

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

حملات الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية الرقمية (دونالد ترامب مقابل هيلاري كلينتون) وتأثيرها على نتائج انتخابات عام 2016

Naima Boudis<sup>\*</sup>, Assia Baghdadi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M'Sila University (Algeria), duffbina@yahoo.fr

<sup>2</sup> M'Sila University (Algeria), assia.baghdadi@msila-univ.dz

Reçu le: 16/01/2024

Accepté le: 13/05/2024

Publié le: 27/06/2024

### Abstract:

The 2016 American presidential election made the news world-wide for the popularity, or infamy thereof, of its final round candidates: Hillary Clinton and Donald J. Tramp. The use of social media as a communication channel and an advertisement tool in the 2016 election helped spread political messages and forge bridges between politicians and their respective constituents. Essentially, social media campaign ads were designed to remedy the out-of-touch elitist politics and dysfunctional aspects of the orthodox party-based campaigns that could no longer keep up with the changing culture. Nonetheless, social media political campaigns have been accorded hyperbolic power on a par with their effects on election results and shaping the public opinion. Thus, this article addresses the significance of digital political campaigns and probes the power of social media in determining the 2016 presidential election results and changing voters' decision.

Keywords: campaign slogan- election campaign- recommender algorithm- social media- voters' decision.

### - Résumé:

L'élection présidentielle américaine de 2016 a fait les gros titres à l'échelle mondiale en raison de la popularité, ou de l'infamie, de ses candidats finalistes: Hillary Clinton et Donald J.

<sup>\*</sup> Naima Boudis, duffbina@yahoo.fr

Trump. L'utilisation des médias sociaux comme canal de communication et outil publicitaire lors de l'élection de 2016 a contribué à la diffusion de messages politiques et à la création de liens entre les politiciens et leurs électeurs respectifs. Essentiellement, les campagnes publicitaires politiques sur les médias sociaux étaient conçues pour remédier à la politique élitiste déconnectée et aux aspects dysfonctionnels des campagnes orthodoxes basées sur les partis qui ne parvenaient plus à suivre l'évolution de la culture. Néanmoins, les campagnes politiques sur les réseaux sociaux se sont vues attribuer un pouvoir hyperbolique vis-à-vis leurs effets sur les résultats électoraux et le façonnement de l'opinion publique. Ainsi, cet article aborde l'importance des campagnes politiques numériques et examine le pouvoir des médias sociaux dans la détermination des résultats de l'élection présidentielle de 2016 et le ainsi changement de décision des électeurs.

Mots clés : algorithme de recommandation- campagne électorale- décision des électeurs- médias sociaux- slogan de campagne.

ملخص :

تصدرت الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية لعام 2016 الأخبار عالمياً بفضل شهرة أو بالأحرى سوء سمعة مرشحها في الجولة النهائية: هيلاري كلينتون ودونالد ج. ترامب. ساعد استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كقناة اتصال وأداة إعلانية في انتخابات عام 2016 في نشر الرسائل السياسية وبناء جسور تواصل بين السياسيين وناخبهم. في الواقع، لم تنشأ إعلانات وحملات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من فراغ، بل تم تصميمها لمعالجة السياسة النخبوية البعيدة عن الواقع وكذا الحملات الحزبية التقليدية الغير قادرة على مواكبة التغير المستمر في الثقافة السياسية. ومع ذلك، منحت حملات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي السياسية قوة مبالغ فيما يخص تأثيرها على نتائج الانتخابات وتشكيل الرأي العام. وبالتالي، يتناول هذا المقال أهمية الحملات السياسية الرقمية ويبحث في قوة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تحديد نتائج الانتخابات الرئاسية لعام 2016 وتغيير مواقف وقرارات الناخبين.

كلمات مفتاحية: حملات انتخابية -خوارزمية نظام التوصية-شعار الحملة الانتخابية -قرار الناخبين -وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

- Introduction:

The 2016 presidential election have undoubtedly ushered in a new political era in the United States election spectrum. Most importantly, It demonstrates the burgeoning impact of social media in the political arena and the performance of basic democratic mechanisms, mainly electoral campaigning. Hillary Clinton's and Donald Trump's electoral tactics replicate the

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

growing influence of social media and different kinds of traditional media in the shaping of public opinion. A woman was elected to the Democratic Party's candidacy, while a businessman with no prior experience in public office was elected to the White House. The mainstream news media covered the campaign and candidates in a traditional fashion, tackling issues like who was leading in the polls, campaign events, and, to a lesser extent, specific policy issues. Despite regular media attention and widespread public interest in the election, many individuals were pessimistic about their chances of voting for either Trump or Clinton, as both were among the least popular presidential candidates in recent history. Consequently, an unusually large number of voters, including partisan supporters, were indecisive. Candidates were faced with the task of motivating potential voters to support their campaign through multimodal advertisement. Trump and Clinton took advantage of the opportunities provided by social media platforms to promote their campaigns, criticize the opposition, and express optimism about their chances of winning the election. Against this backdrop, this study looks at how social media presidential campaigns ads shaped public opinion in favour of one candidate, and to what extent it affected the voting decision. More telling, this study solicits to debunk the hyped role of social media in subverting the 2016 American political discourse and election results.

### 1-The 2016 Presidential Election Campaign

#### 1-1-Social Media' Algorithms and their Implication to Political Campaigns

The internet has revolutionized presidential politics and news coverage indefinitely. Candidates announced their intentions to run in 2008 through online videos, used the internet to collect funds and gain support, and delivered their messages to the public without the filter of traditional advertising. Given that it took hefty capital and resources to print or publish a newspaper or nationally broadcast news, only a handful of wealthy individuals monopolized the news outlet and, therefore, the political discourse. The internet and social media enable Americans eligible to run for office to communicate their political views and launch their campaign regardless of their political experience or power base. The advent of the internet increased the number of media choices, and amplified the diversity of political views. Undoubtedly, the internet reaches more potential voters, but it also makes it more

difficult for candidates to avoid scrutiny. Additionally, campaign news, be them positive or negative, spread in minutes, but speed sometimes triumphs over accuracy (Newman, 2016, p. 24-5).

