

The UConn Undergraduate Political Review

*Edition Two - Speech: Free Speech, Political
Correctness, and Civil Dialogue*

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Letter From The Editor

Dear Readers,

Here is the second edition of the UConn Undergraduate Political Review. Our guiding focus is Speech: Free Speech, Political Correctness, and Civil Discourse. We asked our writers to consider the political role of speech, and the debates surrounding it, across the United States and the world. The result is a wide range of articles, examining the role of speech and dialogue in a host of political contexts.

Contained within are discussions of the space for controversial speech in a Europe increasingly facing the threat of terrorism. Specifically, a University of Connecticut undergraduate studying in France writes of the place for unpopular expression following the November attacks. Another explores speech's relation to technology in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Others discuss the wider status of free speech as a global project.

Alternatively, many writers explore the lively debates surrounding speech which whirl around American campuses such as our own. Writers address political correctness, restrictions on expression, and the importance of civility in a democratic society. Other essays focus on one of the magnetic personalities of the 2016 election cycle, whose speech has become as universally controversial as it is salient to our topic: Donald Trump. Several writers explore the implications of his candidacy, and seek to analyze the appeal of his aggressive rhetorical methods. Two writers specifically debate what the reach of Mr. Trump's candidacy and the extremity of his speech reveal, positively and negatively, about the American electoral environment.

Looking forward to the Fall, the Review will be publishing another edition. If you have an interest in contributing, please visit our website at www.uconnpolitics.com. There you can find our application guidelines for new writers. If you have a specific response or article idea you would be interested in submitting for consideration, that is also welcome, although inclusion is incumbent on a specific submission's fit with the focus of the relevant edition.

Finally, the Review is seeking several new members for the editorial board. If you have strong writing skills, interest in and familiarity with political issues, and the desire to help grow the publication in a leadership capacity, please be aware that we will be opening up the application process on our website soon.

As always, we wish to extend our sincere thanks to our advisor, Professor Bayulgen, to the head of the Department, Professor Yalof, and to the entire Political Science staff and faculty.

Sincerely,

Peter Bassine

Editor-in-Chief

The Lack of Civil Freedoms in Egypt

Jason D'Andrea

The Square

On January 25th, 2011, thousands of Egyptians flooded Cairo's Tahrir Square demanding the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak, who had been in power since 1981. The protests of Tahrir Square occurred directly after the December 2010 uprising in Tunisia, where the protests against military dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had successfully transitioned the state to democratic rule. The protests of Tahrir Square lasted for 18 days and resulted in 850 deaths, but ultimately the protestors achieved what they sought out for, including the resignation of President Mubarak and the implementation of democracy.¹

Democracy Installed

Mohamed Morsi, of the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, became Egypt's 5th president, and the 1st democratically elected head of state in Egyptian history, on June 30th, 2012. Egypt's democratic transition stimulated hope throughout the West in the belief that political change would improve Egypt's human rights record. Sadly, Morsi's non-secular democratic reign was filled with corruption through state monopolization and far-reaching power acts including forms of martial law.² According to a Pew Research poll, the percentage of dissatisfaction with the country's leaders increased from 41% when Morsi was elected to 65% when current President and Military General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi ousted Morsi in July 2013.³

The Current Downward Trends

Egypt's increase in terrorist attacks, including the October 2015 downing of a Russian passenger jet in the Sinai Peninsula, and the February 2016 murder of an Italian student journalist, forces one to question if anything positive came from the 2011 uprising. According to Freedom House, in 2010 there were 0 fatalities/injuries caused by terrorist attacks, in 2014 that number increased to 883.⁴

President Sisi's authoritarian oppression has paralyzed Egyptian society at a time when full participation is necessary to address economic deterioration and, most importantly, the rising security problems. According to Freedom House, under President Sisi, Egypt's human rights record has declined drastically.⁵ Reporters Without Borders has ranked Egypt 158th out of 180 countries in its annual press freedom index and prominently notes that at least 20 journalists are currently being detained.⁶ The Freedom House report goes on to state that the freedoms of speech, association, and assembly have completely deteriorated. Instances include: anonymous Facebook group administrators being identified and locked up, the apprehension of LGBT people for just dancing in YouTube videos deemed to "incite debauchery", and religious minorities, including Christians and atheists, being charged

1 BBC Middle East. 2011. "Tahrir Square's place in Egypt's history." November 22. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12332601> (March 8, 2016).

2 BBC Middle East. 2015. "Profile: Egypt's Mohammed Morsi." April 21. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-18371427> (March 8, 2016).

3 Wike, Richard. 2014. "Key takeaways from our Egypt survey." May 22. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/05/22/key-takeaways-from-our-survey-of-egypt/> (March 8, 2016).

4 Shabaz, Adrian. 2016. "Five Years after Egypt's January 25 Revolution, Little Hope Remains." January 22. <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/five-years-after-egypt-s-january-25-revolution-little-hope-remains> (March 8, 2016).

5 Shabaz, Adrian. 2016. "Five Years after Egypt's January 25 Revolution, Little Hope Remains." January 22. <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/five-years-after-egypt-s-january-25-revolution-little-hope-remains> (March 8, 2016).

6 Reporters Without Border. 2015. "RSF condemns arrest of yet another journalist in Egypt." December 2. <http://en.rsf.org/egypt-rsf-condemns-arrest-of-yet-another-02-12-2015,48611.html> (March 9, 2016).

with defaming religion.⁷ President Sisi's new 2015 antiterrorism law, which has been repeatedly used to prosecute individuals for nonviolent speech and nonviolent assembly, includes a minimum sentence of five years in prison for just posting information that could potentially mislead Egyptian police or judicial authorities.⁸

U.S. & Egypt Relations

Although Freedom House rated Egypt as "Not Free" in 2015, the United States, who has already promised Egypt with \$1.3 billion in military assistance in 2017, has allocated \$76 billion in bilateral foreign aid to Egypt between 1948 and 2015 (calculated in historical dollars—not adjusted for inflation).⁹ With the return of a police state and harsh authoritarian rule that began with the military coup in July 2013, the Obama Administration and U.S. policymakers have been put in a dilemma.

In June 2015, the United States State Department released its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 and noted the following on Egypt, "the most significant human rights problems were excessive use of force by security forces, including unlawful killings and torture; the suppression of civil liberties, including societal and government restrictions on freedom of expression and the press and the freedom of peaceful assembly and association; and limitations on due process in trials".¹⁰ While President Sisi has banned two of the country's main opposition groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, and has locked up a number of other opposition party members, the ongoing crackdown against dissent has put a big question mark on Egypt's international reputation.

How Important is Egypt? Principles Versus Interests

Egypt has been an important ally and geographic strong hold for the United States but Egypt's arms reliance is shifting away from the United States as President Sisi has started to purchase arms and military aid from Russia and France.¹¹ While the Obama Administration is focused on Operation Inherent Resolve against the Islamic State, Egypt has been focused on less and less within the region. While the Obama Administration wants Egypt to move towards a more democratic style of governance and a market-based economy, Egypt and President Sisi's security apparatus disagrees. The Egyptian government has accused American diplomats of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood, spreading neo-colonialism, and undermining Egypt's stability.¹²

While the 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt is considered one of the most successful treaties in Arab-Jewish relations, almost 40 years later the United States continues to be heavily invested in both countries. In 2014 \$5.9 billion in foreign military financing (roughly the GDP of Somalia), which is about 75% of all U.S. foreign military aid, was allocated to Israel and Egypt.¹³

7 Shabaz, Adrian. 2016. "Five Years after Egypt's January 25 Revolution, Little Hope Remains." January 22. <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/five-years-after-egypt-s-january-25-revolution-little-hope-remains> (March 8, 2016).

8 Ibid.

9 Sharp, Jeremy. 2016. "Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations." <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf>. *Congressional Research Service* (February): 1-25. (March 9, 2016).

10 U.S. State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. (2015). Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014: Egypt. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>. (March 9, 2016)

11 Raymen, Noah. 2015. "The Real Reason Egypt Is Buying Fighter Jets From France." February 14. <http://time.com/3710118/egypt-rafale-fighter-jet-france/> (March 9, 2016).

12 Sharp, Jeremy. 2016. "Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations." <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf>. *Congressional Research Service* (February): 1-25. (March 9, 2016).

13 Thompson, Nick. 2015. "Seventy-five percent of U.S. foreign military financing goes to two countries." November 11. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/11/politics/us-foreign-aid-report/> (March 12, 2016).

Something has to change...right?

The United States' relations with both Israel and Egypt have clearly been strained and U.S. proposals and ideals have stagnated. In Israel, the two-state solution with Palestine has completely deteriorated, domestic tensions between the Israeli and Palestinian communities continue to worsen, and Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Obama Administration have publicly disagreed on major foreign policies issues including the JCPOA Iran Nuclear Deal Agreement with the P5+1. In Egypt, U.S. foreign aid has continued to flow in, while human rights abuses by President Sisi continue to grow.

Egyptian Future

While the Sisi regime has completely smothered opportunities created by the 2011 uprising, the January 2016 Freedom House report quotes a young Egyptian capturing the general spirit of current apathy and anxiety, "People like me who had high hopes and took to the streets before are crushed with depression... We fear that the state is going to fall apart, and we know that a third revolutionary wave would take everything apart."¹⁴ With continued military aid to the police state of Egypt, it is hard to imagine another revolution, but just like the Arab Spring in 2011, there are instances in history that completely surprise and catch the Western world off guard.

In conclusion, I believe that Middle East scholar Aaron David Miller describes the overall situation in the region best, "the idea that the United States seriously believes—alone or with its partners—that it can address, much less resolve, the challenges of governance, sectarian conflict, religious divisions, lack of respect for human rights, and the conspiratorial and irrational reasoning that affect large parts of the Arab world is a leap of arrogance and ignorance so large that it threatens to consume what's left of American credibility".¹⁵ In a region of the world that is currently broken and dysfunctional, diplomatic actions must consist of transactional and reachable goals, not transformational and unrealizable ones. The United States is guilty of infantilizing Egypt, thus if the U.S. continues to accommodate Egypt, or any other state with billions of dollars in foreign military aid, then the U.S. must exert greater influence in human rights.

14 Shabaz, Adrian. 2016. "Five Years after Egypt's January 25 Revolution, Little Hope Remains." January 22. <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/five-years-after-egypt-s-january-25-revolution-little-hope-remains> (March 8, 2016).

