

Measure your voting IQ with these tests

I'M WITH Wm. F. Buckley. A large voter turnout isn't necessarily good when many bores are casting ignorant, uninformed, slogan-driven votes.

That's the minority view. "Voter turnout is very important," national Democratic chairman Paul Kirk said in an interview. "We are deploying, in force, in a key state," said Kirk, who with presidential nominee Michael Dukakis and others has been canvassing the Wolverine State hard.

In a year when two cerebral presidential candidates are falling to stir the emotions of the couch potatoes, the party that can field the biggest percentage of its base will win. "A cardinal rule," said Kirk, "is that you never take your base for granted."

DISTRICT JUDGE Ed Sosnick up Bloomfield Township way talks to a lot of high school classes, even from as far off as Livonia, and likes to test their knowledge of voting laws with a little quiz. See how well you do:

1. Can you register if you are not registered?
2. Can you register to vote when you renew your driver's license?
3. Can a person who is not a citizen of the United States vote in Michigan?
4. Can a person who is not at least 18 years old on or before the date of the election vote?
5. If you move within 60 days of an election, but fail to register in your new city or township, can you still vote where you are registered?
6. Do you always have to go to the polls to vote?



Tim Richard

7. Must the United States flag be displayed either inside the precinct or on a staff outside the building?
 8. Can a blind voter be assisted in voting? b) disabled voters? c) a person who cannot read or write?
 9. Can anyone pass out campaign literature within 100 feet of a poll?
 10. Can anyone watch the counting of votes?
- ANSWERS:**
1. No, you must be registered.
 2. Yes, you may register at any

Secretary of State office or your local city or township clerk (but not the county clerk).

3. No.
4. No. But you may register at age 17 if you will be 18 by election day.
5. Yes, you may vote in your old precinct for up to 60 days. The precinct workers will fill out a change of address form.
6. You may vote either at your neighborhood precinct or by absentee ballot.
7. Yes, the flag must be displayed in one place or another.
8. a) Yes, the blind person may be assisted by a friend. b) Same with the disabled. c) Yes, but a challenger must watch.
9. No, you must stay at least 100 feet from the polling place to distribute literature.
10. Yes — from a specified distance.

HERE IS MY own quiz:
Q. With all the modern punch cards and computerized voting systems we have, is vote counting by the Secretary of State faster or slower than a generation ago?

A. Slower. Secretary of State Richard Austin and elections director Chris Thomas are doing a terrible job, and it gets worse by the year.

What you hear in the way of statewide results Tuesday night and read in the Nov. 9 daily papers will be exit polling results done by private industry — TV networks. There will be no official numbers from Lansing until the end of the next day — none.

For some offices, like state Board of Education, there will be no hard numbers until Nov. 10.

Cleaning out a scrapbook from my school days, before there were exit polls, I found some 1954 clippings reporting that Don Leonard didn't know he won the Republican gubernatorial primary until 3 a.m. Wednesday. Under the Austin-Thomson regime, it takes 12 hours longer to get numbers from Lansing.

(But this newspaper will have pretty good unofficial numbers from the county building by midnight and virtually complete results the morning after the election.)

Funny thing: The worse Austin's performance, the bigger his re-election margins.

Door closing on hot race

FOREVER AND a day. That's how long it seems we've been covering politics this year. For the candidates, it probably seems endless, too, especially for those who began campaigning early.

My beat this time around has been the state House, 6th district, which includes Farmington and Farmington Hills and three villages in Southfield Township. We covered the Republican primary race heavily — too heavily, according to some local politicians.

"There was too much," observed a regular council watcher from Farmington.

But in this traditionally Republican district, the race was hot, there was a good slate of candidates and we thought it deserved coverage.

From start to finish, this race has involved not only personal interviews, questionnaires and covering "candidate nights." It's almost talking to candidates and their supporters on the phone — who embrace our coverage one week and who discard it the next.

An open seat is being filled, which makes the race next Tuesday particularly important. Since we all embrace our incumbents, year after year, whoever wins next week will



Casey Hans

probably be a shoe-in in future elections, be it Republican or Democrat.

IN YEARS past, Farmington-area Democrats "took their turn" running against Farmington Republican incumbent Sandy Brotherton — which most will admit, Farmington Democratic Club president Mike Bresigold, who ran against Brotherton two years ago, told me he was happy this time to watch from the sidelines.

There has been some mudslinging in this race, both during the primary and the general races. Some just received a light layer of dust, while others got the full mud pie treatment, depending on your view.

But there's also been a lot of good clean excitement. What it's come down to is the race of Dolan vs. Dolan.

