

# WHO'S THE LOSER?

## *The Emergence of Donald Trump and the Ever Changing Look of Presidential Campaign Politics*

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This was in the 1980s. A television interviewer was talking to Donald Trump about his luxurious mansion, Mar-A-Lago, in sun-soaked Florida. Trump suddenly stunned him by saying, "It would make a great summer White House, wouldn't it?" The next day, there was talk all over the nation that Donald Trump might run for president because of what he said. The day after that, I was sitting in his office in New York interviewing him about the casino business. Part of my job as a reporter at the *New York Daily News*, where I then worked, was to cover the Atlantic City casino and entertainment industry. That office was smaller than the one he currently occupies. It was a clear, sunny day and he looked good. He sat down, leaned forward and folded his hands in front of him as he looked at me. I asked him about his comment on the summer White House. "Are you thinking of running for president?" I asked.

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"I don't know. I don't know. If I did, though, everybody would vote for me. That's for sure," he said.

"I think a lot of people would study your positions on policy before they voted for you, if they vote for you," I said, or something like that.

"Come on, everybody would vote for me. I mean everybody," he said, revealing no doubt about the vote outcome in his voice.

It is now about thirty years later. The self-confident, bold as brass Donald has not changed one bit.

And now, indeed, he is running for president.

He announced his candidacy and shook up American politics like nobody has before and might not ever do again. He's an original? He is the factory mold for the original.

Trump shocked everybody twice when he decided to run. He surprised them when he announced his candidacy, and then again, right after that, when he said, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending the best...."

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 WHO'S THE LOSER?  
*Bruce Chadwick*

They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists... ." Liberal America just blew a gasket. Everybody piled on him for his political incorrectness. I saw him make that comment on television while sitting in the bedroom with my wife.

"He's finished now," she said, as did so many.

"I don't know," I said. "A lot of Americans just don't like Mexicans."

A week later, jaws dropped when national polls showed Trump leading in popularity after the Mexican quip. Then, in rapid succession, there were all of his other blasts against (pick anybody or anything). After each denouncing salvo was fired, his poll numbers went up. He became the center of attention within a week. Marco who? Ted who? Jeb who? All the media talked about was Donald Trump, the billionaire, casino owner, reality television star, and general Prince of Bombast. Because of relentless, non-stop television press coverage, late night comedians said that now everybody was watching the Donald Trump Show.

The experts in the media, and there are thousands of them, said he would never last. These are the same people who did not think Lady Gaga would last and that nobody would watch the Kardashians on television. These are the same people who bet heavily against the Mets ever making the World Series. The media experts all said that The Donald's non-stop mouth would sink him. He did not know how to give speeches; he just hurled insults. He did not know how to run a campaign. He did not know how to raise money, put together a staff, engineer primary victories or talk to voters. He did not know how to do this or do that. He was an inexperienced, untalented shooting star. He and his fiery orange hair would never last.

They both did. Why?

1. He is an "outsider." Americans have sought the beloved "outsider" since that noted outsider, the farmer from Virginia, George Washington, ran in 1789. How about rail splitter Abraham Lincoln, college professor Woodrow Wilson, general Dwight Eisenhower, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter, actor Ronald Reagan? The public wants to get rid of the establishment that has failed in its efforts to run the country efficiently and embrace the latest "outsider."
2. He is a businessman. We are finally creeping out of the 2008 recession that crippled the country. All the government does is lose money, people say. Trump is a businessman who made nearly \$10 billion. His supporters think he can fix the economy of the country.
3. He is not a politician. Anyone who is simply "not a politician" enjoys a huge poll boost on day one of his or her campaign. Trump will not wind up hog-tied in red tape in the halls of Congress. Since he is "not a politician" he can

get things done without sinking in the political quicksand of Capitol Hill.

4. He speaks his mind. Now, everybody speaks his or her mind, but when The Donald *speaks* his mind, he speaks his mind. People like that.
5. Finally, he embraces Richard Nixon's Great Silent Majority. Remember them? The Silent Majority's children now vote. They, like their parents, are furious about the failures of the country, genuinely annoyed at the crooked path the nation is taking and want a man who has the nerve to say what they want to say but cannot. Trump does that. The members of the Great Silent Majority cannot publicly denounce any ethnic group because of today's runaway political correctness. Trump can. Remember his proposed ban on the Muslims? That was the last straw, the media experts said. He is finished now. What happened? His poll numbers not only went up yet again, but climbed over the 40% barrier and doubled those of any of his Republican opponents.

