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The Axe Files - Ep. 192: Donna Brazile

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Axelrod: [00:00:00] Donna Brazile it's so good to see you here and at the Institute of Politics.

Brazile: [00:00:06] It's great to be here.

Axelrod: [00:00:07] You're the big news maker these days. And we're going to get into all of that. But I would be remiss if I had you here and didn't ask you about your story and your family's story which is so so rich and helps explain why you do what you do. Tell me a little bit about your family and growing up in Louisiana.

Brazile: [00:00:30] Well I'm the third of nine children . A Catholic a Catholic family. My family if you walked in my my my house back in the middle of the 60s you would have seen a picture of John F. Kennedy Bobby Kennedy Martin Luther King and of course Jesus . I f you walked in there today you would see those same figures but Barack Obama as well. My parents were working poor. My dad was a janitor at a local high school. My mom a maid in downtown New Orleans. We were raised to pay it forward to give back and pay it forward . So on the night that Dr. King was assassinated I'll never forget that as long as I live I was eight years old and my grandmother called us all in her room in the order of our birth Cheryl Sheila Donna Tay Chet Lisa Demitri Kevin Ziola . And my grandmother wanted us to pray. And she said we had to pray because Dr. King had been murdered and she wanted us to pray for his family pray for Mrs. King and the children but also to pray for whoever killed him. And I thought that was odd. And I raised my hand. I used to always raise my hand. And I said Grandma why do we have to pray for the murderer? And she said because God you know teaches us to love one another. And whoever did it his family tonight her family well she said his family would be suffering as well. So that night I prayed. And a year later I was going door to door to encourage people encourage my friends to get their parents to register and vote. So I've been at it now since.

Axelrod: [00:02:14] So you were nine years.

Brazile: [00:02:15] Nine years old. So I've been at it for a long long time. I recently counted up 11 presidential campaigns 7 of which I was a paid staffer 21 off season election midterm elections in addition to those that are held in Virginia right after presidential and Louisiana which is also an unusual unusual election cycle. So I've been at it now for almost 50 years.

Axelrod: [00:02:44] You know I too began my political career when I was nine years old handing leaflets out for Bobby Kennedy. But I always say when I say I worked for Bobby Kennedy I point out I wasn't the strategist. You weren't the strategist either. So tell me how you progressed how did you make your way to the point where you were running national campaigns?

Brazile: [00:03:09] Well I started off by being a grassroots organizer. I went door to door voter registration. I also signed people up to work the precincts. I also handed out leaflets in the 1976 race with Jimmy Carter. By 1978 I was working for the state attorney general candidate. And by 1980 I was at LSU and I was the youth coordinator. I finally turned 18. I was a youth coordinator for the Carter Mondale campaign. And by 1982 when I was up in Washington D.C I worked with someone you probably knew very well Paul Tully.

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Axelrod: [00:03:47] Of course. A legend in organizing

Brazile: [00:03:48] Paul was my mentor. The legendary. He Paul Tully was one of the the finest strategists and organizers in the country. Paul Tully hired me. I was an intern at the DNC and by 1984 after finishing the campaign to make Dr. King's birthday a holiday I worked on that Harold Washington

Axelrod: [00:04:09] You were recruited for that.

Brazile: [00:04:11] I was recruited by Mrs. King. Because as a student organizer I worked for the United States Student Association and I had organized students on over 200 college campuses to produce seven million petitions and as a result of how organizing I became the I started off as a youth coordinator everyone hired me to be a youth coordinator because I was young and then I ended up being the national mobilization director for the King holiday effort.

Axelrod: [00:04:39] And how did you come to know her. I mean obviously through this process but what was your relationship with her.

Brazile: [00:04:45] Well I got to I met Ralph Abernathy on the campus of LSU

Brazile: [00:04:50] Dr. King's colleague and successor

Axelrod: [00:04:52] Chair of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. And one by one C.T. Vivian Dr. Abernathy Dr. Benjamin Hooks I got to know and then of course Reverend Jesse Jackson. Stevie Wonder was behind the quote unquote the major campaigns the big marches and Teresa Cropper who's based here in Chicago a lawyer she called upon me she was the coordinator she called upon me to organize more campuses. So by 1983 I became a quote unquote I became a famous organizer because I had worked on the King holiday effort and then I went directly to work for Jesse Jackson historic first campaign.

Axelrod: [00:05:39] It really was historic. What was that like? Because that campaign spawned a lot of careers in politics a lot of young African-American candidates surfaced and challenged some old line politicians around the country.

Brazile: [00:05:53] Career politicians, that's right. It was a great campaign because we didn't have a playbook. We basically got up every morning looked in the New York Times and Washington Post and we found out why Reverend was going. And then we had to

Axelrod: [00:06:08] That's an unsettling feeling when you're working for a candidate.

Brazile: [00:06:10] When you're working for I mean nowadays you know two weeks in advance where the candidate is going we knew we knew the morning of. We went where the votes were. Reverend taught us how to you know how to increase the number of African-Americans running for office running for delegates as well as voter registration. Our campaign really was about citizen mobilization. And the reason why I loved that campaign is because I would often go into states like Virginia Georgia Alabama of course I did Louisiana and I would find the preachers that Reverend knew preachers that were involved in the civil rights movement. I would go to the

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church. We record radio spots down in the basement of the church. And then we would just reach out to the people that were affiliated with that church go to their homes and then we would hold community meetings and one by one you know because back then the rules were the Democratic Party had the so-called winner take all systems similar to what the Republicans continue to have. And we looked for places where we could win and take all of the delegates as opposed to where we can just cherry pick and get a few delegates. So Reverend put me in charge of that operation along with the field operation. And I got to understand a little bit more about politics and when the election when Reverend dropped out of the race at the convention I also had to go at the convention and get signatures to give Reverend Jackson an opportunity to speak on the platform and speak at the convention.

Axelrod: [00:07:39] Which he did to great effect. That was a landmark speech for him.

Brazile: [00:07:43] That was a great speech. And then the Mondale campaign hired me.

Axelrod: [00:07:48] Now let me ask you a question. What did it did you see the Jackson campaign as a essentially political exercise or did you see it as an extension of the civil rights movement or both? I mean I guess it could be both?

Brazile: [00:08:06] It was both. It had elements of a political campaign in a sense that we had to get on the ballot. We had to identify and recruit delegates. But at the same time it was like an old civil rights revival going across the country getting people in Fayetteville getting people in Jackson getting people who had been on the frontlines of the civil rights movement to come out and serve as not just surrogates for the campaign but also to help Reverend Jackson raise awareness on the right to vote. Back in the 19 early 1980s black voter registration was about 40 45 40 to 45 percent. It has now increased to almost 65 to 70 percent of African-Americans are registered to vote. And I think as a result of Reverend Jackson's campaign more and more African-Americans decided that they wanted to run for office. And what we saw post 1988 was a shift in thinking in terms of how to increase black voter mobilization but also black electoral participation through running for office.