Candidates avail themselves of cross-time-and-space connectivity offered by web communication and the democratization of the internet. The latter blast out incessant streaming of information related to their campaign, ask for donation, and interact with voters on social media platforms. There is hardly any candidate who does not have a Twitter account, a Facebook page, or a YouTube channel. Clever use of social media is widely credited to helping Barack Obama's sweep to power in 2008 and successive second term win in 2012. Blue State Digital, the online advertising technology company behind Obama presidential campaign win, made effective use and harnessed the power of web sites- mainly YouTube and Twitter- and set in motion an unprecedented campaign marketing strategy. Obama was the first candidate who combined together the internet and community organizing.

Social media played a significant role in shaping the path of events that led up to, during, and after the 2016 presidential election in the United States. It allowed people to become more involved in the political landscape, conflicts, and news underlying the candidates. Unlike traditional news platforms, social media allowed people to comment below a candidate's ads, headlines pertinent to his persona, or articles tackling his policies. It also allowed people to form their own opinions on public forums and websites, giving way to greater voter interaction. The majority of candidates used multiple social media accounts across multiple platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Depending on the digital architecture of each platform, candidates would employ a variety of techniques to discredit their opponent and gain support. Users could then share, like, or comment on these actions, expanding the candidates' reach. In so doing, candidates and users are said to either influence or change people's opinions on a specific issue (Anderson, 2020).

Although the internet has expanded the width and breadth of public debate- so much so data consumers are rendered content producers and purveyors- the online discourse is by no means dialogic and democratic in terms of exchanging opposing views and vertically

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

interacting with decision makers. Social media reinforces existing ideological orientations and preferences by selectively exposing like-minded users to favorable content and networks that echo their core beliefs and confirm their biases- thus the expressions "selective exposure", and "confirmation bias". These expressions connote mechanisms inherent in social media that generate constellations of homogenous views, dubbed "echo chambers." The socio-cognitive engineering behind online echo chambers is based on humans' tendency to organize themselves in enclaves driven by confirmation bias and homophily.

Narrow exposure and concentrated user interest caused by recommender algorithms is an important mechanism imputed to the echo chamber effect. This tendency is exacerbated by the human underlying proclivity to lend credence to evidence that fits one's existing beliefs. Confirmation bias, a term typically used in the psychological literature, connotes seeking or interpreting evidence in ways that are partial to existing beliefs, expectations, or hypotheses in hand. Psychologists and philosophers alike have viewed confirmation bias as a decisive determinant of human behaviour and attitude yet diagnosed it as a human reasoning flaw inasmuch as it causes myriads of polarizing disagreements and disputes amongst individuals, communities, and polities. By definition, confirmation bias entails the inadvertent biased selection and acquisition of new information that approves of pre-existing knowledge and well established mode of reasoning (Nickerson, 1998, p.175). Suffice it to say, confirmation bias "connotes evidence that is perceived- to support- to increase the credibility of- a hypothesis" (ibid., p. 176). More tellingly, not only do humans approach novel ideas in a biased fashion when their long-held belief system is contested or refuted wholesale, but they also engage in cherry-picking evidence even when their hypothesis is not jeopardized:

If we have nothing personally at stake in a dispute between people who are strangers to us, we are remarkably intelligent about weighing the evidence and in reaching a rational conclusion. We can be convinced in favor of either of the fighting parties on the basis of good evidence. But let the fight be our own, or let our own friends, relatives, fraternity brothers, be parties to the fight, and we lose our ability to see any other side of the issue than our own selves, the more difficult it becomes to be rational and intelligent (Thurstone, 1924, p. 101).

In a similar vein, internet users, inherently equipped with confirmation bias, tend to sort through data with caution. Disquieting information or opinions are discarded insofar as it is difficult to cognitively reconcile two antithetical hypotheses; nonetheless, favourable hypotheses supportive of one's stance are adamantly sought and guarded. Consistency of established beliefs with evidence trumps rationality of counter-indicative evidence inconsistent with long-held beliefs.

Psychologists and sociologists have approached homophily as an underlying structure of social networks that is prerequisite for contending with social contentious issues such as socialization, segregation, and social mobility. People with demographic similarity, shared knowledge and cultural tastes tend to sort themselves into enclaves of marital kinship, friendships, tribal affiliation, and workplace acquaintances, to name but a few, in order to maintain smoothly substantive communication and reliable connection. It has been noticed that within the same social circle individuals with the most patent similarities- ranging from demographics to mental states- are more likely to experience propinquity and, therefore, potently selective association than those with fewer similarities; this is especially evident within adolescent subcultures (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 435). Socio-demographic similarity is the *prima facie* determinant of homophilous connections; hence, sociologists placed socio-demographic attributes, mainly race, ethnicity, gender, age, and class at the center of social network studies. More to the point, sociologists Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) identified two homophily categories: status homophily and value homophily; the former encompasses the perceived status of individuals including sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, academic achievement, and occupation whereas the latter denotes the internal states, mainly attitudes, values, political affiliation, purported to dictate our future behaviour and endeavors. An exclusively socio-demographics-based approach to online homophily, nonetheless, falls short to account for the digital social networks.

Social media provided a venue for individuals to explore online community structure and social networks beyond their geographical locations and social circles, and across different timezones. Users' socio-demographic information such as gender, race, class, age, and education available on social media might not be reliable in terms of credibility whereas their

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

interests, cultural tastes, religious beliefs, political affiliations, and ideologies are displayed advertently or inadvertently through likes, comments, reposting, and following (Bisgin et al, 2010, p. 533). Network studies shifted focus from socialization between individuals to organizational structures of social entities above the level of individuals such as businesses, political institutions, social movements, activist groups, to name but a few. The findings of these studies helped, inter alia, further individuals' careers, improve business models and advertising strategies, and revolutionize political campaigning (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 418)

With humankind's homophilous bent in mind, social media algorithms were designed to conduct data mining and analytics in order to "segment society into digital silos" (Neudert and Marchal, 2019, p. 16) wherein users hedge in themselves such that they are impervious to opposing views. Contingent on psychographic analysis and behavioural micro-targeting, the tailor-made political and marketing messages successfully and constantly manage to reach the intended granular market of potential consumers or voters. User data is leveraged to "gain insights about uses' behaviour, preferences, attitudes and lifestyles, which then ultimately informs decision-making in areas as diverse as product design to formulating policy and campaign slogans" (ibid., p. 23). Analysts, however, have warned against user data mining not least conducted on the behest of politicians owing to the fact that the latter engaged in unethical political interference in terms of redlining particular segment of users from political information, shadow banning certain groups' posts, and manufacturing attitudes. Arguably, social media algorithms are bound to generate managed citizenship instead of participatory citizenship (Howard, 2006). This contention runs contrary to the popular belief asserting that social media is a beacon of democracy and informed citizenry eligible to make political decisions.