Trump is the best thing that ever happened to political television. The networks and cable stations were surprised in the 1990s and 2000s when they discovered that an interesting presidential campaign translated into high viewer ratings. The networks always saw politics as boring and unpopular with the viewers, but necessary for democracy. They were wrong. Ratings climbed during recent presidential campaigns. So naturally, the networks devoted much time to the campaigns and tried to make television personalities out of the candidates. Sometimes this worked (Clinton) and sometimes it did not (Bush 2). It certainly worked and worked well in 2008 because the campaign offered the possibility of either the first African-American or woman President in Obama and Mrs. Clinton. Trump, though, gives the television industry a brand new Great Orange Hair Hope. The ratings for the very first GOP debate staggered the nation. Twenty four million people tuned in, three times the previous record. Trump, of course, claimed all responsibility for that record, and he was right. Subsequent debates also hit high numbers. Even the Democrats, swimming along in Trump's wake, drew 15 million viewers for their first debates.

By the summer of 2014 Trump had become a superstar. People all over the nation and the world were talking about him. Trump, now 69, started out in his father's real estate business after graduation from college. One of five children, he graduated from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. Earlier, he had obtained a private school education at the New York Military Academy. He moved to Manhattan in the early 1970s and used loans and tax breaks to become a prominent real estate developer. He

took the old Commodore Hotel on 42d Street and turned it into the lavish Grand Hyatt. He started the Trump Organization. He plunged into Atlantic City in the 1980s and at one point owned three casinos. Along the way he started an airline and bought, and sold, a 280 foot luxury yacht. He completed Trump Tower, the famous mid-town office and residential building in 2001. He was the host of *The Apprentice* reality television show (“You’re fired!”) and had his name put on a number of golf courses, food items, and building complexes. He hosted *The Apprentice* for 14 seasons from 2004 to 2015 and that brought him much fame. Throughout all of these years some of his companies went into bankruptcy, some were discontinued, and some came under fire from the federal government. By 2015, though, despite financial setbacks and investigations, he was worth over \$8 billion. He had put together quite a career.

He drew substantial headlines for his business triumphs and even larger ones for his marital woes. He has been married three times. His first wife was Ivana, who worked with him on his Atlantic City casinos. They divorced in 1992. The second wife was Marla Maples, an actress he met while married to Ivana. They married in 1993 and divorced in 1999. Number three, his current bride, is Melania who rarely appears with him in public. He is father to five children. His sons Donald Jr. and Eric are businessmen. He also has a teenage daughter, Tiffany, and a young son, Barron, 9. His daughter Ivanka works with him in his real estate business, television enterprises, and appears frequently with him on the campaign trail.

No matter where Trump goes, people wonder about him. He is great on bombast but short on policy, wonderful on promises but late on delivery. He can’t possibly do what he says he can — a 2,000 mile wall between the U.S. and Mexico? The Mexicans will pay for it? Kick eleven million illegal aliens right out of the country? Ban the Muslims from entering the country? Some of these things are just not doable (wall) and others unconstitutional (Muslims). Trump does not care about that. He just yells and screams. And people listen. His popularity with so many people was not politically correct, historically sustainable nor, well, possible. Yet there he was, first in the polls week after week, tough guy candidate in primary after primary.

Trump is not textbook politics; he is American politics. Anything can happen in American politics and usually does. The image of the outsider and a man who has little to do with politics and runs a business for a living has worked and worked well often in American elections. Perhaps the most successful outsider/non-politician was Abraham Lincoln, an outsider from the far western state of Illinois in 1860, a rail splitter who worked with his hands all of his life and a man who when elected President in 1860 had been out of national politics for many years. Lincoln said of the way the people saw him, “Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed.”<sup>1</sup>

There is great irony in the Trump – Lincoln comparison, though. Trump is constantly in trouble with today’s immigrants, but in 1860 it was a large immigrant vote that pushed Lincoln over the top and put him in the White House.