Axelrod: [00:09:13] And you off of that experience then you sort of Paul Tully obviously was right in the thick of national Democratic politics so you made the shift over to Mondale in 84 after Jackson dropped out of the race.

Brazile: [00:09:30] That's right. Mondale Ferraro campaign. I worked with a wonderful woman by the name of Gina Glance. Gina was another mentor. She was the director and Gina assigned me to stay in a headquarters and to help out with mobilization across the country. In fact I also served as an advance person for Geraldine Ferraro and I went around the country helping her with her events as well. So I got a chance to learn not just about politics message mobilization but also as an advance person I became very good at logistics.

Axelrod: [00:10:09] Yeah. Geraldine another historic you were involved in a lot of historic races at that moment. Reverend Jackson's and hers. What was she like to work with? First woman nominated for for a national office.

Brazile: [00:10:25] Well in between the 1982 midterm and the 84 cycle I served as an intern on Capitol Hill for a Gillis Long who was the rep from from Louisiana but he was a chair of the

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House Democratic Caucus so I got a chance to see all of the major players in the Democratic Party from Tip O'Neill the speaker to Gerry Ferraro to Bell Absa Shirley Chisholm Barbara Jordan I mean think about it back in those days they were giants I mean everyone wanted to get to meet these wonderful charismatic leaders. Gerry was this woman from Queens. I mean she was smart dynamic. She was she understood how the House worked. And I wasn't surprised that Mondale chose her. Remember that was the year that Mondale interviewed several women including Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Mikulski Lindy Boggs who was my hometown Congresswoman. But Gerry stood out because she was such such a great leader and she understood politics.

Axelrod: [00:11:33] She's a great politician.

Brazile: [00:11:34] She was a great politician. And I think the Mondale campaign the effort was to try to bring home some of those so-called Reagan Democrats if you recall the Reagan those years when Democrat the Democrats would lose to Republicans and we lost a substantial number of white male voters and others.

Axelrod: [00:11:52] Yeah yeah. And and you ended up moving on your I guess your next big posting was with Dick Gephardt.

Brazile: [00:12:02] Yeah. In between those campaigns I worked on the midterms in 1986. We made up some ground in the in the House and the Senate but not enough I mean we still held the House but we made up ground in the Senate and then by 1988 I was down in Louisiana running Mary Landrieu's first statewide campaign. She wanted to she ran for state treasurer. Ann Richards of Texas had convinced her to run statewide. And I went home to run her campaign.

Axelrod: [00:12:32] You must have known her dad Moon Landrieu.

Brazile: [00:12:35] I was an intern for Moon Landrieu.

Axelrod: [00:12:38] You're like Zelic you show up everywhere.

Brazile: [00:12:41] Well I I had this I had this drive this passion to serve a passion to give back. And more importantly and you recall this David because of you know you grew up around the same era people were actively engaged in their democracy you know and for young people back during those days there was no greater calling than to hear from a politician or political leader that they wanted someone of my age to help them. And I was you know I wasn't pressed by these people.

Axelrod: [00:13:11] Yeah well Moon Landrieu was a was an exceptional figure. I mean he was larger than life character.

Brazile: [00:13:17] And you know you know and I'll say I'll say the mayor or the secretary depends on what day it is I call him Mayor Landrieu I call him

Axelrod: [00:13:24] He was secretary of HUD under President Carter.

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Brazile: [00:13:28] Jimmy Carter. But most people don't know that he was one of the first white downtown lawyers to fight for integration.

Axelrod: [00:13:38] You know we had Mitch Landrieu on this podcast and he talked about that and his father's role and how that impacted on him.

Brazile: [00:13:46] Civil rights. He was one of the first white lawyers to handle civil rights cases down in the south. And he was good friends with Norm Francis who just retired as president of Xavier University. Everyone knew that Moon Landrieu cared. He cared about the folks in the Ninth Ward and of course he cared about downtown New Orleans and here I was living out in Cana [?] which is about 20 miles to the west. And every day I caught a bus from my home in Cana [?] all the way downtown to be his intern. What a great opportunity.

Axelrod: [00:14:19] And so you worked for Mary when she ran statewide?

Brazile: [00:14:21] I ran because Mary and Mitch are like part of my family. I ran her campaign and when I got a call from Dick Gephardt. I heard from Paul Simon Michael Dukakis Joe Biden and Dick Gephardt. I met with all of them and I decided upon Dick Gephardt and

Axelrod: [00:14:37] Before you get to Gephardt because I want to hear about that but as long as you've outed yourself as a member of the Landrieu family you know are you are you giving Mitch any advice on whether he should look at the presidential race?

Brazile: [00:14:52] Well I try to I try to stay away from giving candidates advice or potential candidates advice. But if he calls me I will make myself available to talk to him. But I would make myself available to talk to anyone.

Axelrod: [00:15:06] What do you think of him as a potential candidate?

Brazile: [00:15:08] I think along with Mayor Garcetti Mayor de Blasio I think we're going to see a fair a good number of Democratic mayors running for president in 2020.

Axelrod: [00:15:18] It used to be that that candidacies would come out of the state houses out of governorships there aren't that many Democratic governors these days. It elevates these mayors who govern in a very pragmatic way.

Brazile: [00:15:33] Especially in states like Louisiana and New York and other places. But as you well know we also have a handful of governors who are thinking about 2020.

Axelrod: [00:15:41] I think it's fair to say and I've said it before that it'd be easier to construct a list of those Democrats who aren't going to run for president than the a list. I mean that would be a shorter list.

Brazile: [00:15:50] I'm at 51. And maybe by the end of the day we'll be 52.

Axelrod: [00:15:56] Yes. Well we'll. Maybe you'll jump in there.

Brazile: [00:16:00] Oh no.

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Brazile: [00:16:01] Gephardt. So we're on Gephardt. Dick Gephardt at the time you met was what was he a ranking Democrat but he wasn't the leader of the house.

Brazile: [00:16:13] No he was he was on that trajectory to becoming the leader of the party. And what I liked about Gephardt I met with all of them and Dick Gephardt was the first candidate and you know I was 27 at the time who when talking with him because I would interview the candidates and when talking with him Dick Gephardt asked me a series of questions and I was struck by the fact that he wanted my views on trade policy he wanted my views on economic policy on defense policy. He was the first candidate that didn't ask me about organizing in the black community or doing outreach to women. He wanted to know my views on public policy issues and I was impressed that Dick Gephardt wanted to know my personal views and it was we had an enjoyable conversation.

