

The Campaign Decoder

A Weekly Online Magazine to Understand the 2016 US Presidential Elections

Made by 1st Year Students in the English Department at Rouen University

with a little help from Prof. Peter Marquis.

The Comeback Issue

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print version



A montage of the four leading candidates as of Feb. 24. Source: <https://goo.gl/pj3Kx3>

Editorial

After a pause of 14 days due to the winter break at Rouen University, we are delighted to be back.

By all accounts, the campaign did *not* take a break: Justice Scalia's death, the South Carolina primaries, the Nevada caucuses, Clinton's mocking the Republicans, Rubio's comeback, etc... there was indeed a lot to decode!

We hope you enjoy this issue.

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The editors-in-chief for this issue were Clémence Bonvalet and Manon Deconihout.

Publisher's note: *all the articles were researched, written and proofread by students. It is their original work. Plagiarism check was done using Urkund (<http://www.orkund.com/en/>). The pieces of information in parenthesis were added by the publisher for clarity. If you have any questions or comments, write us here (<mailto:petermarquis.teaching@gmail.com>). We value your feedback.*

Breaking News: Trump Wins Nevada

By the Publisher

We now know the results of the Nevada caucuses for the Republicans which took place on Tuesday the 23rd of February. Donald Trump, who was leading in all the polls before the contest, won handily (46%) over Rubio (24%) and Cruz (22%). It is his third straight win. He is now leading the race for the Republican nomination by at least 50 delegates (source (http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/republi_n_delegate_count.html)).

The victory was celebrated widely by his supporters, although the real estate mogul had been criticized in the media for saying during a rally in Las Vegas that he "would have liked to punch (a protester) in the face" and would have liked "to see him leave the place on a stretcher" (source (<http://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2016/02/23/donald-trump-on-protester-id-like-to-punch-him-in-the-face/>)). Mr Trump's no holds barred rhetoric seems to have gone up a notch.

The News These Past Two Weeks

1. The Aftermath of Justice Scalia's Death

By Meissan Belkezzi, Souhila Ikhlef, and Charlotte Mary



Two weeks ago, on Saturday 13th, 2016, (79-year-old Supreme Court) Justice Antonin Scalia passed away. His sudden death made the Republicans worried. Indeed, since he was a (conservative) judge, the Party lost a vote in the Supreme Court leading to a four to four situation between liberals and conservatives. Therefore, the conservatives want to delay the nomination of a new judge until the Presidential Election in November. For the same reason, the Democrats are trying to hasten Obama's (nomination of a new Supreme Court justice), because if a Democrat is nominated it would shift the balance of the Court's power in favor of liberal ideas, such as abortion.

To go further: Emily Bazelon, "Scalia's Supreme Court Seat and the Next Frontier in Political Hardball (http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/14/magazine/scalias-supreme-court-seat-and-the-next-frontier-in-political-hardball.html?_r=0)" (*NYT Magazine*, Feb, 14, 2016)

2. After South Carolina and Nevada: Trump and Clinton Ahead, Bush Out.

By Meissan Belkezzi, Souhila Ikhlef, and Charlotte Mary



Trump speaks during an event in South Carolina (Paul Sancya).

On Saturday February 20th, Donald Trump won South Carolina by more than 30 percent (of the polls), beating Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, who both got a little less than 23 percent. (Self-declared) Evangelicals, as well as the majority of the population aged 45 and over chose Trump over Cruz and Rubio, according to the South Carolina Exit Polls (<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/02/20/us/south-carolina-primary-exit-poll.html>). Younger people (from 17 to 40) voted equally for Donald Trump (26%), Ted Cruz (26%) and Marco Rubio (25%). After this win in South Carolina, Donald Trump is currently taking the leads for the Republican Party's nomination. It is his second-straight-win after New Hampshire.

However, the unexpected news of this weekend is that the former Florida Governor, Jeb Bush, is quitting the presidential race. He had entered it as the front-runner with great financial funds a year ago. He quit after finishing in fourth position on February 20th (in South Carolina) with less than 8 percent points. During his speech in Columbia (South Carolina) Bush said: "The people of Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina have spoken and I really respect their decision, so tonight I am suspending my campaign."

On the Democrats' side, Hillary Clinton won the Nevada caucus this Saturday by 52.6 percent points, against 47.3 percent for Bernie Sanders. She is now taking the lead of the Democrats' nomination, with 502 delegates out of the 2,383 needed, whereas Sanders has 70. (According to the New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/22/us/politics/delegate-count-leaving-bernie-sanders-with-steep-climb.html>), Sanders is now facing "a steep climb" to nomination.)