Arguably, social media algorithms are dividing societies. The recommendation algorithms that social media uses tend to give users more of what they desire and, therefore, lock them into a narrower set of information, coined "filter bubble." Filter bubble refers to personalized digital ecosystem generated by the algorithms that selectively serve content to individuals based on their preferences, search history, location, and online behavior. Users' news feed is

tailored by recommender algorithms that are designed to give users more of what they want to keep them engaged; thus, create a filter bubble of information that is unique to each individual. Moreover, media analysts contend that the internet users are living in echo chambers, wherein they follow people with whom they share similar views. That is, users tend to follow sites that reinforce their existing beliefs. Ironically, insomuch as the internet is believed to deliver on promises of interconnectivity and diversity of information, it is equally polarizing. One should not approach social media with a naïve contention that asserts its bona fide precept; it is first and foremost a profit-driven enterprise. The economic strand of social media prioritizes maximum viewership at the expense of spreading fact-based news (Aral, 2020). Thus, politicians' smearing campaigns, polarizing and racist views- such as Trump's campaign slogan "Build that Wall" to keep Mexicans from entering USA illegally- rising Nazi white-supremacist and extremist views were condoned and given a platform by social media platforms in the past few years (Lilleker, 2016, p. 45).

The internet was poised to be a boon for democracy, yet social media platforms, not least YouTube and Facebook, are constantly bashed for subtly shadow banning dissident voices and suspending their accounts on the pretext of "violation of community guidelines and maintaining a safe environment for users" (Neudert and Marchal, 2019, p. 21). Shadow banning gained notoriety as a substantial digital misstep that "dramatically reduces the visibility of posts by hiding them from its Explore page without warning" (Are, 2022, p. 1). In 2016, conservative users accused Twitter and Facebook of content moderation in an attempt to muzzle the conservative voices. Twitter PR team explained this away as "a glitch, an anticipated error in the algorithmic system that had limited the search bar visibility of large number of users, irrespective of political orientation" (Savolainen, 2022, p. 1092).

#### 1-2-Social Media and the 2016 Election Ads

Social media platforms constitute the ideal landscape for advertisement owing to their hitherto unmatched reach to users- and sensu lato consumers- from miscellaneous backgrounds. Social media companies are profit-oriented; their primarily source of profit is advertisement revenue: "as social media users do not actually pay for the service, they are the commodity themselves, and one of the reasons online social platforms exist is that they



## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

commercially exploit people who join them and who use them to share information and data" (Iosifidis and Wheeler, 2016, p. 41). That advertisers, in the throes of designing hyper-targeted and personalized advertisements, pay for users' data and generated content-intermittently amassed by data-driven analytic platforms, inter alia social media- gives rise to the commodification of users. Facebook is notably a case in point as the company ekes out its revenue by monetizing customer data. Fundamentally, Facebook's business model is contingent on "attracting third parties into monetized agreements for personal information" (Hoofnagle and Whittington, 2014, p. 630).

The Trump campaign relied heavily on social media platforms, particularly Twitter. Unlike the other candidates, Trump's Twitter and Facebook posts linked to news media rather than his campaign website as part of his tactic to prioritize media appearance over volunteers and contributions (Anderson, 2020). Trump's unusual use of social media in comparison to other candidates drew criticism, as he used Twitter as a platform to respond quickly to his opponents and tweet about his stance on different issues. Before being picked as the official party candidate at the 2016 Republican National Convention, many of his tweets directly threatened his fellow Republican candidates when their poll numbers started rising (Phillips, 2021). Trump frequently used Twitter during and after the 2016 presidential election, claiming that social media helped him win both the primary and general elections despite the fact that his opponents spent far more money than he did on campaign ads (Morin, 2016). The Trump presidential campaign also benefited from a large number of supporters who were active on social media since the inception of his campaign. Depending on the digital architecture of each platform, candidates would employ a variety of techniques to discredit their opponent and gain support. Users could then share, like, or comment on these actions, expanding the candidates' reach. Candidates and users would either influence or change people's opinions on a specific issue by doing so (Anderson, 2020). The moderator of the first Republican Presidential debate, held on August 6, 2015, asked candidate Jeb Bush if he stood by a statement made the previous April that illegally crossing the U.S. borders is an "act of love," to which Bush answered that he did. Thencefore, the Trump campaign used his remark

in a video featuring mugshots of illegal immigrants who committed violent crimes in the United States, interlaced with footage of Bush while uttering said phrase (Fehrnstrom, 2016). Hillary Clinton's campaign team utilized pre-existing social media strategies and tactics that she had used in previous elections to significantly improve her popularity in the 2016 election. Because none of the other candidates had recently run for president, Clinton's strategy was unavoidably unique (Enli, 2017, p. 53). According to a Pew Research study, 80% of Clinton's posts contained links to her website or campaign pages- on Facebook, it is stated that 60% of the posts linked to her campaign in comparison to 25% to the news media- while 78% of Trump's posts contained links to news media (Mitchell et al, 2016). The Clinton campaign utilized social media to expose Trump's use of fake news and a probable Russian election meddling. Clinton had used social media platform Snapchat to record her campaign's journey across the United States (Kearly, 2015). One of her videos, in which she declared, "Just chilling', in Cedar Rapids," quickly became a meme on the video-sharing app Vine, receiving over 17 million views in a month (Rogers, 2015). Nonetheless, many argue that Clinton's loss was caused in part by Trump gaining votes from groups that do not use social media, whereas Clinton's audience was active on the majority of social media platforms (Boxell et al., 2018).