Axelrod: [00:17:01] Because its easy to get Pigeonholed in a role. Oh this is our this is our black person this is our black organizer.

Brazile: [00:17:08] Yeah. This is this is a person who could help me with all of the other candidates wanted me to come on board to either serve as their director of black outreach or Southern outreach which also meant black outreach. That was just a glorified way of saying black outreach. Its like we'll put you in charge of the South. Really? But Dick Gephardt Dick Gephardt said I would like you to be my deputy campaign manager. Number two under Bill Carrick. And I went home and I'm like wow this is my opportunity. I'm 27 years old. And I'll I'll get the opportunity to be the deputy field director deputy campaign manager and I can start hiring people like myself to go out and work in the various states. My hardest decision David was to tell Reverend Jackson.

Axelrod: [00:18:00] Who was running again in 1988.

Brazile: [00:18:01] Yeah and how do you tell Reverend Jackson I'm moving on.

Axelrod: [00:18:04] How did you tell him?

Brazile: [00:18:05] Oh my God I drove all the way up to Memphis. He was in Memphis. He was having a big retreat and I called Ron Walters who was like his right hand. Professor Ron Walters. And I said I need to come and have a one on one conversation with Reverend. I'm 27 years old. And I went into his room and I said Reverend I have to tell you I have some news. And he immediately went to the states he wanted me to run the things he wanted me to do and I said I will not be with your campaign this year I'm going to work for Dick Gephardt. And he said who? I said Dick Gephardt you know the congressman from Missouri.

Axelrod: [00:18:44] So that immediately probably signified to you that you had some work to do for Gephardt there the fact that Jackson could couldn't identify him.

Brazile: [00:18:51] He said who? And I'll never forget. And you know Reverend Jackson told me and I wrote this in my first book Cooking with Grease Reverend told me that I would become a branch without a tree and I was like Oh Reverend that's horrible. I want to be stay rooted with the Civil Rights Community. I want to continue to work with you know civil rights advocates

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which I did. But Reverend told me I would become a branch without a tree. You know what we maintained contact throughout that campaign. When the campaign was over with we continued to talk to one another. And when I became campaign manager for Al Gore in 2000 Reverend Jackson called me everyday to check on me to see what I needed. He wanted to make sure I was doing OK. I have the greatest admiration for Reverend Jackson for not only giving a kid like myself an opportunity to serve but just the friendship that we've had over the years. I talked to him last week. A couple of weeks ago I was at the funeral of his mother in law. I feel like I'm I will always be one of Reverend Jackson's

Axelrod: [00:19:52] So it turns out that the tree and branch stayed together.

Brazile: [00:19:57] Oh yeah. Well we got deep roots. And I love Miss J too.

Axelrod: [00:19:59] We're going to take a short break and we'll be right back with Donna Brazile.

Axelrod: [00:20:08] So 88 you know I know I know something about that race because Paul Simon was my first political client when I left journalism the former he was the congressman he got elected to the Senate in 2000 I'm sorry 1984 and then he decided to run for president in 88. And he and Gephardt had quite a contest in Iowa and right down to the last minute to the day he died Simon believes that he won the Iowa caucuses if they just counted all all the votes.

Brazile: [00:20:40] Well we knew that that Simon would take the Eastern Counties Davenport et cetera

Axelrod: [00:20:47] Neighboring Illinois.

Brazile: [00:20:48] Yeah neighboring Illinois. Iowa. Missouri. But we knew that we had the western counties and our targets were really everything north of Des Moines. And we were in a really good campaign in Iowa. Steve Julie Gibson it was we had an aggressive campaign.

Axelrod: [00:21:09] Around the issue of interestingly trade was the issue that that really drove the vote for him there.

Brazile: [00:21:15] Right. And I'll never forget that's what that was the big question that Gephardt asked me about trade and I'm like how I mean I never had anyone you know like I said seek out my advice and my opinions.

Axelrod: [00:21:25] His slogan in that campaign was it's your fight too.

Brazile: [00:21:28] Its your fight too.

Axelrod: [00:21:30] Interesting because we're still having these same same battles same debates today. I honestly believe that you know Gephardt ultimately Michael Dukakis won the nomination. Fine guy. Gephardt was very skilled politically and that appeal around that issue was strong. He didn't have the resources to continue that campaign. He he was he was really mowed under by the absence of resources.

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Brazile: [00:22:01] Absence of resources and also when Gore and Gephardt went after it for Super Tuesday in those southern states Dukakis emerged Dukakis and Jackson emerged much stronger but we essentially killed each other killed each other. That's our political way of saying that we ran out of money. I'll never forget I was in a I was on the airplane with Terry McAuliffe who was our finance director back then and I was talking to Paul Begala who was already on the ground and we like we got to go and tell Dick we there's no way to continue. And we went down to South Carolina to say it's time for us to fall out. One month later I was up in Boston working to help Michael Dukakis.

Axelrod: [00:22:41] It must have been persuasive to Gephardt for Terry McAuliffe to say we can't raise the money. Mr. ebullience. He was here recently. Must have been a pretty strong message.

Brazile: [00:22:54] I remember when Terry was at the D triple C raising money and did that alligator wrestling. So I mean Terry and I go back also. It's funny in this business with 40 plus years of service you really know everybody. Both Republicans and Democrats who've been on the battlefield for as long as you have.

Axelrod: [00:23:13] Well you and I have known each other for a long time. We met during you were running Eleanor Holmes Norton's campaign for Congress in 1990 and I was involved in that.

Brazile: [00:23:23] I want I wanted the best for my mentor and friend .

Axelrod: [00:23:27] Yes thank you.

Brazile: [00:23:28] And I you know David you know this is a great story because I'd searched around I knew a lot of people as you well know and I searched around for someone who understood the nuances of city politics black politics gender equality I mean you had you had a mix of everything.

Axelrod: [00:23:46] Well I was lucky because I came up in Chicago at a very interesting turbulent time and ended up working when I left journalism working with Harold Washington the first African American mayor of Chicago who was larger than life. And I ended up doing many many urban races after that because I think it's the most vital kind of politics there is actually. It's where the rubber hits the road. You know it's where these life and death issues.

