the contemporary media with most of people getting their information from social media, many from conservative broadcast sources, and those sources have successfully advanced a narrative that this was fundamentally peaceful protest, that Trump encouraged it to be peaceful and that these are really patriots who are being persecuted by a weaponized criminal justice system against them.

Now, I don't think if we had a structure of media that didn't provide so many ways that people could hear only views similar to their own and get them reinforced that that narrative could have won the

wide acceptance that it did. After all, the Congressional Committee provided a lot of filmed evidence that and testimony by capital police and more that showed that this narrative was not at all descriptive of the reality of the January 6th experience, but a lot of people just didn't watch those hearings. They heard accounts of them on their preferred media sources. I don't particularly like to blame the media because I always figured that the media wouldn't succeed if people didn't want to hear their message, but I do think that there's something to be said for the fact that under the current structure of media, too many of us, and that includes people across the spectrum, only hear views that the algorithms correctly tell us, we want to hear and reinforce our prejudices.

Let me add one other element though it is clear that both pressure from Donald Trump and from Trump's supporters led many Republicans, many Republican officeholders who initially were prepared to jettison Trump after January 6th, they feared for their careers. In some cases, they feared for their families against threats of attacks, and so many fell in line in ways that didn't seem at all predictable on January 7th.

Stephanie Perry:

Can you talk a little bit more about the media lowering the temperature at the same time that there's a lot of precedence that's being set? So for instance, there's a good chance that Trump will pardon some of the people who stormed the capitol and just the fact that we had this moment of volatility in the country. What do you think that might say now for his second term and just looking ahead to the future?

Rogers Smith:

It very much remains to be seen whether Trump will take all the actions that he promised on the campaign trail. Some of them, I think, risk ratcheting up the volatility of American politics and the potential for lawless violence in very concerning ways. In particular, the plan for rapid mass deportation of millions of immigrants, it's going to be logistically hard to do. He's planning to deploy the US military to do it. It is going to encounter resistance for many state and local officials, and there will probably be groups of immigrant supporters that engage in forcible resistance. And if the media performs as it has in the past, it will publicize, sensationalize all these conflicts rather than lower the temperature on them. So I am concerned that if these plans go forward as the rhetoric has presented them, we could find ourselves in very turbulent times in the very near future.

Stephanie Perry:

During Trump's campaign, there was already a lot of press on what his re-election might mean for our institutions of government. Over the past week, President-elect Trump has already made a number of controversial cabinet picks, including former Congressman Matt Gaetz for Attorney General and Fox Host and former Army Major Pete Hegseth as Secretary of Defense. Trump has also talked about wanting the Senate to confirm some of these picks through recess appointments. Can you talk about recess appointments? Other past presidents, including President Obama and George W. Bush and I think President Clinton made recess appointments. So why is this controversial?

Rogers Smith:

The recess appointment power is found in the Constitution. It does arise from the fact that at the time the Constitution was adopted, it was hard to get Congress together and there would be periods in which a major office might suddenly become vacant and the President would feel the need to appoint someone to that office before Congress could be brought in for the regular advise and consent process

that the Constitution requires for all major executive positions. Now, in the modern era, getting Congress together is not nearly so logistically challenging as it once was, but we have a very polarized and divided Congress that often fails to confirm appointments. And so presidents of both parties have been tempted to use the times when Congress is not in session to make an appointment that lasts until that Congress's term expires.

Obama did this in some cases very frustrated by Republicans in Congress at times when Congress had recessed only for a very short period, matters of hours, and he was making these appointments and the courts have decided that's an abuse of the recessed power and have required that Congress recess for at least 10 days before presidents can make appointments. There is a chance that the current court, which is a strong supporter of presidential powers, might challenge that position however, but Congress traditionally, the Senate in particular, has prized its role in giving advice and consent to presidential appointments. It's part of the way that senators can shape the direction of the executive branch and the American government as a whole.

And so if Trump tries to make lots of recess appointments and tries to get the Senate to recess for more than 10 days or to go along with allowing him to challenge the court's doctrines and make appointments with shorter recesses, that's going to be a big change in American governance. The reaction of the Republican senators so far suggests that they want to have a normal advice and consent process, but they want to approve most, if not all, of President Trump's nominees. The Constitution famously said that you want to make the interests of the man related to the constitutional interests of the place. This is a position where Republican senators interests in their own power as senators is in conflict with their interests as Republican supporters of President Trump, and how they will deal with that conflict remains to be seen. I think they will want Trump to have as few recess appointments as can possibly be managed.