15 Miller, Aaron David. 2016. "Obama Is Right: America Can't Fix the Middle East." March 13. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/03/us-foreign-policy-middle-east-213723> (April 9, 2016).

The Price Of Security

Lucas Silva Lopes

Ichiro Furutachi was the satirical presenter of Japan's evening news on TV Asahi. His show, "Hodo Station" has been religiously watched by millions of Japanese for nearly a decade due to its acid humor and vigorous criticism of the government. Mr. Furutachi however, due to increasing governmental pressure, has been forced to quit presenting "Hodo Station". James Rosen is a Fox News correspondent who, in 2013, had his email and telephone records secretly subpoenaed and seized by the Justice Department under the pretext of "being part of a national security leak investigations." Perhaps the most well-known case of controversial speech in recent memory, was Stephane Charbonnier, also known as Charb, editor-in-chief of the French magazine Charlie Hebdo that issued a satirical cartoon of Mohammed. On January 7th, Said and Cherif Kouachi broke in to the magazine's office and executed 12 people, Charb included.¹ The circumstances involving each one of the three individuals mentioned are certainly vastly different, and yet one concept ties all three of these men together: they are (or were) journalists who had their freedom of expression restricted, or in the case of Charb quite literally "gunned down".

The yearly "Freedom of Press" reports issued by Freedom House, an independent organization that analyzes the challenges to freedom and scores each country on a 0-100 scale with 0 being the best environment for the press and 100 being the worst, certainly point to this trend of press freedom being increasingly restricted in the 21st century. Scores for press freedom have been going down in the democratic world in the last three years. The latest report issued for the year 2014 found that press freedom had reached its lowest point in more than 10 years. Conditions for the media were found to have deteriorated sharply in 2014 to the point that journalists worldwide were facing increasing restrictions on the free-flow of news and information, and in some extreme cases even received threats to their own lives. Governments have employed tactics such as arrests and censorships to silence criticism whereas terrorists and other non-state forces kidnapped and/or executed journalists trying to cover armed conflicts and organized crime.² While it is true that the greatest decline in press freedom is registered in countries with questionable governments, the downward trend registered in democratic countries forming the coalition to fight terrorism, including the U.S, France, Canada and Japan, is alarming to say the very least.

Freedom House has lowered each of these countries "freedom of the press" scores within the last ten years. The case of the United States however, is more interesting due to its leap of three points (from 18 to 21) within the short span of just one year between 2013 and 2014. 2014 saw a harsher stance from the Obama administration. Much pressure was exerted to compel journalists to reveal their sources. Furthermore, the year of 2014 also saw a considerable distancing between officials of the Obama administration and journalists, as it became increasingly more difficult for reporters to gain access to government officials and information. At the same time however, government eavesdropping on news outlets and journalists increased.³

The irony, of course, is that the First Amendment is the world's strongest legal framework in the protection of free speech, and yet it appears the environment for freedom of press and information has grown more hostile in recent years. However, this should not come as a surprise. Throughout US history, the First Amendment has often been either challenged or violated in turbulent times. Such was the case under the Adams

1 F., J. 2015. "Free All Speech." *The Economist*. <http://www.economist.com/blogs/prospero/2015/05/charlie-hebdo-and-pen> (February 28, 2016).

2 Jennifer Dunham, Bret Nelson, and Elen Aghekyan. "Harsh Laws and Violence Drive Global Decline." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press-2015/harsh-laws-and-violence-drive-global-decline> (February 28, 2016).

3 "Freedom of the Press United States." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/united-states> (February 28, 2016).

administration at the end of the 18th century when rumors about French spies and a conspiracy surrounding Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans joining France in the war against England, led Adams and the Federalists to enact the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1801 that forbid "any derogatory criticism directed at the government."⁴ Another famous attack on the First Amendment came in 1919 with *Debs vs The United States* that jailed union leader Eugene Debs for violating the Espionage Act of 1917 by speaking out against World War I during a rally.⁵ The history of freedom of the press in the US is therefore a history of up-and-downs, but within the last century, there was a genuine breakthrough from the part of the Supreme Court. Cases such as *Brandenburg vs Ohio* in 1969 put hate speech on the spotlight and ruled the First Amendment did not protect it.⁶

Unlike the favorable political atmosphere of the second half of the 20th century, the 21st century has seen a gradual build-up of restrictions and intolerance towards journalists and freedom of expression. The 9/11 tragedy at the beginning of the century has led to increased efforts to prevent information breaches. The American government has thus passed more restrictive legislation on free speech and expression, such as the Patriot Act of 2001. While it is understandable the desire to enhance security and national surveillance to prevent another tragedy, it does not excuse restrictions on free speech and free press nor the greater surveillance of journalists that has been characteristic over the last years. National security, due to unknown and invisible enemy of terrorism, undoubtedly justifies broader controls and more restrictive immigration laws; it does not, however, justify trampling or challenging the First Amendment.

More conservative and preventive legislation however is not endemic to the U.S in recent years. The 2014 Parliament Hill Shooting in Canada and the Charlie Hebdo tragedy in France have also led to the enactment of more restrictive legislation in both countries. Where France took a more hard lining approach with free speech, Canadian leaders were subtler. The 1982 Canadian Constitution borrows heavily from the US First Amendment in its affirmation of the freedom of expression and freedom of the press, but at the same time deviates from its American counterpart by allowing the government to restrict free speech with the aim of ending discrimination.⁷ Nevertheless, in 2013 the Canadian Supreme Court made great strides in free speech and free expression by narrowly defining "hate speech" as "any representation or expression that exposes or tends to expose certain groups to hatred."⁸ In my opinion, the definition is still somewhat vague, and Canadian journalists began to worry. The tide for free speech and free press turned after the Parliament Hill Shootings in 2014. Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper swiftly passed Bill C-44, the Protection of Canada from Terrorists Act that proposed to broaden the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.⁹ It remains to be seen whether newly elected Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will attempt to overturn Bill C-44, although it does not seem likely.

In the wake of the Charlie Hebdo shootings, the French government passed a counterterrorism bill that could potentially limit free speech, especially online. This bill relocated the ambiguous provisions that incited or glorified to the criminal civil code.¹⁰ The problem however, is that those crimes are very broadly defined and the individual risks up to seven years in prison and a €100,000 if a certain crime is committed online. The new law also authorizes the government to ask Internet service providers to block sites for glorifying terrorism, and allow the police to use online monitoring and surveillance to detect violators.¹¹ In other words, the French government has gone the extra mile to prevent a second terrorist attack at the expense of free speech and free press.

4 Divine, Robert A. et al. 2013. *The American Story: Combined Volume*. Fifth. Boston: Pearson.

5 "Debs v. United States." *Oyez*. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1900-1940/249us211> (March 1, 2016)

6 "First Amendment Timeline." *First Amendment Center*. <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/first-amendment-timeline> (February 28, 2016).

7 "Freedom of the Press Canada." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/canada> (February 28, 2016).

8 "Freedom of the Press Canada." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/canada> (February 28, 2016).

9 "Freedom of the Press Canada." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/canada> (February 28, 2016).

10 "Freedom of the Press France." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/france> (February 28, 2016).

11 "Freedom of the Press France." *Freedom House*. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/france> (February 28, 2016).

The case of Japan however differs from the previous three countries. Greater restriction on free speech and press freedom is not the result of a terrorist attack but rather what are perceived to be dangerous neighbors.¹² Japan has never enjoyed much popularity in East Asia, but the rise of China as a global superpower has been used to justify increased national security. The Abe administration has grown more intolerant of any government criticism. In this sense, it has recently enacted the restrictive Protection of Specially Designated Secrets Act which imprisons journalists for up to five years should they publish leaked information. It also allowed the government to designate certain information as state secrets for up to sixty years.¹³

The conclusion reached from all the new restrictive legislation passed by the main countries engaged in the coalition against terror is that their own citizens are paying a great price for their security: their freedom to express themselves. Greater security and surveillance is a must, but cracking down on what the ordinary citizen may or may not say is definitely not the way to go. What good are beautifully worded constitutions that promote and protect the freedom of expression as one of the main inalienable rights if at the first threat governments will forsake themselves? The next few years must be followed by a gradual reversal of the measures and legislations passed, and governments need to find the right balance between national security and violating personal liberties.

¹² "Anchors Away". 2016. *The Economist* 418 (8977): 34-35

¹³ "Freedom of the Press Japan." Freedom House. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/japan> (March 21, 2016).

France's Continued 'State of Emergency' Stifles Civil Dialogue

Cailin McHugh-Roohr

A government's use of general panic as an opportunity to expand its power may be something of a tired cliché for many, but France's Socialist leadership, at least, seems to consider it *en vogue*.

After the November 13th attacks in Paris last year, President François Hollande ushered in a three-month state of emergency. Due to end on February 26, measures were then pushed through parliament to extend the state of emergency for an additional three months, as well as to increase the power of the central government for this duration.¹

On November 18, less than a week after the attacks, an apartment was raided in the banlieue of Saint-Denis, north of central Paris.² Several accomplices to the attacks either died in the raid or were taken into custody, preventing the completion of further planned attacks; a police-state success. The success on the part of the government's counter-terrorist efforts in the period following those investigations has been more dubious.

Before the initial state of emergency had reached the three-month mark, Amnesty International reported in early February that more than 3000 raids had produced only four preliminary investigations of terrorism-related crimes and one indictment.³

Under the state of emergency, security forces conducting searches and raids are bound only by vague allusions to possible terrorist associations. Often this means the targets of such raids have been somehow connected to someone in the S File, the secret list of hundreds of thousands of people the French government intelligence has flagged as suspicious.⁴ The S File is not subject to public or judicial oversight, so French citizens are rarely aware of whether they are included in the lists or what may have landed them there. Hundreds of secretly marked citizens have been put under house arrest, some for reasons as questionable as being the owner of a cafe where so-called suspicious persons sometimes have coffee.

It almost goes without saying that the actions of the government have created a climate where Muslim citizens in particular have seen the erosion of their freedom of expression, not to mention their freedom of movement and association. This is especially true in light of policies that could involve revoking French citizenship for dual-citizens convicted of crimes.⁵ What may come as more of a surprise is the other voices being silenced by the state of emergency.