Brazile: [00:24:18] But you knew how to raise issues that didn't turn off suburban voters. In our case we didn't have any suburban voters. But you knew how to you know bring people from you know say a ward 8 in Washington D.C. together with a ward 3 which is predominantly white ward 8 predominantly black. When they saw your ads David they didn't think black or white they thought DC DC. So I want to applaud you for that. And Eleanor is still serving.

Axelrod: [00:24:44] Yes.

Brazile: [00:24:46] So twenty two terms later Eleanor is still serving.

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Axelrod: [00:24:48] Yeah. And and then you know I want to get to Gore because that was a historic appointment that he made when you became talk about your role in the Clinton years.

Brazile: [00:25:01] During the Clinton years the one thing I enjoyed working with Eleanor and then Gephardt is that every two years they allowed me to take a leave of absence. I used call it my fix. I had to go out and get a fix. And because I love politics and I love to recruit young people to run and I like to train people and I like to go out and be with the people. I don't like to sit in the campaign headquarters. And so in 92 I'll never forget this Paul Tully called me he was down in Little Rock he said I need you to come out to Little Rock and I said you know what I'm putting curtains up. That was a metaphor that I was finally buying a house. I needed to stabilize my life. I lived out of a suitcase. And I said I'm putting curtains up. As soon as my curtains go up I will go around the country you tell me wherever you need me to go. And there are few of us in politics I can think about Theresa Velmane Julie Gibson Michael Hooley we're the kind of people you call in when you have a crisis and you need folks to go in and fix it.

Axelrod: [00:25:59] The Marines.

Brazile: [00:26:01] Yeah we like the trenches. We are all we are the trench fighters. Laurie Moscowitz. Now you're making me call up all my friends. And so I did I think I did like five or six states for the Clintons. For Bill Clinton in 91 92. But I was close to Al Gore. You see I wasn't close to Bill Clinton. I was close to Al Gore.

Axelrod: [00:26:23] Because you both were from the south?

Brazile: [00:26:25] We were from the south but there was something about when I turned Gore down because Gore had requested that I work for him. But I still kept a relationship with him I don't know I just

Axelrod: [00:26:34] This was in 88. He also ran in 88. Thirty nine years old.

Brazile: [00:26:38] So we became friends and I was friends with Tipper and so I was close to the Gores and so when he called me to help out I helped out. So I didn't have a formal role other than that of being a senior adviser. I wasn't on the payroll for them. I was on the payroll of the DNC at the time when I took my leave of absence. I used to tell people I'll take a leave of absence and I need \$1500 a month. You know I said that back in 1992 and that was my going price you know for the last few years. \$1500 a month. I said if you can't live off of \$1500 a month which I call two shifts at some you know minimum wage job then you can't survive.

Axelrod: [00:27:23] And in 2000 you Gore's campaign was not going particularly well against ultimately George W. Bush. But there was he had a primary he overcame Bill Bradley in the primary. I think the aforementioned Gina Glance was involved with Bradley in that campaign.

Brazile: [00:27:44] Yes she was.

Axelrod: [00:27:45] But you at one point he made a dramatic turn in his campaign. He appointed you as his campaign manager and moved the whole campaign out of Washington D.C. to Nashville. What was the thinking behind that?

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Brazile: [00:28:02] Well the 98 season was in 96 I helped with the re-elect. I actually ran the tri-state area and Virginia Maryland and D.C. and I traveled across the country to battleground states as a surrogate. In 1998 few people remember this Bill Clinton was under impeachment. It was a big scandal.

Axelrod: [00:28:20] I think a lot of people remember that actually.

Brazile: [00:28:23] It was a big scandal in Washington D.C. and that year I just didn't want to work. I said this is got to be a messy one. And Charlie Rangel came to came over to the office one day.

Axelrod: [00:28:35] Congressman from New York.

Brazile: [00:28:35] The former congressman from New York and he said to Eleanor he said we need Donna over at the D triple C. Because every two years I went over for \$1500 a month. And I said oh my god this is going to be a bad one because the president is being impeached. The resources were drying up and they like you know how to do it. And I went over to work with the D triple C and the DSCC and we came within five seats went in back the House. And people forget how we ran that race. We went underneath all the national noise and we went into what I call the the down ballot races.

Axelrod: [00:29:11] Yeah that was extraordinary because with everything going on and you know presidents in their sixth year generally don't have very good mid-term elections right.

Brazile: [00:29:20] That's right. And so I came out of 98 pretty after Newt Gingrich stepped down and then my former Congressman Bob Livingston came in and stepped down and Gore called me that March of 1999 and said I need you to be my deputy. And I guess at that point in my career being you know 38 being deputy was not such a bad position. I said I knew Craig Smith met the campaign manager. But by September of that year the campaign was hemorrhaging money. We had a big bloated budget and the vice president felt that he wanted someone else in that position who would focus on grassroots. He was afraid that Bill Bradley who was running against the establishment remember sounds familiar right the establishment candidates running.

Axelrod: [00:30:15] Yes its a theme running through our politics for quite a while.

Brazile: [00:30:17] And so Bill Bradley Gore was afraid that Bradley was going to catch up and he wanted to you know get to campaign outside the beltway. He wanted to get it out of the quote unquote Clinton Gore. I mean the D.C. orbit. And he tells me to be his campaign manager. I 'll never forget I called my dad that day and I said guess what Al Gore just appointed me his campaign manager and my dad said well its just a job.

Axelrod: [00:30:44] Well that's deflating. Probably in certain ways also a good message though which is you know we tend to define ourselves by what we do right instead of who we are who we are.

Brazile: [00:30:57] So my dad and so I had to take the staff down to Tennessee. I had to refill the coffers. We were you know bleeding money. I had to take a lot of the consultants off the

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payroll which was the same thing under the DNC so we can come on the budget. And then I had to shift the focus to win in Iowa and New Hampshire because I felt I felt like if we won Iowa and New Hampshire then the rest the rest of the states or at least those Super Tuesday states I thought that Al Gore would be in a better position to win in those states because many of them were in the south.

Axelrod: [00:31:30] And you do that. That's right and you did do that.

Brazile: [00:31:33] Bradley dropped out the second week of March and Al Gore came over to me. I'll never forget when he said well how did we win in Washington State? How did we win in Delaware? I said because while the consultants were telling me don't fund those races I knew what to do. I knew how to do grassroots organizing and we won all of the delegates.

Axelrod: [00:31:53] So we should before we move on we should talk about the way that race ended which was historic and and painful for you I'm sure. The longest vote count in the history of presidential politics.

Brazile: [00:32:10] 37 Days.

Axelrod: [00:32:10] Talk to me about that night when when the votes were coming in.

