

PREFACE

IN THE SPIRIT OF OPENNESS and full disclosure that the Millennial Generation treasures, the readers of this book should be forewarned that two life-long Democrats wrote it. Both of us have shared a deep passion for politics and baseball, not necessarily in that order. Along the way, we rooted for the same political party, if not always the same baseball teams. We have also both been fortunate enough to pursue rewarding careers in the private sector.

We did, however, take time out from those more personal pursuits to help orchestrate the successful resurrection of the Michigan Democratic Party after it was buried in the 1972 Nixon landslide. One of us, Mike Hais, supplied the survey research data for Carl Levin's first successful campaign for the U.S. Senate, in 1978, against Senator Robert Griffin, the Republican minority leader. Mike then helped Congressman Jim Blanchard win the state's gubernatorial election in 1982, ending a twenty-year Republican reign. The other author, Morley Winograd, was the state party's chairman from 1973 until 1979, during which time the party recaptured a majority of the state's congressional delegation and, for a brief moment in time, both houses of the state legislature. Together, with the help of the great men and women of the United Auto Workers, we turned the tables on the Republicans and their ticket-splitting strategy, honed to perfection by Governors George Romney and William Milliken in the 1960s and 1970s. We used that approach to elect Democrats by splitting off moderate Republicans from the increasingly conservative candidates the GOP was beginning to nominate, even back then.

After the 1990 midterm elections, the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) invited Morley, along with Doug Ross, another Michigan Democratic friend, to deliver a presentation entitled "How to Win

the White House in 1992.” The person sitting next to us taking copious notes was the vice-chair of the DLC, Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas. As described in *Taking Control: Politics in the Information Age* (1996), Clinton used the speech and the mantra of “Opportunity, Responsibility, and Community” to do what most Democrats, including himself in 1990, thought could not possibly be done.

That book, which Morley co-authored with Dudley Buffa, was also the first to identify an entirely new constituency in U.S. politics, based on the impact of information and communication technologies on how Americans were beginning to work and live. After the book’s publication, the Institute for a New California commissioned a series of trail-blazing studies of the California electorate that Mike developed and executed when he was vice president, Entertainment Research, at Frank N. Magid Associates, which identified and profiled “wired workers”—a term that the study made part of the political lexicon of the 1990s.

In 1996, *Taking Control* was brought to the attention of President Bill Clinton. As photographed in *Time* magazine, the president handed a copy of the book to Vice President Al Gore during one of their weekly power lunches and asked him to review its ideas and policy prescriptions. As a result, Morley was asked to assume the position of senior policy advisor to the vice president for the administration’s second term, with special responsibility for the National Partnership for Reinventing Government. In that capacity, Morley had an insider’s view of the workings of the West Wing, and some of those experiences became the source for a few of the stories we tell in this book.

But despite our personal partisan perspective, in writing this book we have attempted to be as objective as possible. We have not failed to criticize our Democratic allies where we felt criticism was warranted, and we have attempted, along the way, to outline the best strategies that Republicans might pursue to extricate themselves from their current difficulties. We do so for the same reasons that have spurred our interest in American politics for all of our adult lives.

America’s identity as a nation comes from its belief in the concept of democracy. Those fundamental values create a common bond that unites an otherwise heterogeneous population. Phrases such as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” or “in order to create a more perfect union” have been powerful enough to permeate every aspect of American

society and make the country's citizens as distinct as if they, like the citizens or subjects of most other nations, shared a common birthplace, race, ethnicity, religion, or language.

Yet the exact nature of American democracy has undergone significant changes during the nation's existence. Each time technology created new economic realities, a new generation of Americans, comfortable in a new world, has forced America to find, within its constitutional framework, the flexibility to change and adapt to those new circumstances.

Today, the United States faces another test of the strength of its democracy from those same twin forces of change. A new generation of Americans, the Millennial Generation, is entering the electorate and workforce in record numbers. Their arrival was heralded by "Baby on Board" signs in minivans twenty-five years ago. Now Millennials are entering young adulthood with a sense of confidence and commitment that reflects their sheltered and yet, at the same time, pressured childhood. Millennials are also the first American generation to be raised with access to the Internet and the incredibly greater communication opportunities the Web offers. Whether they are texting the person sitting next to them in the backseat of a car or IMing a buddy clear across the globe, Millennials are always in touch with their friends. Their team orientation and desire to constantly share information are just two of the Millennial behaviors that are impacting American culture and politics.

This book is an attempt to illuminate Millennial values and behaviors, as well as the technologies that help to create and enable them, for the Baby Boomers and Gen-Xers who are currently running America. In some previous eras, intergenerational misunderstandings and the failure to use new technologies wisely have had catastrophic consequences for American society. Student and racial unrest, barely contained class warfare, and even the Civil War are examples of the failure of America's democratic institutions to manage these discontinuities. In other times, however, the successful integration of a new generation's perspective and the use of new technologies have led to periods of tremendous economic growth and the rebuilding of the country's civic institutions. Victory in the Cold War is the most recent of those happier examples, but others stretch all the way back to the founding of the American democratic republic and to the expansion of the United States to its present continent-spanning boundaries.

Which direction the current confluence of changes in generational attitudes and the introduction of new technologies will take is not yet known. Depending on what America's leaders do to deal with these new realities, the United States in the next several decades could either be infinitely better off or in a much worse position. One thing is certain, however: in less than a decade, the United States will look very different than it did at the turn of the twenty-first century. If Americans are to design a government able to take the United States down the right path and preserve its democratic ideals, it is critical that we understand both the technological changes that are creating new conditions for economic and political success and the very interrelated way in which the new Millennial Generation thinks and behaves. In some small way, the authors hope the data and insights we present in this book begin that journey of discovery and understanding for each of our readers.

Morley Winograd and Mike Hais
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