The two Dolans aren't related — they're not even distant cousins. During the primary, everyone joked about the possible scenario, and then

on election night it happened. Even Democrat John Dolan from Birmingham Farms was surprised when I called the next morning — he had just discovered he won.

RUMORS ABOUNDED. There were allegations that the Democrat had been "put up" to run and cause confusion. John Dolan said, early on, he was prompted to run by Birmingham-area Democrats, and denies any rumors.

Jan Dolan's Republican primary win was no surprise. The Farmington Hills councilwoman is well-known and involved in the community. But even we didn't know her quite as well as we thought.

It turns out she's two months shy of 62, not 59 as she told us during the campaign. She admitted the "white lie," we reported it and the campaign rolled along.

Although some of these side issues received play and spiced up the race, so did the candidates' views on key issues.

Hopefully, attention was drawn to these, so voters can make an intelligent choice next Tuesday. We plan to visit with both candidates on election night and bring readers not only election results, but some flavor of the moment as well.

Abortion — 'burning on high'

ABORTIONS DIVIDE us.

The words are those of former U.S. Congressman Bill Brodhead, an understatement if ever there was one. Throwing light on a murky topic, he once explained that the Supreme Court declared abortions the law of the land, but the Congress has debated ad infinitum that abortion may be bad for poor people.

"This gets around the issue of whether abortion is right or wrong," Brodhead said. "While it's a legal right, it's implied it shouldn't be available to poor people."

It was back in 1977 that Brodhead revealed these thoughts on abortion, but 11 years later, the pros and cons of funding abortions is right on stage center as Proposition A on our Nov. 8 ballot.

IF YOU VOTE "yes," you'll be counted as voting that the law should prevent the state from paying for abortions for women on Medicaid, the pro-life position. A "no" vote will mean we shouldn't pass a law preventing paid abortions for women on aid.

Few people are lukewarm about abortion rights.

Those who oppose them orchestrate their opposition with the cry that abortion is murder and should



Shirlee Iden

never be permitted. In numbers, they count as a minority, but the voice they raise is shrill and loud.

When Brodhead spoke out on abortion rights, a woman, known only as Marianne, had a legal abortion in a Lathrup Village clinic, then remarked: "I think anything a woman wants to do with her own body should be legal as long as she doesn't hurt anyone else."

"And she shouldn't have to crawl behind a rock to do it."

Presidential candidate George Bush got the attention of millions of television viewers by saying he thought abortion rights should be severely curtailed by law, and that women who broke those laws should be treated as criminals.

THE NEXT DAY his abortion statement was recanted, redrafted and softened.

Michael Dukakis' view is that the abortion decision should be in the mind, in the heart, and in the hands

of each woman.

When the Supreme Court declared in Roe vs. Wade in 1973, by a vote of 7-2, that abortion was the legal right of all women, civil libertarians — especially the ACLU — celebrated, believing that a woman's right to an abortion was once and for all assured constitutionally.

Wrong again. This is a fight never relegated to any back burner, but always right up there burning on high. Even in the suburbs, violence over abortion is an unfortunate fact.

Feelings run high. There are the bombings, the pickets, the call of names such as "baby killer."

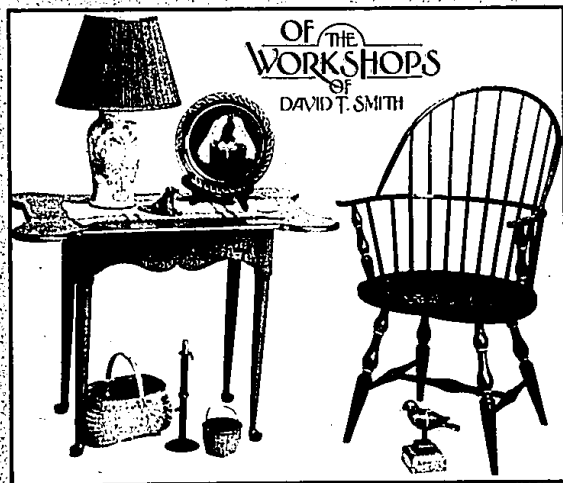
There's been a lot of heat on the subject. In this state, Michigan lawmakers have approved more than 17 bans on abortion spending, usually by adding a line in the annual budget limiting the expenditure to \$1.

EACH OF THESE bills was vetoed by Gov. James Blanchard, a Democrat, and his predecessor, William Milliken, Republican. The vetoes have never been overturned.

A petition drive by pro-life forces put the question on the ballot, we'll be marking in just over a week.

Remember, that is when you close the curtains and close out the world as you vote your conscience. And that's when you decide if women should retain control of their bodies.

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