Brazile: [00:32:16] Well I mean I had my that morning we were in Florida the night before in Dade County. We left Broward went to Dade. And we were going to campaign all night you remember those all nighters we used to pull. I can't do those anymore. And we ended up in St. Pete Tampa-St. Pete Hillsborough County. And I started getting phone calls. I'm like wow it's too early to get phone calls that the polls did not open up people had not their name had been removed from the ballot. I kept that entire day I called up to the Justice Department Mr. Lee and I said something is going on in this country because I'm hearing from a lot of states that people's names have been removed from the roster and they're standing in long lines. I heard later that day from Leon County which is Tallahassee that there were a problem. So by the end of the day we went back to Nashville Tennessee and I started receiving more phone calls once we got to Nashville but the polls were closed and across the country starting in Virginia going all the way through. And as you know David the first hour the news media reported that we won. I went up and took a shower. Game over. We won Florida. Game over. Came out of shower. I was about to go and grab some popcorn. That is my you know celebration snack.

Axelrod: [00:33:38] You walked in with some today.

Brazile: [00:33:40] I know I got I love popcorn. Red wine and popcorn are my favorite meal. And I got out the shower. I was so happy. And then within an hour I was up in the vice president's suite. We were looking at the TV and I'm like what the hell just happened. One hour ago we won Florida and now we're losing Florida. And as you can imagine up until midnight with Bill Daley in the room the Vice President around 9:45 called George Bush. I was angry with him. I said don't call don't concede don't concede. Because if this falls within a thousand vote there's going to be an automatic recount. And we went over to the War Memorial and Michael Hooley got a call and that we got it up to Al Gore that

Axelrod: [00:34:31] They were in a motorcade at the time.

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Brazile: [00:34:33] We were in the motorcade. And we had already told George Bush well the Vice President told then Governor Bush that he had conceded. We were at the War Memorial where we were hosting our victory party and the vice president had to call again. I'll never forget that call because the Vice President in essence said I don't care what your brother said. I'm like yeah there you go. You know tell him you're not going to you know throw in the towel tonight. So in the middle of the night.

Axelrod: [00:35:02] He said your little brother is what was reported.

Brazile: [00:35:05] You little brother, right.

Axelrod: [00:35:05] Jeb Bush was the governor at the time.

Brazile: [00:35:08] He was the governor of Florida. Katherine Harris was the secretary of state. And we spent the rest of that evening debating internally. Should we go for a statewide count or four counties? I argued as one of the non-lawyers in the room for a statewide count because I had heard throughout the day from people in Duvall Volusia Leon County I mean I had enough counties in my head that I said it needs to be statewide but there were people I would say the legal team they wanted four counties. And I'm like that's a mistake.

Axelrod: [00:35:43] Well it's strategically it became a mistake because it allowed this notion of selective we can't

Brazile: [00:35:51] We were cherry picking counties as opposed to the entire state. That was

Axelrod: [00:35:55] You know I spent some time with Jim Baker a few months ago and he was brilliant at exploiting those those strategic opportunities.

Brazile: [00:36:03] And you might recall right right as we got to December 10th that there was the Florida Supreme Court said that we would count that all the counties would be you know finally repelled and then the next day as you remember the supreme court

Axelrod: [00:36:22] The U.S. Supreme Court ended that. And what was that like for you having gone through that experience?

Brazile: [00:36:30] Brutal, brutal. I mean the body at the end of any campaign cycle, the body is tired. I mean but my body was tired my mind was tired. And then when I read the Supreme Court decision I don't think I ever got rid of the anger in my heart. I mean they used old civil rights statues to essentially shut down the right to vote. In essence Justice Scalia former justice the late Justice Scalia said we have no right to vote. It's not enshrined in our Constitution. And when you read that and know what we went through to try to get you know Al Gore elected by talking to people by getting them out to vote by ensuring that they had you know all of the proper credentials. When you read that you just sit back and say My God there's no right to vote?

Axelrod: [00:37:19] What do you think that that election what role did that play in the political environment that we have today. It seems like that was a kind of watershed event?

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Brazile: [00:37:31] I think if you go back to the 2000 election and you see ultimately how the Supreme Court ruled in favor of George W. Bush that we did not have a thorough recount of the entire electorate in the state of Florida I think that deepened some of the polarization that was already out there. Look the impeachment process was another flashpoint and this widening divide between the two political parties and clearly 2016 will be another chapter of this quote unquote hyper partisanship at its worse.

Axelrod: [00:38:04] It does speak to and I say this all the time when I'm traveling around the value of the vote though. I mean it was what 529 votes or something like that that separated the two of them which means that if another thousand people had voted that Gore would have prevailed and history would have been much different. Very likely we wouldn't have been involved in Iraq we probably would have been way down the road on climate change. Things would have been different in a really big way. So when people say my vote doesn't really matter.

Brazile: [00:38:41] Every vote matters. I mean you look at some of these races and just this past week there are still recounts in Virginia. Some of the military ballots are people are questioning and challenging whether all of the overseas ballots that are as you know they come in a little late some of them.

Axelrod: [00:38:57] I've actually been out of the country. Is the control of the House of Delegates still in question?

Brazile: [00:39:04] There are three seats that are still being as we as we speak that are still being tallied. One of the seats by 12 votes. 12 votes! So every vote matters. Every election matters. And we proved that this past week when you saw Democrats for the first time compete in all 100 districts. In the last two cycles we've only had less than 50 Democrats. I mean Democrats had given up on Loudon County. Democrats had given up on Southwest Virginia. And this past election cycle Democrats were running all across the state of Virginia. I'm so proud of them.

Axelrod: [00:39:39] And you are seeing all over the country this explosion of candidates lining up for offices up and down the ballot.

Brazile: [00:39:48] A lot of women.

Axelrod: [00:39:49] And a lot of women won in Virginia. Going to change the

Brazile: [00:39:53] Women of color. We now have two Latinas and one Asian-American woman. In fact when I went out to canvass

Axelrod: [00:40:00] This is in Virginia

Brazile: [00:40:01] You know David at my age I have to ask myself what the hell am I doing? I get up early in the morning I flew down from Boston where I'm at Harvard.

Brazile: [00:40:10] You're younger than me. I wish you wouldn't harp on this so much.

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Axelrod: [00:40:12] All right well okay just by a day and I get to Northern Virginia first of all I have to put my GPS on because I don't know what this place is. And and I get there and I look at this large crowd of canvases and I said this is the place to be. I mean a lot of young people a lot of energy. And Kathy Tran who worked in the Obama administration. She was under Secretary of Labor. She ran and she won. She flipped that seat. I'm so proud that I got up and went out there and campaigned for her. I raised money for Justin Fairfax. I raised money for the Virginia Democratic Party. I mean I felt good about our chances.