Ahead of COP21 climate talks in Paris, which took place weeks after the attacks, several dozen French citizens were put under house arrest.⁶ These citizens weren't accused of being ISIL-inspired radicals, or even of

1 humanité.fr. 2016. "Etat d'urgence, les droits des citoyens devant les mesures prises" Jan 28. <http://www.humanite.fr/etat-durgence-les-droits-des-citoyens-devant-les-mesures-prises-591760> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

2 newyorker.com. 2015. "Raid in Sa int-Denis" Nov 18. <http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/raid-in-saint-denis> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

3 libération.fr. 2016. "Amnesty International appelle à la fin de l'état d'urgence, qui «a bouleversé des centaines de vies»" Feb 4. http://www.liberation.fr/france/2016/02/04/amnesty-international-appelle-a-la-fin-de-l-etat-d-urgence-qui-a-bouleverse-des-centaines-de-vies_1431041 (Accessed April 1, 2016).

4 lefigaro.fr. 2015. "Qu'est-cequ'une fiche «S»?" Nov 14. <http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2015/06/26/01016-20150626ARTFIG00345-attentat-en-isere-qu-est-ce-qu-une-fiche-s.php> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

5 hrw.org. 2016. "France: Abuses Under State of Emergency" Feb 3. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/02/03/france-abuses-under-state-emergency> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

6 ibtimes.co.uk. 2015. "COP21: France uses Paris attacks' state of emergency to detain environmental protesters" Nov 28. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/cop21-france-us-es-paris-attacks-state-emergency-detain-environmental-protesters-1530939> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

serving them coffee, but were instead suspected of being too radically environmentalist.

Over the course of COP21, numerous demonstrations were shut down by the police and National Guard. Human-chains promoting international environmental unity were dismantled and largely peaceful marches were met with teargas.⁷ Place de la République, the square that had been filled only a week before with flowers for those lost in the attacks, became filled with pairs of empty shoes, as French citizens unable to march under such restrictions insisted on making their numbers known.⁸ More than ten thousand shoes were promptly cleared from the square by security forces.

At the time, there was a sense that although environmentalist demonstrations were unlikely to promote terrorist acts, it was possible to argue, at least, that they could provide cover for some sort of violent activity. COP21 ended in December, but as the November attacks have grown more and more distant, crackdowns on unrelated protests have become no less habitual.

On March 6, for example, security presence was high at a demonstration for women's rights, ahead of international women's day. One woman was arrested for wearing a t-shirt that read called for the boycotting of the 'Israeli Apartheid State,' which drew protesters to the outside of the third arrondissement police office where she was held.⁹ The tone of the protest quickly shifted to one antagonistic towards the state of emergency in France.

Of course, the state of emergency has been the subject of many protests across the country in its own right. Many of which, naturally, have been shut down on account of restrictions in place because of the state of emergency.

One of the ironies of the situation is the nature of the attacks that have been used to justify the gagging of French civil dialogue. As the main targets of November's attacks were the cafés and concert hall of the 11th arrondissement in Paris, many French people felt their culture had been targeted. Attending a concert or sharing a bottle of wine in one of Paris' most multicultural quarters is a common way for French youth to spend a Friday night, and in the week following many did just that in order to spite the notion that their way of life could be successfully disrupted by such violence.

In terms of cultural identity, protesting is as French as wine or baguette, and in terms of preserving means of aggregated expression it is uniquely vital. By continuing to use the state of emergency as a means to minimize demonstrations, the French government has prioritized a pretense of security over protecting the liberties upon which it was founded.

7 [ibtimes.co.uk](http://www.ibtimes.co.uk). 2015. "COP21: Riot police detain 100 climate change protesters as tear gas fired in Paris" Nov 29. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/cop21-tear-gas-fired-riot-police-shut-down-climate-change-demonstration-paris-1531029> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

8 [lexpress.fr](http://www.lexpress.fr). 2015. "COP 21: la place de la République recouverte par 4 tonnes de chaussures" Nov 30. http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/environnement/cop21-la-place-de-la-republique-recouverte-par-4-tonnes-de-chaussures_1740583.html (Accessed April 1, 2016).

9 [humanite.fr](http://www.humanite.fr). 2016. "Une militante BDS arrêtée pour port de T-Shirt : organisons la riposte !" March 8. <http://www.humanite.fr/une-militante-bds-arretee-pour-port-de-t-shirt-organisons-la-riposte-601371> (Accessed April 1, 2016).

Freedom of Speech and Social Mobilization in the Technological Era

Rubayet Lasker

In the past decade, the world has seen great turmoil in the relationship between the state and its people. Drawing a correlation between the explosion of technology and social upheaval, I argue that social media has empowered voices historically silenced by those in power. The Internet, a medium that the state has limited control over, is an unregulated marketplace of ideas increasingly accessible to a larger population. I will use Tunisia and Bangladesh as case studies to illustrate how expanded freedom of speech has led to greater hostilities between marginalized and power-holding groups, in both authoritarian and democratic settings.

Tunisia

The Tunisian Revolution sparked the crisis of this generation, the Arab Spring, leading to the displacement of millions. It began on December 17, 2010, when the police confiscated 26-year-old Mohammad Bouazizi's livelihood, his vegetable cart. After being turned away by municipal officials, his frustration with the state peaked as he poured fuel over himself and lit his body on fire.¹ His death was immortalized on video and shared throughout the world. This act was emblematic of what fueled the larger forces of the revolution, as it can be argued that the state of the economy was the core problem. Thomas O'Brien argues that while Ben Ali's Tunisia had a so-called booming economy, wealth distribution analysis paints a more complex picture. GDP per capita doubled between 1987 and 2010 as a result of adherence to rigid IMF structural adjustments. The Ben Ali regime achieved this growth by basing the private sector on internationally competitive production. However, there was a great deal of corruption, and the economy was vastly based on top-down decision making, with power in the hands of a few business and political elites. This contradiction is illustrated when examining rates of unemployment; for those with higher education, unemployment increased from a rate of 1.6% in 1994 to 28% in 2010.² Thus, the country's GDP continued to increase the wealth in the state's hands, while the general population of Tunisia suffered.

Due to the oppressive authoritarian nature of the government, the people were unable to express these frustrations through the political process. A few civil society organizations were able to find opportunities within the oppressive system to advocate for labor rights, but it was extremely difficult for these organizations to survive the constant threat of violence and manipulation from the state. In examining freedom of the press, the law seems to protect free speech. Article 1 of the Tunisian Press Code advocates for "freedom of the press, publishing, printing and distributing books and publications." Additionally, the constitution apparently guarantees freedom of opinion and expression through press. However, Tunisia received a "Not Free" status from Freedom House in the Freedom of the Press category every year between 2002 and 2011, with increasingly worsening scores (Freedom House).³ Every medium of the press, including television, radio, and print, is state-run. The Tunisian Radio and Television Establishment (ERTT) operates the country's television and radio.⁴ The main goal of state TV is to propagate a

1 Abouzeid, Rania. 2011. "Bouazizi: The Man Who Set Himself and Tunisia on Fire". Time. <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2044723,00.html> (January 21, 2011)

2 O'Brien, Thomas. "The primacy of political security: contentious politics and insecurity in the Tunisian revolution". *Democratization* 22.7 (2015): 1201-1229. Published Online.

3 <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/tunisia>

4 Miladi, Noureddine. "Tunisia: A media led revolution?". Al Jazeera. 17 Jan 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/01/2011116142317498666.html>

competent and successful image of the President, with most news channels' reporting almost exclusively covering the everyday engagements of Ben Ali. Thus, contrary to its constitution, the state, or the power-holders, controls all platforms of expression in Tunisia, resulting in the oppression of any voices that may contradict the state in any capacity.

Attempts to mobilize through press and civil society therefore proved to be largely fruitless as frustration with the regime culminated with the revolution. Mohammad Bouazizi's suicide illustrates how the public sphere of government and state hurts and harms an individual's private sphere. Perhaps this is why the image of his suicide became viral on social media, a platform through which people express their personal thoughts within the public sphere. Initial protests against the government were in Sidi Bouzid, Bouazizi's home city. Unsurprisingly, these protests were followed by a brutal police crackdown. However, inspired by Bouazizi's sacrifice, protesters refused to be silenced, and images of police brutality rapidly circulated through Twitter and Facebook. Within 24 hours of the protests, #Tunisia and #SidBouzid were trending on Twitter. Soon after, the Tunisian Revolution went viral on the Internet. The harder the police cracked down on the protesters, the more pictures circulated social media, which, in turn, attracted more protesters. This cycle created a social upheaval between the state and its people that spread throughout the Middle East. On January 14, 2011, less than a month after Bouazizi's suicide, Ben Ali and his family fled to Saudi Arabia. The Tunisian Revolution serves as an example of how technology empowers the oppressed. In this authoritarian setting, the Tunisia case illustrates the way the government holds onto power by limiting freedom of speech of its people. Social media has radically changed the way an authoritarian state centralizes power, as it has little to no control over this new, immense medium

Bangladesh

While authoritarian governments theoretically operate differently, it is important to discuss ways in which many voices have been oppressed in democracies as well. While American school systems teach their students that the purpose of democracy is to bring power to all people, in practice, democracy brings power to the majority. In Bangladesh, the majority population is Muslim; this has led to a social power dynamic in which Muslims control the proliferation of media and literature. For example, in 1993, Taslima Nasrin rose to fame in Dhaka after the publication of her novel *Lajja*, or *Shame*, which portrayed the marginalization of Hindus by Muslim fundamentalists. Despite having sold 600,000 copies, the book was banned, and its author, Nasrin, was banished by the Bangladeshi government. Years later, Nasrin still faces death threats from various Islamist groups operating within Bangladesh. There was no real mobilization to protest against this injustice, but rather, a general social attitude of indifference and condescension towards Nasrin. Meanwhile, Muslims in the country seem to have a monopoly on violence. Islamists regularly set fire to Hindu villages with no attempt at legal repercussion.⁵ A double standard exists in Bangladesh that leads to censorship of some, and encouragement of violence for others. Thus mainstream print media, television, and literature continued to serve the majority power holders.