“Without the vote of the foreign born, Lincoln could not have carried the Northwest, and without the Northwest...he would have been defeated,” wrote historian Donnal Smith.<sup>2</sup>

One interesting sidelight in the Lincoln vs. Trump comparison is their rather comical appearances to the public. All the world has made fun of Trump’s rather remarkable orange hair and bouffant style. He makes fun of it himself and constantly has people come up to touch it to prove that it isn’t a wig. Other jokes have focused on his heavy weight and the sneer on his lips during televised debates. Lincoln faced the same criticism concerning his awkward appearance and, as Lincoln himself said, rather ugly face. “He is the most ungainly figure I have ever seen upon a platform,” said Hugh McCulloch, who attended a Lincoln speech in Indianapolis in 1859. “Plain, dull looking man...ungraceful in his movements.”<sup>3</sup>

Lincoln, like Trump, was very conscious of the enormous press he received when he made a speech. Stories would be printed in the newspaper where the speech was delivered, but re-printed all over the U.S. He estimated that twenty or thirty times as many people read the newspaper articles as were actually in attendance at his talks. Trump keeps track of the people in his audiences and the numbers of viewers of his television debates, and then brags that his appearance drew the record number of people.<sup>4</sup>

Oddly, throughout the Trump campaign, there was little comparison to his “outsider/businessman/no politician” run and the “outsider/businessman/no-politician” run of Ross Perot in 1992. Perot jumped into the George H. Bush vs. Bill Clinton race that year in the middle of the spring primaries. He pushed his “outsider” and successful businessman image and shot to the top in most of the three way race polls. Perot, the head of Electronic Data Systems (EDS) in Texas was a millionaire many times over. “Once you have money, life changes,” he joked.

Perot was seen as a stellar businessman and electronics expert in a year when, as often happens, polls showed a lack of loyalty to either sitting president George Bush or Arkansas governor Bill Clinton. The media set up Perot as a “can do” guy and a man who speaks his mind and doesn’t hide within the mumbo-jumbo speeches and pledges of politicians. The press liked Perot. “He was good theater and good copy from the start,” said one of his EDS executives.<sup>5</sup>

There are many similarities between Perot and Trump. Perot, like Trump, enjoyed being on television and seemed to crave the cameras. He was a TV star, too. His infomercials, speeches, and ads drew huge numbers of viewers. Trump, of course, was the long time star of his own network reality show. He loved the attention of the media from the first day he ran for president, always bragging of the intense coverage of his campaign.<sup>6</sup>

Perot did well in the 1992 race too, getting just over 20 million votes (19% of those cast). He was actually ahead of both Bush and Trump in the early summer, when he stunned all by dropping out of the race (He said he could not beat Clinton). Then, America was shocked when he jumped back in. It was too late, though, and Perot never caught up to his pre drop-out poll numbers.

The people who back Trump seem like the same type of people who backed Perot. A detailed study of voting statistics from the 1992 campaign by Albert Menendez showed that Perot's voter base came from people who did not have a college degree, were considered middle class or working class, and did not make much money. Many claimed they were economically distressed. Polls last summer and fall showed that those characteristics lined up pretty closely with Trump's basic supporters.<sup>7</sup>

The 1992 election also drew more voters than in several previous elections and most of the new people casting their ballots voted for Perot. (Statistically, in any American election where more people vote, the new voters tend to vote for third party candidates or Republicans or Democrats with radical views).

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The non-politician candidates extend all the way back to George Washington. Just before the initial Presidential election in 1789, a year after the Constitution was ratified, Washington told friends, family, and colleagues that he certainly was not inside the system. He told his son-in-law David Stuart and friend James Madison that he was just a farmer from Virginia, with no political connections, and just read about political events in newspapers like everybody else.<sup>8</sup>

After he was elected president, Washington said that he had no interest in politics and just served "for the public good." Two centuries later, General Dwight D. Eisenhower did the same thing, saying that he only ran for president because the people wanted him to do so. He, like Washington, was no politician.<sup>9</sup>