Axelrod: [00:40:50] Justin Fairfax was elected lieutenant governor. You said that you knew him way back when.

Brazile: [00:40:55] He was one of my hires in the Gore campaign. He was he worked for Tipper Gore. He was one of her briefers meaning he wrote the talking point. Good guy. He's to be a great lieutenant governor.

Axelrod: [00:41:07] One of the Doug Wilder obviously been a lieutenant governor and governor but since then this is really

Brazile: [00:41:16] The first African-American statewide since 1989 when Doug Wilder. So it's a big it was a big night for African-Americans especially if you look at the results in North Carolina. We the first black female mayor now in the great city of Charlotte. We also saw a tremendous amount of voter turnout in places like Maine where offseason elections turnout you know drops 20 30 percent.

Axelrod: [00:41:44] They had had a thing on they had a issue on the ballot as to whether my Maine would expand Medicaid in Orange County.

Brazile: [00:41:53] Medicaid. 89000 people.

Axelrod: [00:41:53] And won overwhelmingly overturned the decision of the governor up there Paul LePage.

Brazile: [00:41:56] Health care was the number one issue. Yeah I was proud I mean we now have a black female who's lieutenant governor for the state of New Jersey. It was a good night for not just Democrats it was a good night for democracy because we didn't have a lot of problems at the ballot box.

Axelrod: [00:42:12] I'm going to take a short break and speak to you about the last election about which I would guess you're a little less enthusiastic.

Brazile: [00:42:21] Yes.

Axelrod: [00:42:24] So I mentioned at the beginning that you're a big newsmaker you have you have written your book about your experience in 2016 called Hacks. I got to make sure I get the subtitle right. Tell me read you got your book in front of you.

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Brazile: [00:42:45] The inside story of the break ins and break downs that put Donald Trump in the White House.

Brazile: [00:42:50] Good marketing by the way. That's and you have you've created quite a stir about your experiences within the Democratic National Committee and your observations about the about the Clinton campaign. So I'd be I would be drawn and quartered if I did not go through this with you and understand exactly what you're saying because you know one of my reactions to what and I just saw the the press accounts initially one of my reactions was yeah I mean I think it was widely understood that the Democratic establishment was lined up with Hillary Clinton and that there were certain decisions made for example the timing of debates that seemed to be made in her favor.

Brazile: [00:43:38] Right.

Axelrod: [00:43:39] What you're what you're saying is that you think it went deeper than that.

Brazile: [00:43:42] Well first of all I became chair of the Democratic National Committee for the second time as a result the second time as a result of the hacking that took place on July 24 when I was on national television talking about what was going on with the e-mails that had been leaked through Gusafa [?] 2.0. I had no idea at the time that the DNC was under a cyber threat from the Russians. And so when I became chair that afternoon I began to look into what was happening at the DNC and I promised Bernie Sanders that I would figure out if anything had if the campaign if the primary was rigged. It took me a few weeks to do a real forensic examination of what was going on at the party although I was an officer during those years I was not a quote unquote DNC staffer. Debbie Wasserman Schultz who was the chair of the party the chair has a fiduciary responsibility to carrying out all of the quote unquote programs and implementing the the day to day operations of the party. What I learned within a few weeks as chair disturbed me so badly that I felt compelled to call Senator Sanders and report back on what I learned and also tried to address it. And what I learned was that in addition to the standing joint fundraising agreement that we've had in place since 2004 when John Kerry became the nominee there was a memo

Axelrod: [00:45:25] Those are those are agreements between the campaigns of the DNC that allow for joint fundraising.

Brazile: [00:45:30] Correct.

Axelrod: [00:45:31] Some of the money goes to DNC some goes to the candidate.

Axelrod: [00:45:34] Some goes to the candidate but most of it goes to state parties and helping to manage the you know whether it's it's [unclear] in various states. This was not the standard joint fundraising agreement whereby a candidate would in exchange for raising money would begin to open up offices in the so-called battleground states. The memorandum went beyond just simply giving the DNC resources in exchange for bailing the DNC out which was broke. The Clinton campaign would assume control over three divisions of the party. One was research I found no evidence in the research department that they were doing anything but research and Donald Trump and the Republicans. So I came away convinced that the research department was OK. Then I looked at technology and given the fact that we were being hacked and our

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data and e-mails and everything else was stolen I found no evidence again of any nefarious activity that could have impacted the primaries. But then I went to comms communications. And once again I didn't see any evidence but then I began to look beyond just the press releases and I became very alarmed. And so while I have said that I did not find any rigging of the primary meaning the scheduling of the primary dates or the vote count what I did find concerned me a lot and I called it unethical. Its unethical for any campaign.

Axelrod: [00:47:10] Well tell me tell me why it concerns you and how you think it impacted on the campaign.

Brazile: [00:47:18] The DNC should be independent of any campaign during an election cycle. I'll never forget when I was when I was elevated to become the campaign manager Bill Bradley requested and I agreed to step aside as being the co-chair of the Rules and Bylaws Committee I was Al Gore's campaign manager I mean the last thing you want to do is have the campaign manager tip the scales or at least

Axelrod: [00:47:44] Do you think if these arrangements hadn't existed that Bernie Sanders would have been the nominee of the party?

Brazile: [00:47:49] No.

Axelrod: [00:47:49] The other question I had was that

Brazile: [00:47:53] But it did impact my ability to do my job as chair to party. And the arrangements that that Debbie's I assume that Debbie understood knew what she was signing up to this arrangement gave the Clinton campaign an unfair advantage of controlling the DNC money before she assumed the nomination. And that you should never do.

Axelrod: [00:48:15] But again you don't think that's what that that would not have changed the outcome.

Brazile: [00:48:18] I don't think that would change one vote because she received more than four million votes she won three out of the first four contests. She won the majority of pledged delegates she won the majority of states no she won nine out of 10 African-American and if you know anything about Super Tuesday many of those states were in the South. I mean she clearly understood the electorate and I believe that's why she won you know four million more votes than Bernie Sanders. But Bernie ran a very energetic campaign. He brought a lot of new people into the process. He ran against not just the Democratic Party establishment but the establishment overall and I think I wanted the supporters of the Sanders campaign just like I wanted the Clinton supporters to understand what what was happening and what we did with their resources.

Axelrod: [00:49:08] Just one more question on this whole piece of this and that is you came under some attack and in fact it cost you some media jobs because of one of the leaks that came out this WikiLeaks trunch that was stolen from the Democratic National Committee and it was an e-mail or I don't know if there were several suggesting that you were giving sort of you were the baseball term will be stealing signs but essentially giving giving Hillary a sense of what pitches were going to come in these debates. Tell me exactly what happened and why why did

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you do it? Because you obviously did have this concern that there not be a sense of unfairness in the process.