The study conducted by liberini et al (2020) to probe the impact of social media political ads- to wit: Facebook's micro-targeted ads- on voting behavior deduces that said impact is, however decisive as it tilted the balance of power in favor of Trump, of small magnitude. The study aims at measuring the 'effect on election turnout, choice of candidates, and the likelihood that individuals change their minds about which candidate they prefer during the course of the campaign" (Liberini et al., 2020, p. 6). Realizing the strength of his base in the red states, Trump's online campaign ads targeting moderate voters in the swing states has managed to secure their votes that "have had a disproportionately large impact on the overall election results" (ibid., p. 29). It has been evidenced that exposure to Facebook campaign ads increases the likelihood of maintaining voters' initial voting intention and party affiliation. This is true for men, conservatives, people of color: "An increase of 10 percent in our measure for the intensity of political campaign exposure reduces the

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

likelihood of changing one's voting intention by 3 percent overall. This effect amounts to 4.5 percent for men, 0.3 percent for conservatives and 2.3 percent for non-white voters" (ibid., p. 4). More to the point, voters consuming online campaign ads and information are more likely to uphold their initial position, unlike voters who are not exposed to online political communications. The effects of Facebook ads vary for each campaign in terms of turn out on Election Day. Trump's campaign ads and personal tweets have excessively targeted his base, persuaded them to turn out and vote for him, and, by and large, managed to sway moderate voters in swing states to cast their ballots for Trump in lieu of Clinton. Turnout in red and swing states was significant vis-à-vis the depressed blue states' turnout. The votes cast in favor of Trump gained him the Electoral College votes that handed him the presidency given that he did lose the popular votes to Clinton by 3 million votes ("Presidential Approval Ratings," 2017). Political commentators and analysts attributed this loss to his "offensive statements made about immigrants, women, members of Congress, judges, and others" that hindered any attempt to reach out to "members of his own party, let alone attempting to build bridges with Democrats" (Schier and Eberly, 2017, p. 29).

Assessing ads price gives way to measuring the intensity of online campaigns targeting different user categories based on political affiliation, gender, ethnicity, and location. The effect of social media campaigning is better elucidated by an analogy drawn between Facebook users' and nonusers' voting behavior- that is voters who were exposed to social media campaign ads and those who were not. The findings of the study divulge that exposure to these ads hardens voters' initial voting intentions- chief of whom are Trump's staunch supporters who have unapologetically expressed their intention to vote for him. Nonetheless, the non-partisan undecided voters, be them the moderate or the less informed, were persuaded to vote for Trump. More tellingly, micro-targeted ads did Clinton a disservice as it reduced turnout among targeted liberals, whereas they ramped up turnout and support for Trump among conservatives and moderates. The turnout variation is attributed to Trump's effective use of social media as a primary channel for his political communication and Clinton's extensive reliance on traditional media (Schier and Eberly, 2017, p. 4).

In the aftermath of the election, Facebook and Cambridge Analytica launched an investigation into the harvesting and use of private data on social media for political advertising, which resulted in the liquidation of Cambridge Analytica and the congressional testimony of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. A separate investigation into Russian election meddling was also conducted, which concluded that Russian intelligence agencies created fake social media accounts and purchased ads on multiple social media sites in order to influence the election in favour of Donald Trump (Mueller, 2019). This sparked a global debate about the spread of fake news on the Internet, with many social media platforms enacting new policies to address the issue ahead of the 2020 election (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017, p. 211-32). Additionally, the Internet Research Agency tried to sway the vote in favor of Donald Trump by creating a massive number of social media accounts designed to like, share, and repost positive information about Trump and negative information about Clinton (MacFarquhar, 2018). Russian computer hackers also infiltrated both the Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's information systems and posted files obtained on a number of websites, such as DCLeaks, Guccifer 2.0, and Wikileaks (Nakashima and Harris, 2018). The evidence in 2016 indicated that Russian interference was targeted at swing states and that its reach and scope were large enough to affect voters in a way that could change the election results through voter turnout. Additionally, a lot of manipulative messages sent by Russia in 2016 was about voter suppression. Voter suppression memes were targeted at specific communities. In 2016, on Instagram, African American voters were targeted with voter suppression memes indicating that Hillary Clinton is not an advocate for the welfare of the black community and therefore black voters should abstain from voting writ large, given that Trump is not the lesser evil in this equation. Those types of memes were targeted at mentions at communities that were African-American insomuch as 2016 election followed the Black Lives Matter Movement, trying to suppress specific communities of voters in key swing states (Aral, 2020).

## 2-The Power of a Mediatized Slogan

A political slogan, akin to a tagline, is a catchword or a rallying motto quite related to a political party. Despite the fact that a slogan normally originates with the president or

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

different politicians, its effectiveness relies on acceptance and use by the public. It is possible for slogans to go beyond party lines and emerge as followed by the nation as a whole. While its origins might remain rooted in an event, the most successful slogans need not be forever tied to a specific party (Voleti, 2020). Taglines can be found on hats, shirts, signs, commercials, and so on. Although one may not know anything about a candidate, one will recognize their tagline ("2016 Presidential Campaign Slogans," 2020). A mediatized slogan is used by candidates to promote their campaign agenda; this is often realized through the use of hashtags. Essentially, a hashtag- a word or a phrase mentioned by the pound #- is used to categorize messages and connect people who post about a shared topic. A Twitter's political hashtag, for instance, conveys the day's crucial news. Slogan hashtag trends are a telltale sign of wide circulation and, therefore, likelihood of high turnout in favour of the candidate. To know who is leading on a campaign trail, one ought to track the most popular slogan hashtag.

### 2-1- Make America Great Again

It is a clear and simple, easy-to-remember slogan "borrowed" from Ronald Reagan's 1980 "Let's Make America Great Again," Trump revived it in the 2016 election campaign, he used it particularly by wearing MEGA hats- red hats with the phrase in white letters- which quickly became popular among his supporters. Subsequently, he took the campaign slogan to social media, most notably Twitter, where he used the hashtags #makeamericagreatagain and its acronym #maga. Many democrats have interpreted the MAGA slogan as standing for "make America white again" given Trump's racist and polarizing rants in his rallies. Trump unequivocally voiced his "zero tolerance policies" towards illegal immigrants, Islamophobia, sexism, and condescence towards African countries which he referred to as "sh\*\* h\*\*e countries" ("2016 Presidential Campaign Slogans," 2020); his carefully concocted slogan reflects succinctly his deeply-entrenched xenophobic views.