One of the great "outsiders" in presidential campaign history was Senator Barry Goldwater from Arizona. He was not only a part of the political system as a senator, but an accomplished politician. Yet, the conservative Republican convinced his supporters that he was the original man on the outside looking in at the mess in Washington. He won his party's nomination because the delegates at the convention were angry over the liberal turn the nation had taken under John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. Goldwater, to them, embraced a conservative philosophy that was well outside the mainstream, making him the "outsider." While many Republicans saw him as a policy genius, others saw him as a fool. "What we were looking for was (something) that would put the nation and the rank and file of our party on alert to the fact that our leading candidate was impetuous, irresponsible and slightly stupid," said one delegate at the 1964 Republican convention.<sup>10</sup>

Goldwater was not a student of history either. Radicals simply do not win. "By simple definition, a winning political

party cannot be ideological or tightly disciplined to a narrow aim. Its machinery cannot be captured by a faction, however demanding or deserving," said a Republican at the time.

Goldwater made that mistake. He found out, too, that one large faction, such as the conservatives, is riddled with smaller factions within it, often at war with each other. Those were helped to bring Goldwater down. Trump understands that and refuses to let conservative Republicans put him into their tent. He insisted that he saw each issue differently and was not a conservative.<sup>11</sup>

Trump is also seen as a non-politician who can make some headway between the warring Democratic and Republican parties. Many political theorists contend that someone from either party cannot do that; someone not connected to either can because he/she has no history in congressional battles and goes to battle against both with the support of the public.<sup>12</sup>

Trump is also easy to describe—the tough guy, take-no-prisoners fighter out for a new America to be achieved by wars against groups A,B,C (pick a letter). New sheriff cleans up Dodge. Many outsiders have not been easy to define. Barack Obama seemed to be the perfect outsider. He was just a two year U.S. Senator and long term Illinois state senator with little or no administrative experience. He campaigned on a promise of "change" and was elected. Who was Barack Obama, though? He spent his first term mired in the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. People could not define him at all and he suffered politically because of that.<sup>13</sup>

Even in his second term, Obama was not easily defined. Political analysts say that starting with Richard Nixon, presidents have tried to attract supporters from outside their own party to become more representative of the people and gain more power. Obama stuck with the Democrats and disdained the Republicans and that was part of his political identity problem and why he did not have as much success as he might have as an "outsider" and "non-politician."<sup>14</sup>

President Obama admitted that about himself. "Some powerful interests who had been dominating the agenda in Washington for a very long time...they're not always happy with me. They talk about me like a dog. That's not in my prepared remarks, but it's true," he said midway through his first term.<sup>15</sup>

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No one took Trump seriously when he jumped into the race for the Republic nomination. He was a sideshow. He was a loud sideshow, full of color and bombast, but nobody in the political arena or the media gave him much of a chance. His early remarks on Mexicans being criminals and rapists drew scorn from the political and media establishment. Cities that had contracts with him for housing ended them. Univision, a Spanish language television network, canceled one of his beauty pageant shows. There was a movement to take his name off a state park that sat on land he donated to New York

State. He was derided from coast to coast. He claimed that Senator John McCain was not a war hero, despite spending years in a Vietnamese POW camp. The nation was aghast at that remark. His subsequent poll numbers? They rose. He argued that the United States should no longer allow Muslims into the United States. Politicians and media pundits were stunned—discrimination, persecution, unfairness. And his poll numbers rose yet again.

Why did they rise? Because many Americans just do not like Muslims. It does not matter if they should; they don't. "I'm for him on that," said Bonnie Stickley of Iowa. "They shouldn't be letting these people into the country."<sup>16</sup>

He was belligerent in the first TV debate and asserted that he would run as a third party candidate if he did not win the nomination. He also demeaned most of his fellow candidates. He did everything he was not supposed to do. The result—his poll numbers rose yet again. The establishment political groups and national media could not understand it. How could they not? What Trump was doing was appealing to the new angry-at-any-cost electorate that is simply fed up with the failure of American policy both foreign and domestic. Why were we permitting thousands to die and spending billions of dollars on wars against Iraq and Afghanistan that we were losing? If unemployment had dropped so low, why did so many people have friends and relatives still out of work? Why can't Johnny and Susie read and write very well? Somebody needs to solve these problems.