Yet, in the past decade, the Internet has become increasingly accessible to a greater demographic of the Bangladeshi population, giving rise to a secular humanist Bangladeshi blogosphere. Avijit Roy was an engineer as well as the editor of his blog "Mukto Mona" or "Free Mind". On February 26, 2015, Islamist extremists attacked Roy and his wife with machetes, resulting in Roy's death. Washiqur Rahman, Ananta Bijoy Bas, Shaiful Islam, and Niladry Chattopadhyaya were Atheist bloggers as well, advocating for a post religious society. All of them were murdered in the exact same style with machetes, by Islamist extremists. These murders and their graphically violent nature illustrate upheaval as the result of changing power dynamics. While power holders even in democracies have been able to indirectly control the flow of information in the past through traditional forms of media, the Internet and social media are largely unregulated. Therefore, it provides a platform

⁵ Mohapatra, Atanu & Sahoo Prakash. "Violence Against Minority Hindus in Bangladesh: An Analysis" <http://www.vifindia.org/print/2200>

for free speech amongst groups who were previously oppressed. Bangladeshi bloggers have created an online community, thus are able to mobilize quickly. For example, the Shahbag Protests, which protested for the death penalty of Islamist war criminal Abdul Quader Molla is a prime example of this secular online community mobilizing against powerful state and societal actors. This mobilization and empowerment amongst historically silenced voices causes upheaval and backlash, resulting in violence amongst the oppressors and the oppressed. The Bangladesh case shows that a government does not necessarily have to be authoritarian in order to limit free speech. In fact, it can be argued that because democracies by definition serve the majority, there is a tendency to institutionalize power in the hands of the majority while silencing minority groups.

Discussion

The Bangladesh and Tunisia case studies illustrate the dynamics of free speech, social media, and mobilization in democratic and authoritarian settings. While the avenues of oppression are different, the trend remains the same: social media has empowered traditionally oppressed groups and provided a platform for expression. The power holders, either the state, privileged citizens, or both, create backlash in order to maintain their power. This results in violence and social upheaval. Bangladesh and Tunisia are merely case studies to illustrate a worldwide trend of social media driven social upheaval.

Political Speech under the First Amendment

Maye Henning

Political speech exists everywhere, in many different forms. The diversity of the topics represented in this issue of the UConn Undergraduate Political Review serves as a testament to that fact. “Speech” ranges from political activism to cartoons, the political rhetoric of presidential candidates, and online postings, spanning across continents and college campuses. This variety begs the question: what counts as “speech”? Particularly, what counts as speech under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution?

The First Amendment reads: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”¹ For over two hundred years, this amendment has formed the foundation for our understanding of “free speech.”

Since the early decades of Constitutional history, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled on cases to which the direct relevance of the First Amendment is not immediately evident. Through rendering decisions in favor of the party whose actions the Supreme Court has determined are protected under the First Amendment, the Court has expanded the definition of speech. Actions that extend beyond “pure speech,” limited to “verbal expression” as a means to communicate ideas² are denoted as “speech-plus” or “symbolic speech.” Speech-plus refers to the combination of speech and actions, whereas symbolic speech refers to non-verbal actions.³ Here are two examples symbolic speech as determined by the Supreme Court.

Flag Burning: Gregory Lee Johnson was arrested and convicted for violating a state statute in Texas that prohibited “the desecration of a venerated object, including the American flag, if such anger were likely to incite anger in others.”⁴ The 1989 Supreme Court Case *Texas v. Johnson* determined that the First Amendment protected flag burning because it “constitutes a form of ‘symbolic speech.’” Despite the Congress’ dissatisfaction with this ruling, the decision was upheld in later cases.⁵

Financial Contributions to Political Campaigns: The 1976 case *Buckley v. Valeo* determined that the government could not limit campaign expenditures made “by candidates from their own personal or family resources,” however upheld the constitutionality of limitations on individual campaign contributions.⁶ This case paved the way for the 2009 decision for *Citizens United v. Federal Election*, which called into question the right of corporations to make certain types of campaign contributions. The Supreme Court determined that it is unconstitutional to limit or ban corporate election-related spending, thus expanding the scope of *Buckley v. Valeo*.⁷

Undoubtedly, the U.S. Supreme Court plays an integral role in the determination of constitutionally protected forms of speech. Whether or not the First Amendment protects certain actions is not always clear, as conceptions of “speech” change over time based on technological advances and the present political atmosphere. The increasing complexity of society creates new potential forms of speech, and it is the Court that ultimately

¹ “First Amendment.” *Cornell University Law School, Wex Legal Dictionary*, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/first_amendment (April 16, 2016).

² “First Amendment Rights.” *The Independence Hall Association*, <http://www.ushistory.org/gov/10b.asp> (April 16, 2016).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ “Facts and Case Summary- *Texas v. Johnson*.” *Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts*, <http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/facts-and-case-summary-texas-v-johnson> (April 16, 2016).

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ “*Buckley v. Valeo*.” *Oyez*, <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1975/75-436> (April 15, 2016).

⁷ Kristen Sullivan, March 2, 2010. “Summary of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.” *Connecticut General Assembly*, <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-R-0124.htm> (November 3, 2015)

determines whether or not they count. As we enter into this period of uncertainty with regard to the composition of the Court. In this technological age in which mediums for communication are constantly changing, we must be conscious of the opportunity for the expansion or constraint of rights and what the implications may be.

Freedom vs Correctness: How We View Speech

Evelyn Luchs

A common trope about the Netherlands is that Dutch people are very direct. In the short months I've been here, this has been true. The students I've met in the Netherlands, rather unlike most of the people I know at UCONN, are not concerned with whether or not their words offend someone. I've experienced everything from being told that I should really go to the gym more to hearing someone start a sentence with the tricky words "maybe this is prejudiced, but..." "Rude? Yeah. Offensive? Probably. Initially, I was uncomfortable and indignant. *That is so politically incorrect*, I thought, *how could people our age say things like that?* I would turn to other exchange students and raise my eyebrows at them in my best Jim Halpert impression.

But what's really strange is the fact that this seems foreign. After all, isn't the First Amendment, so beloved by our country, based on the idea that everyone has a right to speak their mind? Of course, that what people choose to say may, at the same time, be distasteful, rude, or offensive.

We discuss political correctness a lot in the United States, and, I would say, with good reason. In general, political correctness prevents people from being disrespected or hurt by offensive speech. So why is it so controversial? Are we limiting our own First Amendment rights by policing the speech of ourselves and our peers?

In the Netherlands, the idea of "Dutch Directness" is a commonly accepted cultural phenomenon. It is typical for people here to be very blunt and not to worry about how their words might be received. However, there are limits. For example, populist politician Geert Wilders was tried in 2011 under Article 137 of the Criminal Code for comments he made about the Muslim community in the Netherlands.¹ The article aimed to prevent what we in the United States would consider hate speech. However, after Wilders was acquitted, the government reconsidered the code and widened the scope of free speech by repealing blasphemy laws (although hate speech is still illegal, as well as threatening the police or the royal family).¹

Wilders' political party, the Party for Freedom, is infamous for its anti-immigration, anti-Muslim stance. The conservative news website Breitbart even reports that Wilders is a Trump supporter (not at all surprising given their similar intolerance for Muslims).² And yet, populism gains support. Even other political parties such as the Christian Democratic party and the Socialist party have adopted the populist themes of a Dutch *leitkultur* (leading culture) or *heimat* (native region).³

But is this the result of a non-politically correct culture? After all, in the United States Trump continues to succeed in the polls. Or, is our approach to political correctness all wrong? Are we unnecessarily policing our thoughts and words in the hopes of limiting offensiveness, when in reality it doesn't prevent us from hearing prominent politicians propose building a wall to keep immigrants out? We are careful to make sure we don't offend anyone we talk to but we still have huge issues to overcome with how we treat women, minorities, the LGBTQ community, and other historically marginalized groups.

The Dutch approach, on the other hand, seems to be to not sweat the small stuff. They aim for blunt and direct, they put all their opinions on the line, and they accept that free speech means that sometimes, someone will say something offensive or even rude. They have a multiparty political system where everyone (yes, even populists)

¹ "The Netherlands." *Free Speech and Free Press Around the World*. 2013. Web. 23 Feb. 2016.

² "Geert Wilders Endorses Donald Trump, Also Demands No More Muslims." *Breitbart News*. 2015. Web. 23 Feb. 2016.

³ Besamusca, Emmeline, and J. Verheul. *Discovering the Dutch: On Culture and Society of the Netherlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2010. Print.

has a voice, regardless of what they have to say. Maybe neither nation has a perfect system, but the attitude of directness seems to save the Dutch a lot of effort and stress.

It's difficult to say whether the United States would be better off if we adopted a more direct culture surrounding speech, but I think the fact that politicians in both cultures are able to gain support despite advocating incredibly racist, sexist, and offensive platforms indicates that maybe political correctness is missing the point.

The nature of political correctness is that, instead of being universally agreed upon, in some cases it is a standard imposed by others. People who would otherwise be saying offensive things feel like they cannot speak their mind or be direct for fear of being considered bigoted. Instead of basing our speech on what others may think of us, I think we need to question ourselves. In a truly tolerant culture, there should be no need for a standard of political correctness because nobody should need to be forced or pressured into not being bigoted. Instead of focusing on if we're "correct", instead of making sure that other people do not find us rude or bigoted, we should be focusing on our own assumptions about race, gender and culture. It is imperative that we question ourselves, our own attitudes and our own biases. Freedom of Speech is our right as Americans, but with that right comes a responsibility not to use our speech to oppress others.

We've tried to use a culture of political correctness to prevent people from hurting others, and yet we still have not tackled our societal problems with race and gender. It may seem more liberating to freely let people speak their minds a la Dutch Directness, but unfortunately one cannot force someone to stop being bigoted. Instead, we should focus on being more aware of what we say and why we say it. Political correctness can only do so much; the only real way to prevent offensive speech is to combat the attitudes behind it.

Conservative Talk Radio's (Unintentional) Case for Political Correctness

Christian Caron

“Political correctness” has been a favorite target of conservative talk radio ever since the medium emerged as a major force in Republican politics a couple decades ago. UConn should know this all too well, considering that just a few years ago, the notorious Rush Limbaugh falsely reported that Carolyn Luby, who was then a student here, had argued that the new Husky logo “promotes rape.”¹ (In reality, Luby had used the logo as a means of criticizing the administration’s efforts to downplay sexual assault committed by student athletes.) The general public seems to agree that political correctness has gone too far, according to multiple public opinion polls.² Ironically enough, though, those same hosts who rail against “PC culture” need look no further than their own previous remarks if they wish to understand why it is necessary to hold public figures accountable for the discourse they promote.