### 2-2- Stronger Together

Hillary Clinton's slogan, "Stronger Together" is much less rousing than Trump's; however, it's aimed toward a much broader public. It is constructed to highlight the weird anomaly of Trump's candidacy. Nonetheless, it captures an essential distinction with the Republican nominee. While Trump is partisan, dividing humans in opposition to each other and

weakening the nation's social fabric, Clinton's campaign slogan is set to guarantee to carry humans collectively to enhance the nation's collective strength (Wilkinson, 2016). Being the first female candidate to reach the final run for president, many liberal Americans, mainly women, launched the hashtag #ImWithHer to garner the votes of the feminists, be them men or women.

Graph N1. Share of Voice On Trump's and Clinton's Twitter Hashtags (Stromer-Gally, 2017).

### 3-The Key Factors behind Trump's Unexpected Win

Fundamentally, the rise of populism across Europe reached the United State, and Trump seized the opportunity and jumped the bandwagon. He catered to the populist sentiments lying dormant in the collective conscious of white Americans. The failure of liberal democracy of Western leaders, including Barack Obama, in meeting working-class financial needs gave rise to ultra-right groups that sought to restore their countries from foreigners who supposedly took their jobs and erased their culture. Brexit is a case in point. Trump fed into the populist narrative by fuelling the flames of a trade war with China (Lilleker, 2016, p. 67), on the pretext that it is monopolizing American markets and stealing American jobs by producing American brands in Chinese factories. He based his xenophobia-imbued campaign of towards: illegal immigrants, asylum seekers, environmentalists, minority groups, mainly Muslims and women (Lilleker, 2016, p. 61-2). In opposition to Clinton's past military interventionist blunders in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Libya- as she served as the Secretary of State under the Obama administration- Trump pledged to withdraw USA troops from foreign soil, cut military aids to NATO and Middle Eastern countries- unless the USA is paid properly- and retreat from a host of international agreements and alliances, namely NAFTA, NATO and climate mitigation agreements (ibid., p. 45).

As baffling as it sounds, Clinton's loss to an unpopular and indecisive candidate is rooted in rational reasons than social media campaign mismanagement. Knowingly, it is unusual for a party to hold power more than two successive terms. The two terms prior to the 2016 election was held by a democratic president, Barack Obama. Therefore, the likelihood of a democratic candidate holding office in 2016 is far-fetched. Moreover, candidates, be them

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

democrats or republicans, are historically beholden to donors and corporations that finance their campaigns in exchange for issuing policies favorable to their best interests. Clinton is no exception; however, Trump, feted as a successful businessman, branded himself as an anti-establishment candidate who pledged to finance his own campaign and not be enslaved to the rich minority. More to the point, that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was investigating the Clinton's Charity Foundation and its suspicious dealing until the last two days before the election undermined the credibility of the democratic candidate (Roberts, 2016).

The probability of a Clinton's win was pegged at 85% by the New York Times' prognostication web and, interestingly hyperbolically at 98% by the Huffington Post's Election 2016 model. Such models were based on economic and policy-wise fundamentals such as economic growth, consumer satisfaction, and incumbent approval ratings. With such unanimous prognostication, Donald Trump's victory did take the election forecasting industry off-guard, rightly so. Nonetheless, it is by no means a telltale sign of an unconventional and unpredictable campaign strategy. Essentially, it is unusual for the incumbent's party to hold office for more than two executive terms, regardless of the incumbent's approval ratings and popularity amongst voters- 1988 George H. W. Bush presidency is nonetheless the recent exception. Hilary Clinton's candidacy was no exception to that historical recurrence (Schier and Eberly, 2017, p. 5).

Trump redefined the boundaries of acceptable rhetoric in traditional media coverage and social media platforms. Fundamentally, Trump's persona and controversial sensational statements constituted a juicy subject matter for news outlets; the media "gave Trump \$1.9 billion in free publicity in this presidential cycle. That's 190 times as much as he paid for in advertising, and it's far more than any other candidate received," asserts New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof (2016). Trump's lack of political shrewdness and constituency by no means put him on a trajectory towards a victory; however, his rhetoric that fed into and resonated with the burgeoning public discontent and distrust towards the Obama government earned him extensive media publicity in the primary race and built strong channels of communication with the frustrated voters. Conventionally, news outlets conduct

what is known as "horse-race approach" to the primary election coverage that focuses on polling data and public reception of the candidates to the neglect of their policies. Trump's notoriety is achieved not so much due to his scarcely discussed policy as it is due to his rhetorical style and linguistic idiosyncrasy. His atrocious slandering of his party running mates during the GOP primary and negative ads targeting the democratic candidate Hilary Clinton during the general election campaign generated a monster narrative around the elites and the establishment politicians. Opting for a conservative government to reverse Obama's establishment-based policies, governmental spending, regulations, and intervention, is a telltale sign of entrenched distrust of the government. Hillary Clinton is the ultimate embodiment of the establishment owing to her corporation ties- chief of which are the Big Tech, the military complex, and fossil fuel donors; and against whom the populist uprising railed- in terms of campaign finances and subsidiary benefits. In contrast, Trump reiterated on many occasions that he was un beholden to Corporate America insofar as he financed his own campaign and branded himself as the unorthodox candidate intending to "drain the swamp", that is to curb the lobbyists who have long been rubbing shoulders with corrupt legislators and government officials. Clinton's campaign promises and substantial résumé are antithetical to the change earnestly needed by the electorate. More tellingly, her presidency would be nothing short of a Barack Obama's third term:

On Election Day 2016, fully 69 percent of voters were either dissatisfied with or angry at government, and Donald Trump won 58 percent of them. A plurality of voters, 48 percent, wanted the next president to be more conservative than Barak Obama, and Trump won 83 percent of them. A clear plurality, 39 percent, said the quality that mattered most to them in a new president was that he/she can bring change. Trump won 83 percent of those voters as well. Fully half of all voters said government already does too much as opposed to too little, and Donald Trump won 73 percent of them. ("Presidential National Exit Poll 2016," 2016).