Critics and scholars charged most of the Trump supporters were nowhere near as informed about politics and history as they should be to serve as solid citizens (study groups contend that only about one third of America's high school graduates have proficient history and political science skills). As a result they are not responsible, educated voters. Kevin Mahnken, an associate at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, wrote in the *New York Daily News* that "the rudiments of responsible citizenship anywhere lie in a basic awareness of national customs, politics and government. When deprived of this general background, voters are way more likely to fall for the policy free ramblings of a man who promises to replace Obamacare with 'something terrific.' With an impoverished understanding of executive powers and America's posture towards its neighbors. They might similarly buy into the notion that a President Trump could simply mandate that Mexico helpfully pay for a partition along our southern border."<sup>17</sup>

Trump understood all of that.

Former Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell seemed to understand it, too. The experienced politician said that, "a lot of what he (Trump) says resonates with what you and I would call 'reasonable, thinking' people. That's the part that I think is important for Hillary or any Republican running, or Bernie Sanders, or anybody. That's the part that I think is important for them to realize."<sup>18</sup>

President Obama did too. The president, a frequent tar-

get of Trump, told National Public Radio that in order to win the White House, Trump was exploiting the job and wage frustrations of blue collar workers. "Blue collar men have had a lot of trouble in this new economy, where they are no longer getting the same bargain that they got when they were going to a factory and able to support their families on a single paycheck," the president said. "... [I]t means that there is going to be potential anger, frustration, fear – some of it justified, but just as directed. I think somebody like Mr. Trump is taking advantage of that. That's what he's exploiting during the course of his campaign."<sup>19</sup>

Around Christmas of 2015, people who had chuckled at the mention of Trump's name began to take the candidate seriously. Hillary Clinton was one. She finally said that Trump represents "prejudice and paranoia" and that his plan to keep Muslims out of the U.S. was, "...not only shameful; it's dangerous."

Clinton had been laughing at or attacking Trump for months. "I think it's shameful for our country to have people running around to be President of the United States saying those things, demonizing people," she said in early December. She added that "I no longer think he's funny" and that he had "gone way over the line."<sup>20</sup>

Another problem for Clinton and the other Republican candidates was that all of them kept saying that there was no chance in the world that Trump could win the nomination. "In the long run..." they started many of their sentences. How could someone like that actually win the nomination? Impossible. Well, how did someone like Barack Obama win? John F. Kennedy? Abraham Lincoln? By refusing to believe Trump might actually be the nominee, the rest of the Republican field planned their strategies against him badly.

Many Americans who laughed at Trump at the start of his campaign changed their minds as time went on and events unfolded. As an example, Trump's hard-nosed stand on foreign policy and his contention that the United States has to keep out Moslems because they might be terrorists was hailed after the tragic shooting of fourteen people in San Bernardino, California in December 2015. Around the country, a lot of people began to say that they might think Trump was flamboyant, but they agreed with some or many of his positions. The public did not mind his endless personal attacks on Republican opponents or even name-calling of his opponents. Jeb Bush was "low energy" and "Dumb as a rock." Lindsey Graham was referred to as "an idiot." In early January, he began referring to Senator Cruz as "a nasty guy, a very nasty guy" and "a whack job." Trump made fun of Rick Perry's glasses. He often turned his name calling guns on the Democrats, stating again and again that Hillary Clinton was a "liar" and that she might be in the "clink" (prison) by the time the fall campaign started. In the middle of January he fired off his cannons at Democratic contender Senator Bernie Sanders, calling him a "wacko." Trump has repeatedly referred to Mrs. Clinton and his Republican opponents as "stupid" and "losers." He has often deemed them "the worst" in reference to any number of issues.<sup>21</sup>

Towards the end of December, Jeb Bush shook his head when talking about Trump and said, “Donald Trump is a chaos candidate and he would be a chaos President.”<sup>22</sup> To defend themselves, other Republicans began to engage in name calling, too. Jeb Bush, wounded so often by Trump’s sharp barbs, fired back in December. “Just one other thing—I gotta’ get this off my chest—Donald Trump is a jerk,” Bush said to a crowd in New Hampshire. The crowd roared its approval.<sup>23</sup>