Sources:

- Election 2016: What to Know About the Presidential Race Today - The New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/us/elections/election-2016.html?_r=0)
- Bush drops out as Trump wins S.C.; Rubio edges Cruz for 2nd place (w/video) | Tampa Bay Times (<http://mediakit.tampabay.com/news/politics/national/trump-wins-south-carolina-rubio-and-cruz-fight-for-second-place/2266191>)
- Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton Seize Leads for Their Parties' Nominations - WSJ (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-seize-leads-for-their-parties-nominations-1456107956>)
- Trump just won South Carolina. These charts show how huge that is. - Washington Post (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/2016-election/primaries/south-carolina-gop-analysis/>)

What to Look At in the Coming Weeks



A comical cartoon for Super Tuesday 2008.

March 1st is Super Tuesday: the Most Important Day!

By Marie Benaïcha (A.K.A. Biboush) and Suzy Joly

During the year of the presidential elections in the United States of America, (in general) the first Tuesday of March is called the "Super Tuesday". This expression was created in 1988 by eight states in order (not to) be the last states to vote. Since 1988, "Super Tuesday" has become the most important day of the presidential elections in USA. Let's see why.

Simply because the majority of the states are going to vote this day for the primary, in order to decide between the candidates of the two principal parties - Democrats and Republicans - and name the one who is going to be the official candidate of the party. This year, the "Super Tuesday" will take place on the March 1st, 2016 and will gather twelve states such as California, Virginia, Texas, Vermont, Louisiana, Alabama, etc.

All those states will vote at the same time to designate 1,000 Democratic delegates against only 565 Republican delegates. Why is there such an inequality? That depends on the size and on the policies of the different states. There are big states and little states in

America so, obviously, there are more votes in big states. For example, Texas is a big state, so the (number of delegates is higher) than in some other states.

Moreover, each state has particular policies concerning the elections. For instance in some states, when a (candidate) wins 55% of the votes for example, 100% the delegates of this state will support him or her during the National convention ("winner-takes-all" system), whereas on the contrary in some other states, 55% of the delegates would (go to the winner) and 45% to the loser ("proportional allocation").

Sources:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Tuesday (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Tuesday)
- <http://www.uspresidentialelectionnews.com/2016-presidential-primary-schedule-calendar> (<http://www.uspresidentialelectionnews.com/2016-presidential-primary-schedule-calendar/>)
- http://www.270towin.com/news/2016/02/23/super-tuesday-democratic-polling-update_219.html (http://www.270towin.com/news/2016/02/23/super-tuesday-democratic-polling-update_219.html)

Background Check

#4. How to Win an Election? (part 1)

by Barbara Lefebvre, Yolaine and Noëlla. Proofreading by the editor in chief. The publisher modified some information.

In the United States, there are many ways to win an election.

For example, the candidate can go on TV shows, visit states, colleges, rural or urban areas.

In the age of TV and Internet, political ads matter a lot. In the United States, campaign ads are not controlled. An ad can appear anytime during a TV show, that is to say it can interrupt a program. On the contrary in France, ads are controlled.



Screen capture of a Bernie Sanders For President ad on YouTube

The goal of a candidate is to put forward the community that you want to represent or support, by preparing some speeches to share your convictions, your values and obviously your motivation.

Running for president is hard because there are a lot of candidates and only one place, that's why candidates often use illegal techniques to win, as for example corruption. They can also win the elections by making fake votes or by intimidating weak people but also by proposing money in exchange of a vote.

There is also gerrymandering, a way to cut a state's (electoral districts so that the demographics favor one party over the other). (This will be discussed further in the next installment of this series).

A candidate can also be helped by an old political personality, or a member of his family (as for Jeb Bush).

Sources:

- <http://www.politicalcampaigningtips.com/local-political-campaigns-how-to-win-an-election/> (<http://www.politicalcampaigningtips.com/local-political-campaigns-how-to-win-an-election/>)
- http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/18/opinion/how-to-win-an-election.html?_r=0

To go further: Watch a video here (<http://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004216589/how-to-win-an-election.html?action=click&contentCollection=opinion&module=lede®ion=caption&pgtype=article>) about the political strategist who ran George W. Bush's campaigns in 2000 and 2004.

Media Watch: How Did the Media Cover the Campaign This Week?

Hillary Clinton Barked in Reno

By Cécilia Venchiarutti.



Clinton mocking Republicans at rally in Nevada (CNN screen capture)

On February 15, 2016, while campaigning in Reno, Nevada, Hillary Clinton barked as if she was a dog after she alluded to an old radio advertising where there was a dog barking as soon as it heard a politician lying. She wanted to make fun of Republicans, her main enemy to the race of the presidential.