Stephanie Perry:

It seems like they want to have it both ways, but they certainly cannot.

We've been hearing a lot about some potential overhauls to government in the wake of Trump's re-election. This includes eliminating the Department of Education, which administers federal student loans for colleges and ensures equal access to education among other functions. Under the 10th Amendment to the Constitution, the Department of Education is not involved in determining curriculum. So what might be the motivation to eliminate this department? What is the process by which Trump and a Republican majority in Congress could eliminate this or any other federal department?

Rogers Smith:

Well, the Department of Education is the creation of Congress and it can be eliminated by Congress. Its programs can be transferred to other departments or eliminated. Historically, the first Department of Education was created in the 1860s and then it was downgraded to an Office of Education and its functions were limited. The modern Department of Education was carved out of the Old Department of Health Education and Welfare in 1980 and elevated to its own department, but again, those are congressional choices that can be altered.

Trump has now nominated Linda McMahon to be the Secretary of Education. I think most observers believe, and I agree, that this is a nomination that indicates a desire to shut down the Department of Education in the course of the second Trump administration. Now, the department administers a lot of federal aid programs and some anti-discrimination laws that will remain on the books even if the Department of Education is eliminated. And so there would be decisions to be made over whether those functions will be transferred to the Department of Justice, Health and Human Services or elsewhere, or

whether those programs will be cut, and that is a question we'll have to see answered as the Trump administration proceeds.

Stephanie Perry:

So can you talk a little bit about how Congress would eliminate the Department of Education or any department that they hope to eliminate? Do they need a two-thirds majority? How does that work?

Rogers Smith:

It can be done by a regular vote of Congress, but a regular vote of Congress, under the current rules of the Senate, means that you have to overcome a potential filibuster. And so that means basically you need 60 votes to get the Senate to agree. There are some financial bills that can be passed and a few appointments that can be passed with a simple majority in the Senate. And so you could cut out the funding for some Department of Education programs without having to meet this filibuster requirement. But to get rid of the department as a whole, you probably do have to get 60 votes in the Senate.

Stephanie Perry:

Thinking about what we saw in Trump's first term, how much of the function of government can actually be affected in two years or four years?

Rogers Smith:

Well, Trump has come in with a greater determination to disrupt and transform the American government than any president in modern history, and his nominations for cabinet positions and other posts make clear that he is serious about bringing about some kind of major transformation in American governance. And in fairness to him, he did win both the popular and the electoral vote running on promises to do this. Now, it looks like he's going to win slightly less than 50% of the popular vote. So it's not the kind of mandate that an FDR got or that Ronald Reagan got, but there's little reason to think that that will slow Trump down at all or inhibit him. So the only real question is, how much Congress will go along with some of his more dramatically transformative policies, getting rid of agencies and imposing, sweeping tariffs up pursuing mass deportations and more?

Now, if Congress does go along, then there are several scenarios about what could happen. Against the judgment of conventional liberals like myself, maybe Trump will do all these things and they will actually work to bring peace and prosperity. In that case, he can accomplish a lot in two years and go on from there. It's also possible that these policies will lead to skyrocketing inflation and violent resistance and that Trump might then back off and adopt a different course. He's been known to change courses in the past when he feared unpopularity, but there's also the possibility that these policies will have disastrous results, but that he will persist for two years. And in that case, I think there will be a massive repudiation of the current administration in the midterm elections and a rapid effort to reverse the damages as much as possible that may have occurred.

So I think a lot can happen in two years, but if it doesn't go very well for him, then a lot is going to be opposed after two years.

Stephanie Perry:

You touched on him wanting to be the changemaker, and I will just note that the exit poll showed that Trump voters overwhelmingly said that the candidate quality that mattered most to them was someone who can bring needed change. So exactly in line with that.

During his first term, President Trump appointed three conservative justices to the Supreme Court. The Dobbs decision which ended Roe, V. Wade and made abortion a state issue was possibly the most consequential decision by this new conservative-leaning court. Are there other decisions by SCOTUS that you feel have been important since conservatives became a six to three majority? What role do you think a court might play during Trump's second term in office?