Despite his unmistakable inaptitude and unabashed boorish demeanour, as opposed to Clinton's calculated moves and refined rhetoric, Trump became the 45th president of the USA. His oratorical lack of structure and substance has spawned countless studies during and after his candidacy owing to the fact that he did not win despite his un-presidential



## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

persona but because of it: "Research has shown that voters tend to react positively to candidates who communicate in a more informal way. Compared to his Republican opponents and to Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump made more use of nonstandard and low complexity words and made greater use of Twitter" (Schier and Eberly, 2017, p. 16). His discursive features resemble the layman's everyday speech patterns. The curtness, discursive incoherence, repetition, hyperbole, casual tone and tenor, and constant digression are, by no means, indicative of high level of education. Some discursive strategies such as repetition and parallelism serve to rid the political discourse from complexity so much so to render it cognitively digestible, poetically resonant, and socially engaging (Sclafani, 2018, p. 3). Prominently, Trump's resort to repetition, discourse analysts contend, is an endeavour to either shy away from providing substantive explanations to his policies or inculcate voters with certain perspectives and beliefs about the candidate (ibid).

The digital aura gave way to an unprecedented personalization of political advocacy and alarming rise of populism and polarization, redefined the entire political communication spectrum, and revolutionized media viewership. Old media cannot augur well on their own, as far as political communication is concerned; they perform in lockstep with social media that is ubiquitous in all aspects of life. Social media helped politicians to couple their professional, formal, party-centered campaigns broadcasted on mainstream media with anti-elitist, informal, and candidate-oriented campaigns. Candidates find themselves duty-bound to match their multi-platform campaign with a multi-tasking persona that is, first and foremost, a savvy media exploiter. Although Clinton opted to launch her campaign on Twitter in lieu of issuing a press conference - as she announced her run in a tweet: "I'm running for president, everyday Americans need a champion, and I want to be that champion.- H" (Clinton, 2015) -her online interaction with voters were by no means direct and spontaneous, unlike Trump's seasoned social media use. Trump, evidently, manages his account personally insomuch as his idiosyncratic rhetorical style penetrates myriads of his tweets.

It is erroneous to assume that politicians' use of social media emanates a participatory and engaging political culture. Rather, it is a one-way political marketing tool through which

politicians channel their political messages to their voters. The power hierarchy long-held between the power elite and the constituents are reinforced in the new media inasmuch as politicians shy away from dialogue and interactivity with their constituents: "campaigns wish to mobilize the public in the service of the campaign, but getting too close to them, really listening and empowering them, is dangerous and at least disadvantageous" (Stromer-Gally, 2014, p. 187).

Trump wraps his insulting language in "authenticity" veneer; he advocates soliciting to sanitize his abrasive manners by using aphorism such as "getting real" and "telling it as it is" to trivialize his controversial exchange with journalists or political opponents. Eventually, the media and people have become desensitized to his racist, misogynist, and xenophobic rhetoric partly owing to his remarkable gift for humour: "the pure entertainment value of Trump's comedic impressions reduces the potential for critical interpretation; while at the same time further distancing the audience from the target of critique" (Sclafani, 2018, p. 60). Jabs aimed at a physically disabled reporter in one of his rallies (Carmon, 2016) and high-profile women- former Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly (Borchers, 2016) and his primary opponent's wife, Heidi Cruz (Beaumont, 2016) constitute a case in point- were countenanced by his base for being a speech act emblematic of anti-political correctness .

Trump is a post-truth president par excellence; he deliberately ditches facts and objective truth for alternative facts or subjective truth. He is by no means a liar, for lying is a premeditated endeavour wherein the teller consciously issues false statements to gain some advantage from the interlocutor. Thus, Trump's untruthfulness cannot be equated with sheer lying inasmuch as he is unaware of- still worse indifferent to- the falsity of his pronouncement; Trump "is incapable of even imagining a distinction between truth and falsehood; those concepts, and the distinction between them that is intrinsic to most human intercourse, are simply absent for Trump" (Lakoff, 2017, p. 599). Trump's discourse abounds in grammatical inaccuracies (e.g., *bigly*) and impromptu tumultuous syntax and equally lacks the semantic component responsible of linking the linguistic forms to their extra-linguistic referents. That is, the pragmatic component of his public communication outweighs its semantic component. Suffice it to say, he is more concerned with constructing discursive

## The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

segments conducive to audience's approval and persuasion than he is with making sense by telling the truth. His likeability rating is all the truth Trump can communicate to his supporters. Trump has no qualms about unraveling the mechanism of his rhetoric and the intended offshoot he aspires to attain:

The final key to the way I promote is bravado. I play to people's fantasies. People may not always think big themselves, but they can still get very excited by those who do. That's why a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It's an innocent form of exaggeration- and a very effective form of promotion (Trump and Schwartz, 1987, p. 58).

A multibillionaire, whose properties house golden-plated fixture and who has been rubbing shoulder with the elites and bureaucrats for decades, is jumping the populist bandwagon in order to curry favour with disaffected constituents. Painting Trump as a populist candidate is unhinged and antithetical to the definition of "populist" that connote: "someone whose political sympathies lie with the non-elite and marginalized" (qtd in., Lakoff, 2017, p. 595).

Trump's presidential win should not be circumscribed around the hyped narrative of social media campaign efficiency; rather, Trump's candidacy spawned a grassroots movement dubbed by many as Trumpism. Trumpism has reshaped the Republican Party as it shifted its focus from financial concerns to security and anti-establishment concerns. He managed to bring together a multi-ethnic middle-class base driven by populist sentiments. Trump's ostensible antipathy for the liberal elites echoes the disfranchised Americans, both whites and minorities. He fuelled that contempt through chants against Hillary Clinton such as "Lock her up!" and labels such as "crooked Hillary", and the reiteration of birtherism claims questioning Barack Obama's place of birth. Trump peddled resentment politics through his rhetoric so much so his staunch supporters "internalize their support and perceive even a mild rebuke of him [and] his actions as a personal attack on them" (qtd in., Thompson, 2020).