Donald Trump’s misogynistic remarks pale in comparison to those of some conservative talk radio hosts. Perhaps most infamously, Limbaugh labeled Sandra Fluke, a Georgetown Law student, a “slut” and a “prostitute” for voicing support for the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive mandate.³ Mark Levin has shown a penchant for making vulgar and degrading comments about women as well. After presenting the results of a poll that showed Hillary Clinton’s gender was her most popular quality, Levin exclaimed, “It’s her genitalia that stands out! . . . I wonder if Bill Clinton would vote for her because of that. He seems to—well he likes genitalia, but maybe not hers.”⁴ Aware that liberal women calling into his program would not appreciate him attempting to reduce them to their physical appearance, Levin used to regularly ask them what they were wearing. It was not until his mother reprimanded him that he finally cut this habit. Limbaugh’s disparaging remarks cost him sponsorships as well as syndication with two stations, but Levin has repeatedly emerged unscathed. Such comments lend credence to the notion that the Republican Party is waging a “war on women.” So long as the likes of Limbaugh and Levin, who command a combined viewership of approximately 20 million, serve as the *de facto* voice of the GOP, it is difficult to imagine the party ever closing the gender gap.⁵

The anti-immigrant sentiment that has become commonplace among Republicans has its roots, in part, in conservative talk radio. The most egregious example of anti-immigrant rhetoric came last year from Iowa radio host Jan Mickelson, who suggested that Iowa deem undocumented immigrants “property of the state” and “extort or exploit or indenture [their] labor.” After a caller compared his plan to slavery, Mickelson unashamedly asked, “What’s wrong with slavery?”⁶ Michael Savage, whose show is nationally syndicated, proposed something similar only a few months prior, recommending to Donald Trump that he build his wall along the U.S.-Mexico border with undocumented immigrant labor. Talk show hosts regularly dehumanize and demonize undocumented immigrants, portraying them as criminal job stealers. Similar suspicions informed the federal government’s decisions to effectively bar Chinese immigration in 1882 and severely restrict the immigration of “undesirables”—

1 The Rush Limbaugh Show. “This is How It Starts: One UConn Student Says New Husky Logo Promotes Rape.” The Rush Limbaugh Show. http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/daily/2013/04/26/this_is_how_it_starts_one_uconn_student_says_new_husky_logo_promotes_rape.

2 Rasmussen. 2015. “Is America Too PC?” *Rasmussen Reports*. http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/general_politics/august_2015/is_america_too_pc.

3 Weisman, Jonathan. 2012. “Obama Backs Student in Furor with Limbaugh on Birth Control.” *New York Times*. http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/02/boehner-condemns-limbaughs-comments/?_r=0.

4 Marshall, Olivia. 2014. “Mark Levin: The Go-To Radio Host for GOP Lawmakers Despite Inflammatory Rhetoric.” *Media Matters for America*. <http://mediamatters.org/blog/2014/03/24/mark-levin-the-go-to-radio-host-for-gop-lawmakers/198585>.

5 Talkers. 2016. “The Top Talk Radio Audiences: March 2016.” *Talkers*. <http://www.talkers.com/top-talk-radio-audiences/>.

6 Angster, Daniel and Salvatore Colleluori. 2015. “IA Radio Host: Enslave Undocumented Immigrants Unless They Leave.” *Media Matters for America*. <http://mediamatters.org/blog/2015/08/19/ia-radio-host-jan-mickelson-enslave-undocumented/205020>.

primarily Southern and Eastern Europeans—in the 1920s. The racialized xenophobia fostered by conservative talk radio has had policy consequences, too, contributing to the demise of comprehensive immigration reform twice within the past decade. At the peak of the debate over the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007, Limbaugh and his cohort devoted about a quarter of their airtime to defeating the bill, thereby helping to mobilize the opposition.⁷ Aware of the role conservative talk radio had played in defeating the 2007 bill, Senate immigration reform advocates convinced Senator Marco Rubio to try to sell the 2013 “Gang of Eight” bill to the various hosts.⁸ Limbaugh and Levin refused to go along, and vehement conservative opposition led the House to kill the Senate-passed bill.

Through insinuation, conservative talk radio has helped perpetuate the myth that President Obama is a Muslim. Although Glenn Beck disagreed with a Trump supporter’s statement that “we got a problem in this country . . . called Muslims” and that “our current president is one,” he proceeded to argue that Obama “view[s] things through the lens of an Islamist.”⁹ Similarly, though he has yet to explicitly refer to Obama as a Muslim, Levin regularly questions Obama’s Christianity and accuses him of being an anti-Semite who favors Islam over other religions. Levin and other hosts have also exaggerated Obama’s past relationships with Rashid Khalidi, a scholar who is allegedly sympathetic to the cause of Palestinian liberation, and William Ayers, a domestic terrorist.¹⁰ Implicit in all these remarks, of course, is the notion that there is something inherently wrong with being a Muslim. Moreover, by associating a president their viewers despise with a misunderstood and stereotyped religion, conservative talk show hosts are exacerbating Islamophobia within the Republican Party.

Fortunately, the public possesses the means to hold talk show hosts unaccountable for their harmful rhetoric, without infringing on anyone’s First Amendment right to free speech. Following the eruption of controversy, interest groups such as the National Organization for Women and Moveon.org should forcefully condemn the source of the bigoted comment and begin organizing boycotts against the host’s sponsors and stations. Admittedly, boycotts alone are unlikely to produce the desired outcome, in part because the consumers who can deliver the most damage to a company’s profits tend to be those for whom boycotting has the highest opportunity cost.¹¹ Interest group mobilization can, however, direct the media’s attention to an issue. As the Limbaugh-Fluke controversy demonstrated, sponsors and stations are sometimes responsive to public outcry if the comment in question is sufficiently vile and draws significant media attention. While the loss of a sponsorship may not cost a host his show, it could deter him and others from making similar comments in the future.

Over three years ago, the RNC warned that the Republican Party would become obsolete unless it appealed to a broader swath of voters, particularly women and minorities. This has proven to be a difficult task, as evidenced by the current state of the Republican presidential race. Even in the absence of Trump, though, the GOP would have had its work cut out for it, in part because of the unapologetic vileness of conservative talk radio. Some of the aforementioned hosts came to the defense of Heidi Cruz, and rightly so, after she was the subject of threats and sexist attacks from Trump. It is a shame that they are not equally empathetic to the victims of their own vicious attacks.

7 Pew Research Center. 2013. “Will Conservative Talkers Take on Immigration Reform?” <http://www.journalism.org/2013/02/01/will-conservative-talkers-take-immigration-reform/>.

8 Horowitz, Jason. 2016. “Marco Rubio Pushed for Immigration Reform with Conservative Media.” *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/politics/marco-rubio-pushed-for-immigration-reform-with-conservative-media.html>.

9 Feldman, Josh. 2014. “Beck: Obama’s Not a Muslim: But He Views Things Through the Lens of an Islamist.” *Mediaite*. <http://www.mediaite.com/online/beck-obamas-not-a-muslim-but-he-views-things-through-the-lens-of-an-islamist/>.

10 Morris, Michael. 2015. “Mark Levin: Entire Obama Admin is Filled with ‘Left-Wing Marxist Jew Haters.’” *CNS News*. <http://cnsnews.com/blog/michael-morris/mark-levin-entire-obama-admin-filled-left-wing-marxist-jew-haters>

11 Delacote, Phillipe. 2006. “Are Consumer Boycotts Effective?” Presented at the the 6th Meeting on Game Theory and Practice Dedicated to Development, Natural Resources, and the Environment, Zaragoza, Spain.

Donald Trump: The Great American Democratic Man

Harrison Fregeau

Political discourse in the 2016 Presidential Election Cycle has been anything but presidential. Unlike past cycles, defined by polished, regal figures like Kennedy, Reagan or Obama, the brash, boorish Ubermensch defines public discourse in the Twitter Era. His 140 character sound-bites, all sizzle no steak, require little to no political interest, aptitude, or competence to understand. The Nickleback of politicians, He inspires devoted admiration from a select portion of the American electorate, while viscerally alienating the rest. Love Him or hate Him, He requires each American to hold an opinion of Him. For those fearful of voter apathy, He is the remedy. In creating a clearly defined choice, He has democratized interest in the American democratic republic.

His rise, along with the Democratic Socialist's, comes at a time when Americans increasingly perceive their system as oligarchic. The solution to the rise of oligarchy, embodied either by Wall Street or the disconnected Washington elites, is bringing power back to the popular class: democratizing. This diverse, disenfranchised class, adrift since the early 1970's, appears unwilling to cede power any longer. Literary sources, like Plato's *Republic*, de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, and historical moments, like the victory of Lincoln over Douglass, show how this type of movement failed in the past.

Plato's *Republic*, one of the great works of classical literature, ranked five types of government systems. Democracy ranks as the second worst, below oligarchy, yet above tyranny. Democracy values freedom most highly, yet freedom is its slavery. Degenerating from Oligarchy, Democracy forms as diversity increases, and more people join the ranks of the poor. In its indictment of democracy, Plato's *Republic* also defines the Democratic Man. The son of the Oligarchic Man, the Democratic Man lacks the discipline of his father, and pursues all which wealth can buy: luxury, fame, and perhaps, power. The rise of the Democratic man, provides the fuel for the rise of the Tyrannical Man.

With deep classical educations, the Founding Fathers, fearful of democracy, modeled their new government on the Roman Republic. The Electoral College, indirect election of senators, and informal presidential term limits, all intended to prevent the rise of the Democratic Man. Half a century later, Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* noted Americans' refusal to defer to elites as a great sign of democratic tendencies. Ordinary Americans enjoyed too much power, claimed too great a voice in the public sphere, to defer to intellectual superiors¹. This anti-elite, anti-intellectual strain in American thought never went away.

Born into a wealthy New York family, He is the son of the oligarchic man. In an economically struggling, increasingly diverse society, racially, ethnically, sexually, orientationally, His weird semi-Confucian call to "Make America Great Again" reverberates across the nation. Despite the animosity and derision of the full spectrum of the oligarchic media empire, from Fox News to the New York Times, He leads the Republican primary contest. Enough of the mass American electorate embodies de Tocqueville's observation of Americans' refusal to follow their intellectual superiors that He seems poised for the presidency.

Yet, He, this straw man, is a one trick pony. Rhetoric, dangerous, demagogic, democratic, rhetoric, is His only weapon. America has overcome dangerous rhetoric before.

In 1850, the great rising American political figure was Stephen Douglass of Illinois, whose great ideological contribution to politics was popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty advocated that the (white male) citizens of US

¹ Joshua Kaplan (2005). "Political Theory: The Classic Texts and their Continuing Relevance". The Modern Scholar. 14 lectures; (lectures #11 & #12) – see disc 6.