Rogers Smith:

I think the most important Supreme Court decisions have to do with executive power, presidential power, and the power of administrative regulatory agencies. Even though these administrative and regulatory agencies are technically in the executive branch, the court's decisions have gone in sharply opposed directions on those topics. The court has read the powers of the president extremely broadly, especially with the extraordinary decision saying that the president has absolute immunity for his or her core official acts from any criminal prosecution. This has no obvious foundation in the text of the Constitution, which does not speak of presidential immunity at all. And the opinion also said for official actions that are more peripheral, not the core duties, there was still a presumption of immunity. So this is really unprecedented protection for expansive presidential powers that clearly could mean a lot for judicial scrutiny of President Trump's behavior.

At the same time, the court has handed down a couple of major decisions and some related ones, which sharply limit the power of administrative and regulatory agencies reflecting long-standing conservative hostility to the modern administrative regulatory state as it's been built up, especially since the New Deal. The court has elaborated what it calls the major questions doctrine, and that says that if an administrative or regulatory agency makes a decision on what the court views as a major question, the court will demand evidence that Congress explicitly authorized that decision, or it will say the agency has no power to do it, that only Congress should decide major questions.

Also, the court has overturned the Chevron Doctrine going back to the 1980s, which said that when Congress was legislating on an often highly technical policy area and giving authority over that policy area to an administrative or regulatory agency, the court should defer to the expertise of those administrative and regulatory personnel that they would know better the technical means of realizing the Congressional objectives in their authorizing statutes. That was the Chevron Doctrine. What the court now says is, "Well, administrators and regulators, they're not experts at interpreting statutes. We're experts at interpreting statutes. So they can give us their technical judgments, but we are the ones that are going to say what those statutes mean, not defer to the interpretations adopted by the administrative and regulatory agencies." And both of these, the major questions doctrines and overturning the Chevron Doctrine, both of these mean that administrative and regulatory agencies have much less discretion to do anything that doesn't appeal to the current supermajority of conservatives on the Supreme Court.

Stephanie Perry:

You mentioned that this level of presidential immunity is unprecedented and of course consequential. Can you talk about are there any other points in history where something like this has come up where it's something that we can look back to as a lesson as we look ahead to the future?

Rogers Smith:

Well, Nixon did attempt to withhold the secret tapes of conversations in his office from a criminal investigation, and the Supreme Court, four of whose members he had appointed did decide he had to turn over those tapes. Now, at the same time, that court, in another case, Nixon versus Fitzgerald, did

decide that the requirements to function effectively in the presidency did mean an immunity from some kinds of civil prosecutions while in office.

So those are the precedents that people have been looking to. The Supreme Court emphasized the Nixon versus Fitzgerald precedent, not the Watergate tapes, Nixon versus United States precedent, and it also made an argument that the President wouldn't be able to function effectively if the president didn't believe that the presidency enjoys this kind of immunity for core official acts. This is a somewhat startling argument since presidents have functioned all through US history without any guarantee of this kind of immunity. So the notion that they just can't function if they don't have it runs massively against history. It's against at least the spirit of the Nixon versus United States decision. But the court did have one precedent to build on, and it relied heavily on its own functionalist logic, which many of us see as illogic. But nonetheless, that decision is likely to prevail through the Trump administration.

Stephanie Perry:

One constitutional question that has come up recently is about the 22nd Amendment, which limits a president from serving more than two terms in office. President-elect Trump has talked about negotiating for another four years if re-elected as far back as 2020. Democratic representative Dan Goldman introduced a resolution last week that would clarify that the Constitution's two-term limit for presidents applies even if the terms aren't consecutive. Can you talk about the history of the 22nd amendment and the process by which this would need to be changed to allow Trump another election bid?

Rogers Smith:

The 22nd amendment was passed after FDR had been elected to the presidency four times, and he broke with the precedent that had been set by George Washington that no president should serve more than two terms. And the 22nd amendment made it clear that no person could be elected president more than two times, and it applied only prospectively, but it's now been in place since the early 1950s. There's actually no ambiguity about the fact that it applies to presidents elected in non-consecutive terms as well. There is no doubt under the 22nd Amendment that Trump cannot be elected president again. It would require a constitutional amendment, and I think that'd be very unlikely to occur.