#### 4- Conclusion

On sober reflection, it could be surmised that the impact of social media is evident yet scant, not strong enough to sway the election results. Voters' political affiliation is already established and cannot be altered by social media ads. All that social media campaigns

manage to do is to convince an already in-group voter to cast their vote for their partisan candidate. Nonetheless, voters still resort to mainstream media to get informed and updated about candidates' policies, debates, and prospect for winning although the news media shed lesser light on their policies in comparison to polls number and debates. Mainstream media narrative on election campaign cannot be crafted or affected by candidates; thus, the latter turn to social media to compose alternative narratives to garner as many voters as possible. The size and scope of what happened in November 2016 points, not necessarily to a realignment in American politics, but to a systemic reaction by the electorate. It was the manifestation of years, in fact decades, of rising levels of discontent by a growing number of disaffected voters.

Evidently, digital micro-targeted political ads had significant effects when based on geographical location, ideology, ethnicity, and gender. Exposure to these ads made individuals less likely to change their initial voting intentions, particularly among those who had expressed an intention to vote for Donald Trump. It is also proved that micro-targeted ads reduced turnout among targeted liberals, whereas they increased turnout and support for Trump among targeted moderates.

Social media is by no means the sole factor affecting elections. Undoubtedly, the candidates- their charisma, policies, micro-targeted advertisement, ability to connect with voters- as well as news of the day- what is hitting the pocketbooks, homes and families of everyday voters- obviously have the largest effects. Donald Trump, a celebrity, mogul, and online high-profile figure with a strong follower base, managed to with run a successful campaign by connecting his seasoned social media management with his unscripted unpresidential persona wrapped in a populist veneer. For voters, Donald Trump is the sole anti-establishment candidate capable of making America great again and ridding Washington of the corrupt politicians. Hillary Clinton, on her part, reiterated the incumbent democrat Barack Obama's agenda. She symbolized the typical establishment candidate who is beholden to Corporate America and lobby groups.

References:

# The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

## Books:

- 1) Howard, Phillip N. (2006). *New Media Campaigns and the Managed Citizen*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- 2) Iosifidis, Petros and Mark Wheeler. (2016). *Public Spheres and Mediated Social Networks in the Western Context and Beyond*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 3) Newman, Bruce I. (2016). *The Marketing Revolution in Politics: What Recent US Presidential Campaigns Can Teach Us about Effective Marketing*. London: Rotman-UTP Publishing.
- 4) Schier, Steven E., and Todd E. Eberly. (2017). *The Trump Presidency: Outsider in the Oval Office*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- 5) Sclafani, Jennifer. (2018). *Talking Donald Trump: A Sociolinguistic Study of Style, Metadiscourse, and Political Identity*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- 6) Stromer-Galley, Jennifer. (2014). *Presidential Campaigning in the Internet Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 7) Thurstone, Louis Leon. (1924). *The Nature of Intelligence*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- 8) Trump, Donald and Tony Schwartz. (1987). *The Art of the Deal*. New York: Random House.
- 9) Journal Articles:
- 10) Allcott, Hunt, and Matthew Gentzkow. (2017). "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(2), 211-236. Doi: 10.1257/jep.31.2.211.
- 11) Are, Caroline. (2022). "The Shadowban Cycle: An Autoethnography of Pole Dancing, Nudity and Censorship on Instagram." *Feminist Media Studies*, 22 (8), DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2021.1928259.
- 12) Bisgin, Halil, Nitin Agarwal and Xiaowei Xu. (2010). "Investigating Homophily in Online Social Network." *IEEE Computer Society: International Conference on Web Intelligence*, 533-536. DOI: 10.1109/WI-IAT.2010.61.
- 13) Enli, Gunn (2017). "Twitter as Arena for the Authentic Outsider: Exploring Social Media Campaigns of Trump and Clinton in the 2016 US Presidential Election." *European Journal of Communication*, 32(1), 50-61. [https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/55266/Twitter\\_as\\_arena\\_for\\_the\\_authentic\\_outsi.pdf?sequence](https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/55266/Twitter_as_arena_for_the_authentic_outsi.pdf?sequence)
- 14) Hoofnagle, Chris Jay and Whittington, Jan (2014). "Free: Accounting for the Costs of the Internet's Most Popular Price." 61 *UCLA L. Rev.* 606. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2235962>.
- 15) Lakoff, Robert Tolmatch. (2017). "The Hollow Man: Donald Trump, Populism, and Post-truth Politics." *Journal of Language and Politics*. 16(4), 595-606. DOI: 10.1075/jlp.17022.lak.

- 16) Lazarsfeld, Paul, F. and Robert K Merton. (1954). Friendship as a social process: A substantive and methodological analysis. *Freedom and Control in Modern Society*. 18, 18–66. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-658-21742-6\_76.
- 17) Liberini, Federica et al., (2020). "Politics in the Facebook Era: Evidence from the 2016 US Presidential Elections." CESifo Working Papers. No. 235. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3584086>.
- 18) Lilleker, Darren, et al. (2016). "US Election Analysis 2016: Media, Voters and the Campaign." Boumemouth University: Centre for the Study of Journalism, Culture & Community. <https://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/24976/1/US%20Election%20Analysis%220201%20->  
-  
%20Lilleker%20Thorsen%20Jackson%20and%20Veneti%20v1.pdf.
- 19) %20Lilleker%20Thorsen%20Jackson%20and%20Veneti%20v1.pdf.
- 20) McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. and Cook, J.M. (2001) 'Birds of a feather: Homophily in Social Networks', *Annual Review of Sociology*. 27(1), 415–444. DOI:10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.415.
- 21) Neudert, Lisa Maria and Nahema Marchal (2019). "Polarisation and the Use of Technology in Political Campaigns and Communication." *Scientific and Technology Option Assessment*. Doi: 10.2861/167110.
- 22) Nickerson, Raymond S. (1998). "Confirmation Bias: A Ubiquitous Phenomenon in Many Guises." *Review of General Psychology*. 2(2), 175-220. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.2.175>.
- 23) Savolainen, Laura (2022). "The Shadow Banning Controversy: Perceived Governance and Algorithmic Folklore." *Media, Culture & Society*, 44(), 1091-1109. DOI: 10.1177/01634437221077174.
- 24) Internet Websites:
- 25) "2016 Presidential Campaign Slogans & Taglines." (2020, July 07). GetUWired. <https://www.getuwired.com/presidential-campaign-slogans/>.
- 26) "Presidential Approval Ratings—Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends." (2017). Gallup. [https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-](https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx)  
approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx.
- 27) approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx.
- 28) "Presidential National Exit Poll 2016." (2016, November 9). Exit Polls 2016, CNN. <https://edition.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls>
- 29) Anderson, Monica. (2020, October 15). "Social Media Causes Some Users to Rethink Their Views on an Issue." Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2016/11/07/social-media-causes-some-users-to-rethink-their-views-on-an-issue/>.