Western Territories should vote on whether or not to allow slavery in the future state. Democratic means pursued the greatest of undemocratic ends: the enslavement of other human beings. Fortunately, the conservative voice of another Illinoisan, Abraham Lincoln, an opponent of slavery's expansion into western territories, combined with patriotic Jayhawkers in "Bleeding Kansas", exposed the idea as a sham. In just 15 years, slavery in the US went from an issue decided at the ballot box, to one buried deep underground its historical coffin.

It's time for Americans to use their greatest democratic contribution: voting. Having already missed their first opportunity to stop Him², American voters must act to break the Snake Charmer's spell. Vote for the Democratic Socialist. Vote for Robot Rodham. Vote for the Governor from Ohio. Vote for Machiavelli... whoops, did I say that? Must have slipped out... (OK maybe don't vote for Cruz). Let's stop Him before we have to fight a second Civil War.

Democracy takes on many different forms. He embodies the worst of these forms. Don't enable the Great American Democratic Man.

² The Economist, "How Non-Voters Could Have Stopped Trump", March 19, 2016, <http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21695076-how-non-voters-blew-it>

Donald J. Hypocrisy: A Lesson in Freedom of Speech

Will Fricke

Before he was executed by British soldiers on September 22, 1776, American spy and folk hero Nathan Hale cast himself into American history with his famous declaration, “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.”¹ Patriots like Nathan Hale have fought and sacrificed for our country, risking life and limb so that we can enjoy the freedoms we hold dear. No one today enjoys these freedoms more so than a certain Donald J. Trump, and no one misunderstands these freedoms more so than the Donald.

Last month, Trump had to cancel a rally at the University of Chicago, due to rowdy protests outside the venue after supporters of Bernie Sanders organized a crash of the event.² After the cancellation, Trump took to the airwaves, reminiscing over how his free speech rights had been violated by well-organized college students.³ Even Megyn Kelly, who has a tumultuous relationship with Mr. Trump, said “all eyes for the moment are on Donald Trump and how he handles this situation in Chicago, where his First Amendment free speech rights have been shut down.”⁴

I am all for people having the right to say what they want, no matter how much they cause people around the world to lose respect for the United States. It’s all within the spirit of freedom of speech. What I am not for, however, are people with a public platform like what Trump and Kelly have misrepresenting what the Constitution is and says. Contrary to what they believe, Amendment I does not say, “Anyone can say anything they want anywhere and at any time and no one can stop them and there is nothing anyone can do about it.” Amendment I simply says that Congress is barred from making laws that limit the freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition.⁵ Funny enough, there is no mention of organized citizens using the power of assembly to make it difficult for someone to hold a campaign rally. Amendment I only prohibits the government from restricting rights. We The People can do what we want.

I probably would not even delve into the Donald complaining about his free speech rights being violated (which they weren’t) if it wasn’t for him actually calling for freedom of press restrictions not two weeks before. He was kind of asking for it. After securing the coveted nomination of wildly unpopular New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Donald Trump pledged to “open up our libel laws so when [newspapers] write purposely negative stories . . . we can sue them and make lots of money”.⁶ Good luck getting that passed. What’s next? Proposals to commit war crimes and disrespecting Vietnam POW’s?

Of course, there is a very real, albeit slim, possibility of Donald Trump becoming the next president of the United States. His chances are slightly better than the chance the Jets have at winning Super Bowl L. At the very least, he has to know what it means to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

1 Library of Congress. “Patriot Nathan Hale Was Hanged September 22, 1776.” http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/revolut/jb_revolut_hale_1.html (April 2, 2016)

2 Seitz-Wald, Alex. 2016. “How Bernie Sanders Supporters Shut Down Donald Trump’s Rally in Chicago.” March 12. <http://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/how-bernie-sanders-supporters-shut-down-donald-trump-s-rally-n537191> (April 2, 2016)

3 Jacobs, Ben; McCarthy, Ciara; Stafford, Zach. 2016. “Donald Trump Chicago rally called off amid protests and violence.” March 12. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/mar/12/donald-trump-rally-called-off-in-chicago-amid-protests-violence-and-chaos> (April 2, 2016)

4 Staff. 2016. “Megyn Kelly: Donald Trump’s “First Amendment Free Speech Rights Have Been Shut Down.” March 11. <http://mediamatters.org/video/2016/03/11/megyn-kelly-donald-trumps-first-amendment-free/209203> (April 2, 2016)

5 Cornell University Law School. “First Amendment.” https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/first_amendment (April 2, 2016)

6 Jacobs, Ben. 2016. “Donald Trump pledges to curb press freedom through libel laws.” February 26. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/26/trump-pledges-curb-press-freedom-libel-laws-first-amendment> (April 2, 2016)

Trump: The Protector of a Nation

Sam Julien

About two years ago, powerful Republican powerbrokers met with Donald Trump in hopes of convincing him to run for governor of New York. Donald wanted to go straight to the top job though and had less interest in being governor. According to an article in Politico “To the GOP county chairs and assemblymen there in Trump Tower’s glass-enclosed conference room overlooking Fifth Avenue and Central Park, Trump’s aspirations seemed far-fetched and the plan itself sounded downright implausible.” Politico reported that at the meeting Trump said ‘I’m going to get in and all the polls are going to go crazy. I’m going to suck all the oxygen out of the room. I know how to work the media in a way that they will never take the lights off of me.’ One attendee then remarked “You can’t run for President on earned media”. The Donald responded, “I think you’re wrong.” Another asked “Are you going to do all those little events at pizza ranches?” The next quote gives us insight into Trump’s campaign: he replied “Maybe a little, but it’s really about the power of a mass audience.”¹ He never ran for governor in 2014. He went straight for the White House.

Instead of talking about the issues, cable news tends to focus on personalities, scandals, relationships, and group identities. Trump has exploited this. The New York Times did a study that showed the media had given Donald Trump \$1.8 billion dollars in free advertising since the beginning of his campaign.² Trump has been a recipient of every possible insult, but one must give credit where credit is due; his strategy is working. He’s also used social media to advertise himself. By using the power of the press he’s upended the very political class that has held a tight grip on the power structures for a very long time. His off-script comments and attacks on everyone from George Bush to Rosie O’Donnell are entertaining. I watch every Republican debate knowing Trump is going to be there mud-slinging. He’s proven that no news is bad news, and the American people can’t get enough.

Trump is also speaking to issues that tug at the deepest anxieties of many Americans. At the time these seem to be fear of Islamic terrorism, immigration, perceived economic decline (whether they blame unfair trade deals or Mexicans who are taking their jobs) and a more general fear that they’re losing control over their country. So simplistic ideas, like building a wall is the solution to immigration issues, or torturing terrorist families will stop terrorism. Trump is representative of a certain nationalism that has been brewing for some time, particularly within the Tea Party. Many Americans see their country as a moral force for good in the world, but a rapid increase in globalization and technology has left many feeling jobless, fearful and inferior- when they have for long seen themselves as part of a superior American heritage. Republicans (and Democrats) believe their country is on the decline. It’s not hard to see why “Make America Great Again” is the perfect slogan for Donald.

He blames Mexicans, Muslims and other minorities for social and economic problems. He also blames the Republican, and more general “establishment”, or “political class”. He doesn’t just call Obama the worst president ever, but lobs attacks on Republican leaders. He calls them idiots, fools, and incompetents. His appeal is not just that he seems genuine, but that he says things that his supporters are feeling right now: that their government has betrayed them. It doesn’t *belong* to them anymore, but he can fix it. *He is the protector of their nation.* He is the only Republican candidate who won’t cut social security, people’s benefits, or welfare. Many people find the idea of building a wall between Mexico absurd, but it has the same appeal. “I am going to build a wall to protect you.” He has also violated Republican orthodoxy on the Iraq War. He says it was a lie, a mistake, and we shouldn’t make the

1 Stokols, Eli, and Ben Shreckinger. “How Trump Did It.” *POLITICO Magazine*. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/02/how-donald-trump-did-it-213581> (April 17, 2016).

2 Confessore, Nicholas, and Karen Yourish. 2016. “Measuring Donald Trump’s Mammoth Advantage In Free Media.” *The New York Times*.

same ones in Syria. Same principle. The war cost American lives and did not make us safe, and *he* is going to make the military great again. He is going to *protect* your jobs from unfair trade deals.

He also never supported destroying planned parenthood, an issue that seemed pressing for most Republicans. It hasn't hurt him though. Again, it's a similar principle: he's not going to destroy an organization that helps women's healthcare needs. He will protect them, even if it isn't politically expedient or correct. Possibly the most important point he makes is that he is self-funded. In an era where people think politicians are corrupt and controlled, he isn't taking money from special interests or large contributors. This makes his supporters believe no one is pulling his strings. To his base, he represents ordinary people, not the special interests. His violation of Republican ideology and orthodoxy may seem striking to a party that has seemed so ideologically stringent. In their mind Trump can serve and protect the people of the nation, regardless of his actual politics. It is another crucial reason he has built such a broad coalition of Republicans.³

Trump differs with the "political establishment" on foreign policy as well. If you take out the rhetoric of bombing the crap out of ISIS, his foreign policy seems reasonable. It's distinct from the idea that America must use its power to unilaterally intervene in other country's affairs whenever it decides to. From invading Iraq, to removing governments in Libya, to arming rebels in Syria, to overthrowing the Assad government, he's called for a different approach, by proposing actual diplomacy or "making deals". He wants to increase diplomatic relations with Russia, have Europe deal with their own crises, and support legitimate governments. In essence, he is bringing back a classic, realist philosophy that respects other nations rights and sovereignty. Stephen Cohen, professor of Russian history at Princeton has remarked that he's challenging a 20-year bipartisan consensus that may finally produce a missing public debate.⁴ But he's also denied global warming, and lies consistently. Politifact rated 75% of his statements are 'pants of fire false', false or mostly false.⁵ So he may be duping the American public for his own ends. Republicans who find him so genuine should look into that possibility.

3 Elhauge, Einer. "Donald Trump: The Protector." *The Atlantic*. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/donald-trump-the-protector/471837/> (April 17, 2016).

4 "Stephen F. Cohen: Donald Trump Is Taking On the Disastrous US Foreign Policy Triumphalism." 2016. *Stephen F. Cohen: Donald Trump Is Taking on the Disastrous US Foreign Policy Triumphalism*. <http://russia-insider.com/en/politics/trump-v-disastrous-us-triumphalism-foreign-policy/ri13552> (April 20, 2016).