Name calling just hurts the party, top Republicans said. They reminded Trump and voters, again and again of Ronald Reagan’s famous quote that the eleventh commandment of politics is never to speak ill of other Republicans. Sean Spicer, the

chief strategist for the Republican National Committee, told the CNN show *Reliable Sources* as early as July 2015 that, “I understand that it is going to be the nature of any primary for folks to discuss the differences between themselves on policy issues and I think that’s fine. The name calling, though, has got to stop.” He later said that, “We

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have to remember that calling each other names is not helpful in the long term.”<sup>24</sup> Spicer’s boss, Republican party chairman Rince Priebus, went farther. “It needs to stop from whatever source, from every place,” he said.<sup>25</sup> Trump has also been accused of lying. Blogger Michael Russnow compared Trump to Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels who said, “. . .if you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it.”<sup>26</sup>

Many pundits charged Trump with dealing in base American hatreds towards immigrants and citizens of other countries. “The danger right now is allowing him to legitimize the hatred that he so skillfully exploits and to revive the old American tendency, in frightening times, toward vicious treatment of the weak and outsiders,” said a *New York Times* editorial. The writer backed up his point by asking readers to remember that in World War II, fear of others caused the U.S. government to set up internment camps for Japanese-Americans, and the public, for the most part, approved.<sup>27</sup>

The new year of 2016 found Trump blasting Bill Clinton as well as Mrs. Clinton and charging that when the general election campaign began, he would assail former President Clinton frequently for what he said, in veiled language, was his extramarital relationship with Monica Lewinsky and other women. Then it was off on another attack, this time GOP rival Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, who had inched ahead of him in local Iowa public opinion polls. Trump tried to malign Cruz as he had tried to malign President Obama a few years earlier by challenging the validity of his Hawaiian birth certificate. In similar fashion Trump challenged Cruz’ eligibility to run for president because he had been born in Canada, conveniently

ignoring the fact that Cruz’ mother was an American citizen thereby invalidating the ineligibility claim. Nonetheless, Trump went on television from one network to the other, posing the question about Cruz and suggesting that the U.S. would have a constitutional nightmare on its hands if, after Cruz was elected president, he could not serve because he was not born in the country. A few weeks later, he started to say that Cruz should run for prime minister of Canada and every time he did so, he elicited a huge, loving roar of approval from his crowd. He jumped on Cruz again in January when it was revealed that the Texas Senator had failed to reveal significant loans to his Senate campaign from large New York banks, those same types of banks Cruz always criticized in his campaign speeches and, as a Senator, was supposed to regulate. Many saw Cruz as not only dishonest, but hypocritical.

Trump promised to spend money too, to appease his critics who claimed that thanks to massive media coverage, he was campaigning for president for free while he kept bragging that he was worth nearly \$10 billion. He promised to spend \$8 million on a television advertising campaign with a signature ad. That ad was dark and threatening. In it, as always, Trump says, “I want to make America great again,” his rallying cry. There are dark images of attackers, ISIS fighters and protestors. He reiterated his pledge to keep Muslims out of the U.S. on a temporary basis and halt immigration from Mexico. “He’ll stop illegal immigrants by building a wall on our southern border that Mexico will pay for,” the ad narrator intones ominously. As the narrator said that, the film shows hundreds of immigrants racing towards what appears to be the U.S. border. Researchers at an online network checked out the commercial, though, and declared that those were not Mexicans racing towards the U.S., but unhappy people in Morocco trying to flee across its border. “I mean, the man owns a plane. Surely he must know Mexicans can’t sneak into the U.S. by running into Morocco,” laughed a columnist at the *New York Daily News*.<sup>28</sup>

As the pre-primary campaign rolled into the middle of January and the first primary, the Iowa caucus loomed, Trump’s foes, Democratic and Republican, increased their criticism of him. Hillary Clinton continually charged that he was “first a Democrat, then a Republican” to undercut his Republican support. Several Republicans repeated Jeb Bush’s charge that Trump was a “chaos” candidate who would be a “chaos President”<sup>29</sup> Trump’s ride through the Republican primaries this spring followed the pre-primary campaign that stirred up so much controversy. No matter where he campaigned, whether in the early primaries in Iowa and New Hampshire or on Super Tuesday, his outsider/non-politician image served him well and drew impressive vote totals. He tweeted constantly about Bill Clinton’s extramarital troubles and kept calling Hillary Clinton a “liar.” He took turns hammering Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and all the other Republican candidates. Every week, every day, it seemed, Trump was on the offensive against his Republican challengers, Mrs. Clinton, President Obama and former President Clinton.