Clinton said to her supporters: "One of my favourite political ads of old time was a radio ad in rural Arkansas where the announcer said, 'Wouldn't it be great if somebody running for office said something, we could have an immediate reaction to whether it was true or not. Well, we have trained this dog. Well, the dog, if it is not true, is going to bark.'"

She also said "I'm trying to figure out how we can do that with the Republicans. We need to get

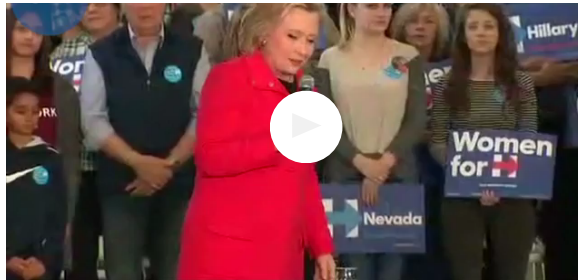
that dog and follow them around, and every time they say these things — like 'oh, the Great Recession was caused by too much regulation — ARF ARF ARF! You know? I think we could cut right through a lot of their claims."

That imitation was mocked in return by the Republicans especially Donald Trump who saw that and said : *"Hillary Clinton is a joke... I'm watching television, and I see her barking like a dog. She's barking like a dog. And everyone says, 'oh, wasn't that wonderful, wasn't that wonderful, isn't that cute, isn't that great?' If I ever did that, I'd be ridiculed all over the place!"*

Sources :

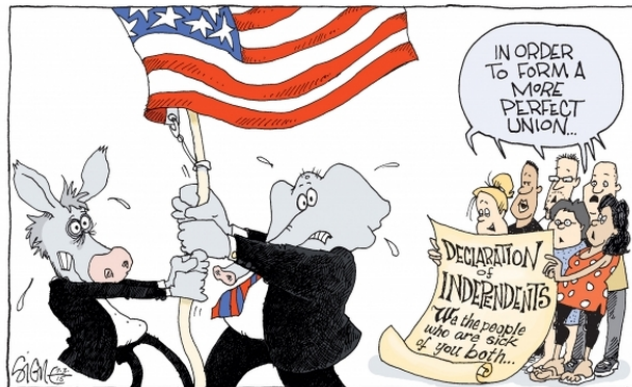
- <http://www.newshonk.com/?p=19019> (<http://www.newshonk.com/?p=19019>)
- <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/02/15/politics/hillary-clinton-barks-like-a-dog-gop/> (<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/02/15/politics/hillary-clinton-barks-like-a-dog-gop/>)
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/book-party/wp/2016/02/17/yes-hillary-clinton-barked-like-a-dog-on-the-campaign-trail-but-she-has-also-endured-talking-dog-syndrome/> (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/book-party/wp/2016/02/17/yes-hillary-clinton-barked-like-a-dog-on-the-campaign-trail-but-she-has-also-endured-talking-dog-syndrome/>)
- video: <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2016/feb/16/hillary-clinton-barks-like-dog-video> (<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2016/feb/16/hillary-clinton-barks-like-dog-video>)

Hillary Clinton barks like a dog at a campaign rally in Nevada - video



Cartoon of the Week: We the People Are Sick of You Both

By Blandine Letailleur



In this cartoon published on the 3rd July, 2015 by Signe Wilkinson, we can see in the foreground on the left, an elephant and a donkey which are both trying to keep an American flag upright. Then, in the background, on the right there are people gathered to read the "Declaration of Independents".

The donkey and the elephant actually are each the symbol of the two main parties of the United States. The Democrats are characterized by the donkey while the elephant embodies the Republicans. Allegorically, the flag represents the nation of the United States that the two parties are trying to preserve.

However, it seems that the flag falls down and the people who are behind them recite the Preamble of the United States' Constitution which says "In order to form a more perfect union". It is to remind the purpose and the basis of the United States which some politicians seem to forget and which creates a kind of a general despondency of the government illustrated with the following words "We the people who are sick of you both".

It may refer to the voter turnout rate of the United States which did not go over 60% since 1968, indeed the number dropped to around 54% in 2012. So, we can think that Americans have lost their faith in politics, which drives them not to vote.

To sum up, this cartoon shows that there is a divide between the government and the people and that despite their divergent opinions, politicians might be united for the country.

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- <http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/preamble> (<http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/preamble>)
- <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/turnout.php> (<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/turnout.php>)

End of Issue #4. Thanks for reading. See you next Wednesday.