The fact that Trump cannot be elected president again does not mean however that Trump might not be able effectively to be President again. As political scientist, Philip Klinkner, has recently pointed out, Trump might look at the example of Vladimir Putin whom he admires in so many ways. And note that when Putin was termed out, he got a loyal supporter to be elected president. He, Putin, was elected prime minister and he effectively ran the government as Prime Minister. Trump might try for a similar arrangement, or an example in this country is that when George Wallace was ineligible to run again for governor of Alabama, he ran his wife Lurleen Wallace and she was governor, but George was doing most of the effective governing. Now, Melania doesn't like to campaign, but we can imagine ways that Trump might try to continue to exercise the powers of the presidency, but he cannot be elected president again.

Stephanie Perry:

He has a lot of children.

Rogers Smith:

That's true.

Stephanie Perry:

Another constitutional question that has emerged recently is whether the 1974 Impoundment Control Act could be ruled unconstitutional giving Trump and the executive branch the power to withhold funds that Congress approved. This act made news during Trump's first impeachment investigation when there were concerns the White House was withholding funding for Ukraine. Can you talk about this act? Why was it passed and what is the likelihood it could be ruled unconstitutional?

Rogers Smith:

The Impoundment Act was, again, a reaction to the abuses of presidential power by President Nixon. The chief executive has, throughout our history, always had some discretion about spending money authorized by Congress. It's the president's responsibility to implement, to administer the programs and policies that Congress enacts, and circumstances can change. So sometimes it might not make sense to spend money for a particular purpose, and that discretion has been allowed throughout US history. But the perception was that Nixon abused that discretion after his re-election in 1972, the country was experiencing rapidly rising inflation and he thought government spending contributed to that, and he also didn't like the purposes of some government spending programs. So he impounded, refused to spend programs for environmental protection, for housing and for other causes that were popular with liberals.

And so Democrats in Congress passed the 74 Impoundment Act, which set up a process in which the president can't simply refuse to spend money. The President has to ask Congress for a rescission, for permission, in effect, not to spend money. And if Congress doesn't give that permission, then the money has to be spent. Well, in terms of how the current Supreme Court might treat this, it's important to understand that one of the big themes of the modern conservative legal movement has been since the late-1970s that the reaction to Nixon went too far and weakened the American presidency in ways that have been bad for the country.

And so over time, conservatives have elaborated the constitutional theory known as unitary executive theory. This also contributes to the immunity decision. Unitary executive theory holds that Article II of the Constitution vests all executive power in the President of the United States, and that anything which infringes on the executive power of the President is presumptively unconstitutional. And if you embrace unitary executive theory, then you do think that limiting the discretion to spend money in the way the Impoundment Act does violates inherent executive powers of the president.

So there is a chance that it could be overturned. Chief Justice Roberts has repeated in the immunity decision this statement that Article II invest all executive power in the president and the president alone. At the same time, the Impoundment Act has been previously upheld and accepted by both parties now for literally a half century. So it would be a major, major step to overturn it. We've already seen though that this court is willing to overturn major precedents in abortion and affirmative action and in other areas. So I think that if Trump does decide to impound funds, there will be a big constitutional battle over that.

Stephanie Perry:

What are some examples do you think that Trump could withhold spending or might withhold spending in the second term?

Rogers Smith:

Well, one of the controversies that already arose in his first term is his willingness to expend funds to aid our allies, and he is clearly not enthusiastic about the tremendous amounts of money that the US has

been giving to Ukraine. There is a real chance that he might withhold some of those funds just as he's threatened to do for the NATO alliance and other partnerships. Plus, the Biden administration in its first two years did succeed in passing some extraordinarily big spending bills to help with the recovery from the pandemic and also the big infrastructure bill that Trump always promised but never enacted, as well as money for programs to combat climate change as part of what's called the Inflation Reduction Act, but it's primarily money for alternative fuels and other environmentally protective measures.

Now, Trump is not a fan of those domestic programs. He believes that they contribute to inflation and he may well look for programs in the infrastructure bill in the Inflation Reduction Act that he doesn't want to spend money on. It will be very interesting to see how that plays out because the infrastructure bill, in particular, 80% of the projects that are being funded by it are located in districts represented by Republicans in Congress. And it is a very long-standing pattern in American politics that Congress, congressional representatives will denounce federal spending in general while demanding more for their district and will see if that happens should Trump try to impound some of those funds, but those are areas in which this fight is likely to occur.

