

# US Midterm Elections: Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) Will Not “Restore Democracy to America”

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

*There's a big push underway- it appears to be primarily a Democrat plan- for GOTV. GOTV is not a videogame; it's the acronym of Get-Out-The-Vote. Behind this drive is the conviction: 'If registered Democrats will simply get off their butts, drag themselves to the polls and check boxes for everyone running in their party's column, this will restore democracy to America'; at the very least it may halt the Trump bulldozer from grinding it deeper into the dust.*

Those embracing GOTV's strategy and volunteering to work for a campaign are equipped with an array of 2018 genre phone apps. With these gripped firmly in our hands, we can identify, locate, and meet would-be voters, then with one click instantly convey results to a tally center. One of these apps allows phone canvassers to override unanswered calls and jump in when the algorithm stops at a real voice- someone has picked up! Seeing their name on our screen, we start our pitch.

Even with this discriminating process, before we've finished identifying ourselves, respondents often ring off. But look! My computer indicates one real person seems willing to speak to me! She's Lorraine, age 55, registered 'D'. She stays with me for seven whole minutes. This, even though she initially appears diffident, declaring "I don't intend to vote. Have you seen what's going on there?" she exclaims.

Is she speaking about the murdered Saudi journalist, the thousands of Honduran hopefuls trudging northwards through Mexico, or NBC network's threat to dump host Megan Kelly? I'm unsure what to reply and, sensing my hesitation, Lorraine elaborates: "The bombs; explosives in the city! Evacuations of CNN! Are you not watching the news?"

Mention of these bomb threats seems to remind her that "there's a Muslim terrorist camp only half an hour from here". I ask for details and share my recall of a similar report in my district last year, rumors that proved unfounded. Then Lorraine admits she's unsure about her claim. "It was a while ago; but some car full of 'people' was pulled over and there was a big drug bust".

I steer the conversation back to GOTV, to the promising Democratic candidate for our district in the state senate race. Although the name is unfamiliar to Lorraine she finally appears interested: "What's her position on abortion?" When I reply and elaborate on the candidate's support for the New York Health Act and school finance reform, my potential voter turns less disputatious.

Has she met the candidate? Did she see last night's debate? No reply. Now Lorraine moves the discussion to the governor's debate, barking about De Blasio (mayor of New York City,

not currently up for reelection), rather than incumbent governor Andrew Cuomo. Although she names his opponent (Molinaro). I can hardly keep up with her. This woman is not stupid, and, allowing for some factual confusion, Lorraine is better informed than many.

And she cares; I can tell.

Lorraine's not alone in her confusion. Now she starts blaming Obama for the immigrant influx. The Obama administration raised her property taxes, she charges. "\$5000 a year now."

My I'm-not-voting respondent is angry at the Democratic Party. Even though, like many Americans who feel similarly, she's a registered Democrat. "There's no leadership." By now Lorraine is subtly pleading with me. (*Tell me something to believe in*, I hear in her voice.)

She has run out of people to attack. At some point Lorraine actually praises the current White House occupant for what she sees as forthrightness. Although she doesn't name any specific statement of his, she feels he's clear-minded.

What can we learn from this?

For how long should I engage?

To end the conversation, I share with Lorraine my own apprehension about the Party; I cite reports of corruption and the irresoluteness I see at the local county level and with the National Democratic Committee. Then I rally; I tell her why I personally am making these calls to support this state senate candidate. I finish upbeat- "Well it seems you really care Lorraine; I do hope you'll vote on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Will you?" Lorraine mutters "Yes, I'll vote."

How should I register this on my app's 1 to 5 scale?

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