# The US Digital Presidential Election Campaigns (Donald Trump's vs. Hillary Clinton's) and their Impacts on Election Results of 2016

---

- 30) Beaumont, Thomas, and Jill Colvin. (2016, March 26). "Trump under Fire for Jabs Aimed at Cruise's Wife." Public Broadcasting Service, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/trump-under-fire-for-jabs-aimed-at-cruzs-wife>
- 31) Boxell, Levi, et al. (2018, July 18). "A Note on Internet Use and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election Outcome." PLoS One, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0199571>.
- 32) Carmon, Irin. (2016, August 10). "Donald Trump's Worst Offense? Mocking Disabled Reporter, Poll Finds." NBC News, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/trump-s-worst-offense-mocking-disabled-reporter-poll-finds-n627736>.
- 33) Clinton, Hillary. [@HillaryClinton]. (2015, April 12). I'm running for president. Everyday Americans need a champion, and I want to be that champion. —H. [Tweet]. X. <https://twitter.com/HillaryClinton/status/587336319321407488>.
- 34) Fehrnstrom, Eric. (2016, February 10). "A Punch-drunk Jeb Bush Carries on." The Boston Globe, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2016/02/10/punch-drunk-jeb-bush-carries/AFJZk3IF7UwmOsd4jqMfIP/story.html>.
- 35) Kearly, Kendyl. (2015, August 10). "Hillary Clinton Finally Got A Snapchat!" Bustle, <https://www.bustle.com/articles/103264-hillary-clinton-got-a-snapchat-finally-shes-already-sending-silly-snaps-to-her-supporters>.
- 36) Kristof, Nicholas. (2016, March 26). "Opinion | My Shared Shame: The Media Helped Make Trump." New York Times. [https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/opinion/sunday/my-shared-shame-the-media-helped-make-trump.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/opinion/sunday/my-shared-shame-the-media-helped-make-trump.html?_r=0).
- 37) Macfarquhar, Neil. (2018, February 18). "Inside the Russian Troll Factory: Zombies and a Breakneck pace." The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/18/world/europe/russia-troll-factory.html>.
- 38) Mitchell, Amy, et al. (2016, July 18). "Election 2016: Campaigns as a Direct Source of News". Pew Research. [https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2016/07/PJ\\_2016.07.18\\_election\\_2016\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2016/07/PJ_2016.07.18_election_2016_FINAL.pdf).
- 39) Morin, Rebecca. (2016, December 11). "Trump Says Social Media Was Key to Victory." POLITICO, 11 December. <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/donald-trump-social-media-231285>.
- 40) Mueller, Robert. (2019, Mars). "Report On the Investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election". United States Department of Justice. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/sco/file/1373816/download>.
- 41) Nakashima, Ellen, and Shane Harris. (2018, July 13). "How the Russians Hacked the DNC and Passed Its Emails to WikiLeaks." The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/how-the-russians-hacked->

- the-dnc-and-passed-its-emails-to-wikileaks/2018/07/13/af19a828-86c3-11e8-8553-a3ce89036c78\_story.html.
- 42) Phillips, Amber. (2021, November 25). "The Surprising Genius of Donald Trump's Twitter Account." The Washington Post. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewiU5pblwfmBAxX2U6QE HUcyAj4QFnoECAkQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fnews%2Fthefix%2Fwp%2F2015%2F12%2F10%2Freading-6000-of-his-tweets-has-convinced-us-donald-trump-is-a-social-media-master%2F&usg=AOvVaw1MuN\\_k61DHlzZpTLw17BN&opi=89978449](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewiU5pblwfmBAxX2U6QE HUcyAj4QFnoECAkQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fnews%2Fthefix%2Fwp%2F2015%2F12%2F10%2Freading-6000-of-his-tweets-has-convinced-us-donald-trump-is-a-social-media-master%2F&usg=AOvVaw1MuN_k61DHlzZpTLw17BN&opi=89978449).
- 43) Roberts, Dan. (2016, November 9). "Why Hillary Clinton Lost Election: The Economy, Trust, and Weak Message." The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/usnews/2016/nov/09/hillary-clinton-election-president-loss>.
- 44) Rogers, Kaleigh. (2015, August 14). "Hillary Clinton Accidentally Became a Vine Meme." VICE, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/vvbwmj/hillary-clinton-accidentally-became-a-vine-meme>.
- 45) Stromer-Galley, Jennifer. (2017, April 13). "A final, Data-Driven Look at Trump v. Clinton on Social Media." Medium, <https://medium.com/tow-center/a-final-data-driven-look-at-trump-v-clinton-on-social-media-7ea9bb747982>.
- 46) Thompson, Derek. (2020, December 29). "The Deep Story of Trumpism: Thinking about the Republican Party like a Political Psychiatrist." The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/12/deep-story-trumpism/617498/>.
- 47) Voleti, Kiran. (2020, Jun 16). "Political Campaign Slogans: How Campaign Slogans Influence Voting." Political Marketer. <https://politicalmarketer.com/political-campaign-slogans/>.
- 48) Wilkinson, Francis. (2016, October 20). "Hillary Clinton's 85 Slogans Explain 2016 Campaign." The Denver Post. <https://www.denverpost.com/2016/10/20/hillary-clintons-85-slogans-explain-2016-campaign/>.
- 49) Videos:
- 50) Aral, Sinan. (2020, October 23). "Debunking Election & Social Media Myths." YouTube. WIRED, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsaol8Nrvig>.