Brazile: [00:49:59] Well you know here's what I did. I worked behind the scenes as the vice chair. I mean I was concerned that we were being attacked the Democratic National Committee was being attacked not just by Bernie but the other candidates for hosting only six debates you recall the Republicans seemed like they were having a debate every other night and we were under a lot of pressure to increase the number of debates town halls and other forums to get both candidates at that point both candidates an opportunity to get their message out. So when I work very closely with my colleagues at CNN because I wore a couple hats David let's be honest up until that point I wore a couple of hats.

Axelrod: [00:50:43] I enjoyed sitting on panels with you at CNN.

Brazile: [00:50:45] And if you recall we used to say the the adults are over there and you sat with the adults and we were the unruly teenagers.

Axelrod: [00:50:53] See I told you I was older.

Brazile: [00:50:54] Yeah well that's a good point because I was hired as a TV commentator because pundits we are hired because we have a point of view. And CNN understood that I was an officer. CNN also understood that if I went on some nights and if Hillary didn't have Paul Begala was not there or Van Jones was not in attendance then I often if Bill Press was there I would take up for the Hillary side or I would take up for the Bernie side because my job was just to call the plays. I didn't really get involved but this question

Axelrod: [00:51:26] Yeah why

Brazile: [00:51:26] I gave because if I was under pressure like the entire DNC to make sure that we we expanded a number of debates. I was also under pressure from Black Lives Matter and others that we also talk about quote unquote issues concerning people of color. The death penalty. This thing about the super predator. The crime bill. And also they wanted to talk about Flint. So my job was to give I gave both candidates heads up that we were going to expand and also because I'm a player I also said that we're going to talk about some issues. I gave them some I gave them a heads up.

Axelrod: [00:52:09] And did you you say you did it to both candidates did you give both candidates the same information?

Brazile: [00:52:13] Absolutely. The difference is is that WikiLeaks only put out e-mails that had Bernie's [unclear] or that could sow discord. I mean I knew there was something wrong when I came home and I said to CNN I said, "Give me a chance to go home. I know I can find all my e-mails because I have all my e-mails." The only e-mails I could not find were my DNC e-mails because the DNC server was wiped out with all the e-mails because all of our phones everything was just corroded and corrupted.

Axelrod: [00:52:43] So had they not been there would have been e-mails there to the Sanders people as well?

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Brazile: [00:52:47] Either e-mails, text messages or whatever. Ted Devine who I dealt with along with Mark [unclear]

Axelrod: [00:52:55] Bernie campaign.

Brazile: [00:52:56] That's right. Ted and Mark, Simone Sanders. All of the Sanders people vouch for me saying We know Donna because Donna gave everybody a heads up. You know in my book I also said I used to give Sean Spicer before he became you know the other Sean Spicer

Axelrod: [00:53:13] Before he became Melissa McCarthy.

Brazile: [00:53:15] That's a good one. I gave Sean head's up because you always do that. In our business you want to know what you don't want your candidate to go in there and get blindsided. I wanted them to know that I wanted them to know two things. One, that we were going to have a dialogue about the issues that people of color cared about and two I wanted to make it very clear that we have diverse voices. So Roland Martin TV One had agreed to also co-moderate this discussion. And I worked with Roland Martin on those questions. I mean, think about it I mean you know me I've got to work with somebody. I needed to work with somebody who understood. Van Jones and I had discussed when are we going to talk about these issues because the people in the black community and others wanted us to talk about these issues. So I gave everybody a heads up. Unfortunately WikiLeaks only put out the information. It was John's e-mails and I didn't have access to John's e-mails and so I tried to get John to say well John tell me if that's my e-mail because I didn't trust at this point, I didn't trust nothing. And no one I couldn't find my e-mails I couldn't find the the ones that I sent to Senator Sanders and so I apologize but that night that night I'll never forget as long as I live by the time I got home I had a suspicious package on my door. And then I started getting death threats and I called CNN and I said I had begged them I said don't do this because I know what's going to happen. And I said give me time to get home. I was in Atlanta I was you know Atlanta was supposed to be one of the Georgia was supposed to be one of the expansion states. I said give me time to get home. I changed my flight. I took a 9:00 flight. By the time I got into my house at midnight I had a package on my step and just my phone was ringing off the hook and the rest is history. But no WikiLeaks sought to divide us. They took active measures to divide the party and discredit Hillary Clinton.

Axelrod: [00:55:08] Yeah. One other thing that got a lot of attention about your book is the suggestion that you thought about replacing Hillary with Joe Biden and that surprised me because I knew that the chairman of the party couldn't by fiat replace the the nominee. So I explain that a little.

Brazile: [00:55:29] You know David the most interesting criticism I've had over the last week was that everyone is explaining to me the rules.

Axelrod: [00:55:38] Now I understand you're past master on that you'd be the person I'd ask about that.

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Brazile: [00:55:42] Yeah well you know Section 7 G in the charter Section 3 in the rules of the convention says the national chair in the case of death resignation or

Axelrod: [00:55:53] incapacity

Brazile: [00:55:56] Disability. That the national chair that day I started off that morning in Washington D.C. and I started getting phone calls and it kept saying What's wrong with Hillary? I'm like nothing. I just saw two days ago. And then I got another call.

Axelrod: [00:56:10] September 11th when she had this health incident and stumbled in the street. Had pneumonia.

Brazile: [00:56:11] When she fell when she stumbled. Yeah. And I kept calling back and forth to Brooklyn. And I kept telling Brooklyn I said ladies and gentlemen I am the chair of the party. Just please what is wrong what's happening. Because I will go out there and defend her I mean and when I saw the quote unquote when it went viral. Oh my God. I had to unplug. I still have a landline David. I'm a little old. I had to unplug my landline turn off my phone and I'm like oh my god oh my god. Because at that time we didn't know. None of us knew. And Charlie Baker came down the D.C. the next day to help me put out all the fires. Yeah. Charlie Baker was a top lieutenant to the Clinton campaign. The reason why it became a fire storm and I had to consider what the national chair would recommend if I had to go about calling Barack Obama go about calling Nancy Pelosi go about calling Chuck Schumer etc. etc. I wanted to know from Charlie if everything was OK. He said yes. But Don Fowler Sr. the former chair of the party had told Politico that the party had to get ready. Elaine Kamarck was calling me it's all in the book Hacked Elaine Kamarck started calling me what are we going to do? I had an enormous pressure and when I finally got the call that she was up and that she was diagnosed with pneumonia I say I can handle it I'll take it from here. I had to tamp down all the rumors. But yes I put in a book that I did I had to spend one evening of my life thinking how would I handle this. And you know

Axelrod: [00:57:46] So this was really a hypothetical in your head if the worst case happen worst case happened.