5 "Donald Trump's File." *Fact-checking U.S. politics*. <http://www.politifact.com/personalities/donald-trump/> (April 21, 2016).

The Illiberal Arts

Joseph Fong

“I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it,” (Voltaire). This idea was forever cemented into the annals of history by the Constitution of the United States’ First Amendment stating, “Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or the press.”¹ In the United States, the notion of free speech is no small matter. Today, we live in a society with ever growing numbers of people being marginalized, whether it be on account of their race, gender, or sexual orientation, resulting in growing advocacy movements on college campuses across the country. In response, many universities have implemented codes and policies that outright ban any speech on campuses that advocates offensive speech. Though these policies are in place to provide the students a space where they may pursue their studies without fear of harassment, they do not coincide with the notion of free speech and are in direct contradiction to the rights afforded in the First Amendment.

Free speech in the United States is based on the notion of a free and open marketplace of ideas. All sorts of ideas, offensive or not are mixed together and debated with the hope that truth will reveal itself and prevail in the end. Universities have been traditionally known as institutions of both learning and debate. The goal of a university education, especially a liberal arts one, is to expand one’s horizons and mindset through an immersion of ideas and free and open debate. Universities of today however are stifling this core philosophy by outright censorship of an entire side of the debate. The most rigorous test of our right to speak freely manifests itself when the speaker’s ideas don’t coincide with what we fundamentally believe. In the case of *National Socialist Party of America v. Skokie*, American Nazis were allowed to hold a march through the town of Skokie, IL; a predominantly Jewish community and home to many Holocaust survivors. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled in favor of the American Nazi Party and allowed them to march because, though the Holocaust survivors and many others would be offended by the presence of the American Nazi Party, a ruling that would outlaw speech because it was offensive would allow for the censorship of any material anyone thinks is offensive.²

University speech policies are at risk universally limiting the speech of students. Across the nation, we see the rise of such organizations like the Black Lives Matter movement, in defending African Americans against racism and police Brutality. On the campus of Wesleyan University, student Bryan Stascavage had an editorial published in the Wesleyan student newspaper, the *Argus* entitled, “Why Black Lives Matter Isn’t What You Think.” In violent backlash to the piece which was critical of the way that the movement was vilifying all police forces, there was an uproar calling Stascavage racist and called for an end to the *Argus*. In response to this act of free speech and with pressure from the student body, the Wesleyan University Student Government voted to unanimously defund the *Argus*’ operating budget by half and distribute the money to other campus publications.³ The students who voted for the defunding of the *Argus* have effectively censored the publication of Stascavage’s opinions and criticisms because it was deemed offensive. While their intentions were to prevent other students from being offended, to do so, they have instituted policy in which legitimate free speech, protected by the First Amendment can be censored by the will of the majority.

¹ “Bill of Rights Transcript.” *National Archives and Records Administration*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Apr. 2016.

² “National Socialist Party of America v. Village of Skokie.” Oyez. Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech, n.d. Apr 10, 2016. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1976/76-1786>

³ Kingkade, Tyler. “Wesleyan’s Student Newspaper Could Soon Lose A Lot Of Money. Or Very Little.” *Huffpost College*. Huffington Post, 19 Oct. 2015. Web. 10 Apr. 2016.

Instead of freedom *of* speech, many students on college campuses are seeking freedom *from* offensive speech. On the campus of another New England institution, Amherst College, students went so far as to petition the banning of the First Amendment in order to prevent students from being offended. A group known as Amherst Uprising are demanding that their University President, Bidy Martin officially denounce the actions of students who displayed posters saying “All lives matter” and advocated for free speech on the campus. Following the protests on other campuses like The University of Mississippi, these protestors also demand that those advocating for free speech and that “All Lives Matter” on the Amherst College Campus undergo unnecessary training for racial and cultural competency citing that the advocacy for First Amendment rights are racially insensitive.⁴ What is scary about this is that, there was no catalytic incident based on race that occurred on the Amherst College that sparked this outrage, rather it is against those advocating for the lives of everyone and their Constitutional liberties. In a bid to remain inoffensive to everyone, the Amherst Uprising is willing to redact the rights of all on campus.

We live in a trying time for our First Amendment Rights. Universities across the United States are seeing the rise of resistance against race-based subjection that hasn’t been seen since the civil rights era. In order to maintain student morale and vitality, Universities are passing codes and standards that make the publication of materials offending to groups of students punishable, however this is only a quick fix that does not solve the problem at hand. In the marketplace of ideas; ideas, no matter how controversial must be debated in order to establish the truth. Through the censorship by universities, they are limiting the democratic rights bestowed upon all citizens of the United States to free speech and cannot be allowed to do so further. Students see censorship as an immediate solution to the racial disparity in the United States today, however are not considering the gravity of the denial of the democratic right to free speech.

⁴ Friedersdorf, Conor. “The Illiberal Demands of the Amherst Uprising.” *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 18 Nov. 2015. Web. 10 Apr. 2016.

Political Correctness is Not Enough

Nicholas Fuller

This summer, I participated in a two-day, mentor training session for UConn's First Year Experience program. FYE programs are customary at most colleges throughout the United States and help transitioning, first semester freshmen college students understand their respective academic institutions' academic, social, and extracurricular opportunities.

During the first session, leaders of the FYE program strongly encouraged — or more or less told — us about the importance of using gender-neutral language when talking to students. For instance, the popular phrase “hey, you guys” was to be avoided, instead replaced with “hey, y'all.” Now, I wasn't crazy about using the cheesy “hey y'all” when talking to a group of students, so I usually said, “hey, how's everyone doing? How has everyone's week been?” instead. As a mentor, I adopted the prescription. I was on board.

But then I thought to myself, “Does this do anything to significantly undermine patriarchy or transphobia?” In other words, I was on board with the switch of phrases because I strongly feel that the recognition and validation of various gender identities and expressions undermine male-dominant or transphobic culture (transphobic, for instance, was redlined as I typed this article. Microsoft word should probably recognize that transphobic is a real word, sort of like the word ‘homophobic.’) I could envision scenarios where casually saying “you guys” would be problematic. I had no issue tinkering this phrase so that inclusion won over any possible exclusion of people, including women or sexual minorities.

But I also examined a different dimension of the issue, which was whether or not the phrase adjustment actually did anything substantial to change people's attitudes. By many measures, someone could say that it does, but someone could also say it does little to nothing at all...

Keeping this situation in mind, imagine another scenario. Someone has just started to personally stop using the phrase “you guys” for several decent reasons. Then, this individual goes back home and notices — for the first time — that everyone uses the phrase “you guys.” Friends say it, parents say it, siblings say it, hell, even beloved former high school teachers say it — it suddenly creeps up on this person on a consistent basis, and it won't go away, no matter how much he, she or they want people to stop saying it. It is everywhere, because everyone knows that it is one of the most casually used phrases ever. Its universality is unbounded.

I've come across situations such as this one before. During these instances, I discovered that I do not correct people who say the phrase “you guys.” I never have, and am not sure if I ever will. In other words, I show willingness to tinker my language, but then do not expect others to do the same; and thusly, my choices here make me less than popular, because they manage to annoy both anti-PC people and pro-PC people at the same time. Overall, I don't like the phrase, but I don't step on people over it, either.

This situation, and others like it, highlights various elements of political correctness, specifically the limitations of politically correct language and the limitations of the debate itself. First, politically correct language is limited because it is not truly groundbreaking in how it changes society. This entire debate can be a “distracter” because, while pro-PC people and anti-PC people argue about the merits or pointlessness of using politically correct language, what I'll call “actual” political or social problems, fester.

Political correctness is not useless, though; it is in fact a one useful way to educate people about the cultural, structural, institutional, or broadly systemic ways certain groups (racial minorities, women, sexual minorities,

etc.) have been oppressed for centuries. When a PC advocate understands how things are and how things should change, they can argue that how we speak is one of the easiest things we can do is to rid our world of hatred and bigotry. But it is still limited, restricted in its effects (how far-reaching it truly is), and in its perceived intolerance of opposing ideas. To put it bluntly, the phrase “political correctness” has baggage.

This notion of political correctness might not satisfy anyone, and it doesn’t mean that I’m advocating for the usage of language or phrases that degrade people. This sort of stance reflects more conclusively whether or not political correctness has no effect, a positive effect, or a negative effect on society.

If I had to pick one, I’d say it has a slightly positive effect, but that’s all it ever will have. It might not truly change someone. The straight guy who accidentally says a homophobic slur while an LGBT friend is in the room can apologize profusely, but he only did because someone there ‘might have been offended.’ In other words, while he apologizes, I — being gay myself — would argue that the homophobic slur is not bad because “someone who might have been offended” (me!) is in the room; it is bad because it degrades LGBT people and their humanity, *no matter what*; it is bad that he used it *at all*. Even so, saying “I forgive you” is important, and no one should use a brush to cast a broad stroke over someone who mucks up a certain social situation, because we all have mucked up certain social situations, myself included.

Changing your language, then, is not enough. Political correctness is not enough. Whether you are anti-PC or pro-PC, readjustments or failure to readjust language only reflect fundamental disagreements about how we speak and what our words mean to others. Basically, anti-PC and pro-PC individuals can agree on the same issue, and then they divide over language usage. While anti-PC people often show indifference to the effects of their language on others, PC people often just make language readjustments and then go no further, which does little to change or undermine the systems of oppression they condemn. In the end, both groups do not do enough; they both can be complicit in these issues.

Political correctness is not useless or harmful, but it is limited. It is more of a preliminary action we ought to take to mitigate harm, but it will do nothing to enact systemic change in our world. While anti-PC critics sometimes ridiculously predict the destruction of the exchange of free thought and ideas, PC advocates naively believe that their refined language is superior and significantly undermines oppressive systems. This whole debate feels distorted by the fact that political correctness, in my view, does not harm society, and that it also is not the best means by which to actually change the world in which we live.

A Crisis of Civility: Uncivil Discourse among Republican Presidential Candidates

Darren Daughtry Jr.

Political campaigns are far from glamorous. Candidates and their supporters engage in a seemingly never ending cycle of attack, and defense. For the most part political candidates maintained a level of civility. However, in recent years the discourse coming from our Presidential candidates has become increasingly heated, negative, and offensive. Such behavior is blatant in this year's race for the Republican nomination. Donald Trump's vulgar comments on illegal immigration and Muslims and Senator Ted Cruz's loathsome comments on Syrian Refugees exemplifies the state of Presidential politics has become.