Stephanie Perry:

Lastly, our podcast has focused a lot on democracy in the context of this election. As a scholar, citizen and educator, what do you think the future of democracy looks like in the US? What gives you pause and what gives you hope?

Rogers Smith:

Unfortunately, I have to begin by acknowledging that the modern American political system isn't all that democratic to begin with, even before you get to Donald Trump. And a lot of the anger against American elites in both parties does stem from the fact that political science shows pretty clearly the preferences of the very wealthy do much more to shape public policies in this country than the preferences of the great majority of Americans. So we don't have that great a democracy to begin with.

Nonetheless, we do have important democratic elements that may indeed be endangered by the current administration. One of the democratic elements that we have had is that people accepted the results of free and fair elections and that we've had peaceful transfers of power all through our history. We barely succeeded in getting a transfer of power in 2020. If the Trump administration becomes very unpopular and Democrats begin to win elections, there will be certainly people in the MAGA movement, the Trump coalition, that will reject the results of those elections as they rejected results in 2020. There are members of that movement, intellectual and political leaders of that movement who say that they may not represent the majority of Americans, but they represent the majority that should count, that there are a lot of people who are voting who are in their view shouldn't be, they're not true Americans.

And so there is a real danger that both the rule of law and the acceptance of the result of democratic elections are vulnerable to being abandoned in the years ahead, and that would be in many ways the end of the American experiment in constitutional democracy. I certainly am not predicting that the end is at hand. There are many Trump supporters, many in the Republican coalition who do believe in the rule of law and in democratic self-governance. And our history suggests that those better angels of our nature may yet prevail. But we do live in a dangerous time in which those who do value democracy and the rule of law will have to be vigilant and active to see them preserved.

Stephanie Perry:

There's also such a difference between the two sides and what democracy means and what it looks like and whether it is threatened or secure just based on their own understanding of what that is.

Rogers Smith:

Absolutely, and I have to note as a scholar of American constitutionalism that what we have is officially a republic, not a pure democracy. We've always recognized that democracy, like all other forms of government, has its weaknesses and limitations. And we have a system that was designed to try to check some of the dangerous potential of democracy.

Now, having said that, if you look at the course of American constitutional development, we have made the system more and more democratic and inclusive over time. And in general, becoming more democratic has been associated with greater success for the country as a whole. So that means that many want to carry democratization further. Others say, "Well, that goes against the spirit of the Constitution," and they have some basis for saying that. And the result is, yes, we have very different understandings of what it would mean to realize democracy in the US, but there are some fundamentals like people get into power by means of votes and not by force, and that the losers of elections except results, that those are common to almost all conceptions of democracy. And again, they are less widely embraced at the moment than they have been through most of our history.

Stephanie Perry:

Are you hopeful about the future?

Rogers Smith:

I actually am hopeful about the future. I do think that we are in a very dangerous time, and my expectation sadly is that there will be not only a lot of controversy, but a lot of human suffering in the period immediately ahead. But I do think that Trump's support represents anger at some policies that did fail to serve a great majority of the American people, and that this may prove a perilous but ultimately beneficial course correction so long as we're careful not to take the problems of modern America and make them even worse by going down a road that abandons democracy, the rule of law, and the kind of spirit of support for the rights and well-being of all that's supposed to be at the heart of the American Constitutional Project.

Stephanie Perry:

Well, thank you so much for sitting down with me today. It's been a pleasure talking with you.

Rogers Smith:

Thank you.

Stephanie Perry:
That’s it for episode 6 and for this season of the Omnia Podcast, Democracy and Decsion 2024. I hope you learned as much as I did in our final episode. I’ve really enjoyed being on this ride with you during this election season.

The Omnia Podcast: Democracy and Decision 2024 is a production of Penn Arts and Sciences in collaboration with the Penn Program on Opinion Research and Election Studies. Many thanks to today’s guest Rogers Smith from the Department of Political Science.

Democracy and Decision 2024 was produced by Alex Schein, Loraine Terrell, and Michele Berger from the OMNIA Magazine editorial team. Our theme music was composed by Nicholas Escobar, College class

of 2018. Our logo design and episode illustration was created by Nick Matej. I'm your host Stephanie Perry, thanks for listening.

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