Brazile: [00:57:51] Of course of course.

Axelrod: [00:57:51] I have to ask you what's become an issue just recently is the fact that the DNC had through apparently through their lawyers financed this so-called dossier the opposition research and this document that was compiled by by Steele the the former British intelligence officer. And did you know? And did you know at any time when you during that time that you were chairman the chair of the party that this expenditure had been made?

Brazile: [00:58:33] You know one of the things that I did as chair when I first became chair I wanted a list of all of the staff their salaries all of the consultants and their monthly fees because I knew we were broke. I was a volunteer. I wasn't getting a salary. I was traveling on my own nickel and dime and I wanted to see the list. I did not see them on the list. When I received the call from someone in the media toward the end of October and as always whenever there was a quote unquote expenditure that I could not see on paper. I went to the lawyers because lawyers are lawyers. OK I'm not making any disparaging comments.

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Axelrod: [00:59:17] Lawyers are lawyers.

Brazile: [00:59:18] They're lawyers. OK. And and I have on my phone a text message to Mark Alais is MI6

Axelrod: [00:59:25] He was a lawyer for the DNC and for the Clinton campaign.

Brazile: [00:59:27] And for HFA Hillary for America. And I said I said is MI6 on our payroll need to know. That is my exact text. And he called me. And he said you don't need to know. So I found out like everyone else a few weeks ago that clearly they were on our payroll but they were on through legal meaning that the legal. We pay Perkins Cooney 40 grand a month the DNC plus we gave them additional money for our mediation efforts from our cyber attacks and we had offensive what I call litigation to keep polls open. The consent decree.

Axelrod: [01:00:07] So there's a lot of money flowing.

Brazile: [01:00:08] A lot of money flowing but I because I'm a stickler for details I knew exactly how much money we were paying Perkins Cooney. It was not under my authority to know that amount because that was the account that the Hillary campaign they were

Axelrod: [01:00:22] Under the agreement that was struck. So it's plausible when Debbie Wasserman Schultz your predecessor says she didn't know about it that she didn't know about it.

Brazile: [01:00:30] Because this money was being spent back in April April of 2016. I was not chair until July 29th 2016. So Debbie was chair but again this is why I picked on that agreement. That agreement gave them the right to spend money on fusion GPS as all these other things that we should not have been spending money on unless unless the party approved it and the party did not approve it.

Axelrod: [01:01:00] And who would authorize that?

Brazile: [01:01:01] Well that is a question that the Clinton campaign needs to answer. And so far they've all said they didn't know. Someone had to know.

Axelrod: [01:01:08] Let me just finish there because the other thing that's gotten quite a bit of attention is you were pretty critical of the Clinton campaign and you shared the anxiety you felt during the campaign. Just very briefly sum up for me what it is that you felt they didn't do that they should have done. And would it have made a difference in the campaign?

Brazile: [01:01:33] Well first of all I wish they would have written a post-mortem when the party when the election was over I heard from Barack Obama right away on 11/14. He got on a phone call with all of the members of the DNC the donors the volunteers and he said you know thank you. I'm sorry we fell short. But thank you. I heard from everybody but the Clinton campaign who had in effect run the DNC at least the financial part and I said we need a full accounting of what happened. I don't know what the polling said. I don't know what the data said. I was not on any of those strategic calls. They made a conscious decision not to utilize the staff and the

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resources at the DNC. I made a conscious decision because I had Barack Obama Michelle Obama and Joe Biden and others I made a conscious decision to make the DNC part of the the the operations of the Clinton campaign and so I was concerned that this group of staffers and remember I've hired so many staff people in my life I tell people I have 300 children different daddies of course. And a few mamas too. But I wanted a full accounting of what happened. And like before when I would go to them after I would come back from a state I just got blown off like OK Madam Chair I'm like no we need a full accounting of what happened.

Axelrod: [01:02:55] You've also said that you thought that the campaign itself was lifeless. Explain that.

Brazile: [01:03:04] David, I've been involved in enough campaigns to know when something has happened and something has not happened. I came up to Chicago twice in 2008 2012. On both occasions the people were I mean it was humming it was volunteers it was activity. Yes there were volunteers there was activity but in terms of the day to day people they were sitting there everybody was looking at their computers. I'm like who's talking who's talking to voters? And we were hacked and so I kept trying to tell Brooklyn I call them Brooklyn I'm like don't rely on your data because if our data was hacked your data was hacked the D triple C data was hacked. We need to find something other than computer models and my theory of the case as we used to say is that we need to go down ballot. I don't trust this top down strategy. They had a top down strategy and just a handful of states and I said we need to go bottom up. So in Las Vegas which is Clark County I said let's go and find the highest vote getters the people who get their votes out every two years or every four years. And Harry Reed was not on the ballot. So this time I went to all those politicians in Las Vegas and I did the same in every battleground state and I could tell you state by state the number of people would tell me up front. There's no activity. Gwen Moore from Milwaukee: no activity. Alcee Hastings down in Broward: no activity. [unclear] called me: I need 300000 because there's no activity there's no signs there's nothing. And David I had to raise that money because Brooklyn kept telling me Don't worry Madam Chair its okay they are going to win and at five o'clock that afternoon on November 8th I am still raising my voice. I'm still saying to Brooklyn the turnout is not as good as we think it should be. Detroit's not turning out. And they criticized me David for sending money to Chicago but they didn't they didn't look to see what I sent money to Chicago for. Barack Obama had agreed to do robocalls. And Tammy Duckworth wanted those robocalls was the job of the party to provide those robocalls. He's the President the United States. Kamala Harris wanted robocalls for her race. And everyone that wanted robocalls as the chair of the party I provide robocalls. Guilty as charged.

Axelrod: [01:05:17] Well there will be there will be I'm sure more postmortems about that as people think forward to what needs to happen in 2018 2020 from a Democratic standpoint. The book is called Hacks the inside story of the break of the break ins and breakdowns that put Donald Trump in the White House. Donna Brazile always a pleasure to be with you.

Brazile: [01:05:43] Thank you David for being in the midst of every storm that I've been in and much more.

Axelrod: [01:05:48] We both have the gray hairs to show.

Brazile: [01:05:51] I got a little purple tint now. Thank you. Thank you.

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