There was no let up. No matter what he said and no matter how nasty his attacks became, his poll numbers remained high or climbed even higher.

The establishment wing of the Republican Party campaigned against him to the last minute. In the Republican response to the president's State of the Union address on January 12, South Carolina Republican governor Nikki Haley, a rising GOP star, slammed Trump. "Today we live in a time of threats like few others in recent memory. During anxious times, it can be tempting to follow the siren call of the angriest voices. We must resist that temptation. No one who is willing to work hard, abide by our laws and love our traditions should ever feel unwelcome in our country," Haley said.<sup>30</sup>

Trump of course, slammed Governor Haley right back. Of her charges that he was an angry voice, he snorted, "I am! I am very angry because I hate what's happening to my country," he said.<sup>31</sup>

All agreed that Haley's comments were a direct attack on Trump on the part of the party hierarchy, although Republican leaders denied it. "Haley did it in a big, public way," said NBC News political editor John Dickerson.<sup>32</sup>

And then, just a few days later, Ted Cruz bashed Trump by stating that he just represented 'New York values' in a derogatory way. When Cruz repeated that charge in the televised debate from Charleston, South Carolina on the evening of January 14, Trump did not lash back full of bombast and vitriol as he usually did against any charges against him. He paused and became very emotional in his response. He started to talk about the terrorist attacks on New York on September 11, 2001 in which nearly 3,000 New Yorkers were killed and the twin towers of the World Trade Center were destroyed. His response to Cruz, in defending New Yorkers in that story, applauding the first responders, fire and policemen and all New Yorkers, was not only laudatory, but eloquent, very emotional and even poetic. It brought a solemn, dignified moment to the lives of all those people watching the debates, and all who would read about them the next day. It was a personality change and triumph for Trump that no one expected. It might alter people's view of him.

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Just before the Iowa caucuses, the direction of the national polling changed. Trump continued to lead all Republicans by a wide margin, two to one in some national polls (at the end of January his popularity kicked up to 41% among Republicans). In Iowa, Cruz was just behind him, but Trump was way ahead of Cruz, and everybody else, in New Hampshire. It became possible, pundits said, that Trump would lose in Iowa but win in New Hampshire, making the primary campaign more of a race than predicted in late December. All of the Republican candidates lost to Mrs. Clinton in national matchups, and Trump did, too, trailing her by ten or more percent in those polls. Mrs. Clinton though, had her hands full trying to fend off surprisingly strong rival Senator Bernie Sanders. She ran slightly ahead of

him or tied with him in Iowa and New Hampshire polls while running well ahead of him in national polls, setting up the possibility that he could upend her in the early primaries and, if he did so, undermine her national strength and make the Democratic race a close one.

Then, suddenly, there was a mammoth Trump bombshell announcement—former Alaska governor and vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin was going to endorse him. She was applauded wildly by Republicans when she endorsed Trump in her well-known, blowsy style, telling the crowds and television audience that Trump was "bally" and was going to win. "Stump for Trump!" she kept shouting, big smile on her face, as the Donald stood to her side, delighted.

And then, less than a week after that, as three feet of snow fell on the East Coast, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said that he was thinking of running for president too, as an independent, and that he would spend one billion dollars out of his \$37 billion fortune to seek the White House. That announcement rattled all in the presidential sweepstakes already, but the pundits said Bloomberg would not hurt Trump. He would hurt the Democrats. Trump had out-trumped them all once again.

That is how The Donald, businessman and reality television star, marched into the primary season, Sarah Palin at his side, his orange hair flopping in the breeze, a copy of *The Art of the Deal* under his arm, the media trailing, and Mexicans and Muslims nowhere to be found.

Donald Trump created his own political world and in primary after primary, showed that he was the new American politician. He may not get elected President, now or ever, but he has sent American politics spinning off in a new and memorable direction.

And if you don't like it, you loser, he'll fire you...

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#### NOTES

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