This election cycle has differed from most. On the Republican side, a field of fifteen people has dwindled down to a three man contest between Mr. Trump, Sen. Cruz, and Governor John Kasich.¹ Unlike their Democratic counterparts, Republican discourse far from civil. It all started with Donald Trump's first tirade against Mexican immigrants. He called them rapists, murderers, criminals, and drug traffickers, except for some who he assumes are good people.² His solution is to build a wall along the border with Mexico, and have the Mexican government pay for it.³ Building a wall across the roughly 1,300 miles of unobstructed border would cost anywhere from \$12 billion to \$25 billion.⁴ Getting the Mexican government to pay would be implausible because there is no way to make them pay for something they didn't even build and the wall wouldn't even be in Mexico.⁵ He also wants to deport all of the estimated eleven million illegal immigrants living in the U.S.. This is also implausible because no one knows who these estimated eleven million people are let alone where to find them. Illegal immigration is a serious issue facing this country^{6,7}, but the idea that the U.S. is going to build a wall along the border with Mexico, and deport an estimated eleven million people is asinine (and ignores the fact that many people enter the country legally using tourist or student visas but they don't leave when their visa expires⁸). Moreover, not all illegal immigrants are Mexicans, they come from all nationalities. None of this is helping foster a civil discussion about illegal immigration.

Recently, Mr. Trump made equally disturbing comments regarding Muslims. Mr. Trump proposes forcing all Muslims in the U.S. to register in a database.⁹ This is eerily similar to the conditions the Nazi's imposed on the Jews before the Holocaust. Furthermore, he wants to ban Muslims from entering the U.S.¹⁰ All this does is play

1 *thewashingtonpost.com*. 2016. "Winners and losers from the 11th Republican Presidential Debate." https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/03/03/winners-and-losers-from-the-11th-republican-presidential-debate/?tid=pm_politics_pop_b (accessed March 5, 2016).

2 *thewashingtonpost.com*. 2015. "Donald Trump's False comments connecting Mexican immigrants and crime." July 8. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/> (accessed March 6, 2016).

3 Murray, Sarah; Diamond Jeremy. 2015. "Donald Trump Outlines Immigration Specifics. August 17. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/16/politics/donald-trump-immigration-plans/> (March 6, 2016).

4 Drew, Kate. 2015. "This is what Trump's border wall could cost the U.S." October 9. <http://www.cnbc.com/2015/10/09/this-is-what-trumps-border-wall-could-cost-us.html> (March 28, 2016).

5 CBP INFO Center. 2015. "Border in Miles." November 7. https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/578/~/-border-in-miles (March 1, 2016).

6 Hoefer, Michael; Rytina, Nancy; Baker, Byran. 2012. "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2011." March. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_ill_pe_2011_0.pdf (March 5, 2016).

7 Murray, Sarah; Diamond Jeremy. 2015. "Donald Trump Outlines Immigration Specifics. August 17. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/16/politics/donald-trump-immigration-plans/> (March 6, 2016).

8 *TheWallStreetJournal.com*. 2013. "Many People in the U.S. Illegally Overstayed Their Visas." April 7. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323916304578404960101110032> (accessed April 8, 2016).

9 Hillyard, Vaughn. 2015. "Donald Trump's Plan for a Muslim Database draws Comparison to Nazi Germany." November 20. <http://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/trump-says-he-would-certainly-implement-muslim-database-n466716> (February 28, 2016).

10 Diamond, Jeremy. 2015. "Donald Trump: Ban all Muslim Travel to the U.S." December 8. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/07/politics/donald-trump-muslim-ban-immigration/> (February 27, 2016)

into people's fears that all Muslims are violent extremists, and Islam is inherently violent and dangerous. Terrorist organizations like the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), Al Qaeda, etc can use statements made by those like Mr. Trump to radicalize potential recruits. Islamophobia in the U.S. and Europe is bad enough as it is.¹¹ People have been attacked because they "look" Muslim, and mosques have been vandalized, firebombed.^{12 13} Mr. Trump's comments only feed the flames. This is not the sort of civil discourse we need to be hearing from someone who could potentially become President.

Like Mr. Trump, Sen. Cruz has engaged in anti-Muslim rhetoric. Sen. Cruz believes all Christians facing persecution abroad should be allowed into the U.S.¹⁴ Muslim refugees on the other hand, should have to take a religious test in addition to the already lengthy and thorough refugee resettlement process.¹⁵ Sen. Cruz's believes that there is no risk of Christians committing a terrorist attack in the U.S., and he believes that no one is helping Christians who are being persecuted. Clearly, Sen. Cruz has never heard of Timothy McVeigh, and the Irish Republican Army or he's conveniently ignoring them to fit his political ambitions. All were Christian terrorist groups.¹⁶ Although Christians are indeed the victims of rape, beheadings, and other heinous acts, so are Muslims, and Yazidis. As we have seen, the Syrian military and the Islamic State in Iraq and Al-Sham have no problem killing anyone regardless of their religion. There is no reason to believe followers of one religion are more likely to become terrorists or be victims of terrorism than another. Sen. Cruz's distortionary statements make having a meaningful conversation about the Syrian civil war extremely difficult.

Civil political discourse is vital because it allows the American people to learn more about the issues. It can help create a better informed electorate. This directly affects politicians because a better informed electorate is more inclined to elect officials who can carry out effective policies that meet their needs. Hopefully, this will create an atmosphere where politicians do what is best for the collective good of the country.

Overall, the level of rhetoric in the Republican Presidential race is alarming. Instead of focusing on the issues Mr. Trump and Mr. Cruz choose to focus on attacks, insults, and degrading comments that do nothing to meaningfully address voters concerns. We must support candidates who have kept their campaigns (mostly) civil and issue oriented. When Election Day comes we should support people who will unite the country by meaningful conversation, not fear mongering. That is how we put an end to this.

11 Dizard, Wilson. 2015. "US Muslims see rise in Islamophobia." December 9. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/12/9/us-muslims-experience-surge-in-islamophobic-attacks.html> (March 6, 2016).

12 Zahriyeh, Ehab. 2015. "Imam of Torched Houston Mosque Meets Islamophobia with Love." February 20. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/2/20/houston-mosque-set-ablaze-responds-to-hate-with-love.html> (March 28, 2016)

13 Milligan, Susan. 2015. "No Welcome Mat." November 20. <http://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2015/11/20/after-paris-islamophobia-is-on-the-rise> (March 28, 2016).

14 Schleifer, Theodore. 2015. "Ted Cruz: Muslim refugees from Syria should go to other Islamic Countries." November 17. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/17/politics/ted-cruz-refugees-syria/> (February 29, 2016)

15 Davidson, Amy. 2015. "Ted Cruz;s Religious Test For Syrian Refugees." November 16. <http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson/ted-cruzs-religious-test-for-syrian-refugees> (March 1, 2016).

16 Rahimi, Babak. 2016. "The Religious Sources of Christian Terrorism." *Huffpost Religion*. 27 January. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/babak-rahimi/the-religious-sources-of-christian-terrorism_b_9066868.html (March 1, 2016).

The Right To Lie

Michael Egan

Election seasons in America often serve as a reminder of the unique relationship between politicians and the truth. Politicians exercise their right of free speech everyday on the campaign trail, with some more than others doing so by lying. While the notion of a dishonest politician lacks novelty, the repercussions of such behavior continues to affect America's political culture.

The Bush administration and the whole debacle concerning "Weapons of Mass Destruction" demonstrates the way that falsehoods proclaimed by politicians permeate public opinion. Going back to June of 2003, after the invasion of Iraq, public opinion polls still found that over 8 out of 10 Americans believed it was likely that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, and was trying to develop nuclear weapons.¹ Fast forward through the following decade with all of the criticism of the Bush administration, however, and this misconception holds more weight. Polls conducted in early 2015 show that, overall, 42 percent of Americans still believe it to be "definitely true" or "probably true" that troops discovered weapons of mass destruction.²

The place of President Obama's birth stands as another example of errors in public opinion. During Obama's first term in the White House, many notable individuals, including Donald Trump, called his birthplace and therefore his legitimacy as President into question. These actions ultimately lead Obama into releasing his birth certificate. Despite this disclosure, 13 percent of Americans, after one month, still believed with relative certainty that Obama was born in another country.³ Nearly three years later, though, additional polls placed the percent of adults skeptical of Obama's birthplace at 15 percent.⁴ These trends of politically induced dispersals of misinformation continues on in the 2016 Presidential Primaries, especially in terms of the GOP candidates. Donald Trump, for example, continues to exaggerate the US' trade deficit with China, and even goes as far as to incorrectly state that the US maintains a trade deficit with "every country".⁵ Such an instance fails to remain an isolated incident, as the current order of candidates in the GOP primary also reflects the order in which these candidates release false, newsworthy statements to the public.⁶ This relation between the success of GOP candidates and their tendencies to lie during their campaigns illustrates an even greater paradox when compared to general beliefs held by their supporters. In the case of the exit polls from the New Hampshire Republican Presidential Primary, 9 out of 10 voters felt dissatisfied with the government, with half expressing hope that the next President is a candidate from outside the political establishment.⁷ In distrusting the current political establishment, voters now seem to favor outsider candidates that lie to them more often than establishment candidates.

Lies proclaimed by politicians may pose a risk to maintaining an informed public, but the public's acceptance of these lies proves an even greater risk. Whether politicians lie intentionally or unintentionally, the recent primary results show that straying from the truth provides little to no damage to campaigns. To once again use the example of Donald Trump, poll numbers establish that 68 percent of conservatives and 25 percent of liberals believe Donald

1 Gallup. 2003. "Americans Still Think Iraq Had Weapons of Mass Destruction Before War" June 16. http://www.gallup.com/poll/8623/Americans-Still-Think-Iraq-Had-Weapons-Mass-Destruction-Before-War.aspx?g_source=weapons%20mass%20destruction&g_medium=search&g_campaign=tiles

2 Politico. 2015. "Poll: Half of Republicans still believe WMDs found in Iraq" January 7. <http://www.politico.com/story/2015/01/poll-republicans-wmds-iraq-114016>

3 Gallup. 2011. "Obama's Birth Certificate Convinces Some, but Not All, Skeptics" May 13. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/147530/obama-birth-certificate-convinces-not-skeptics.aspx>

4 YouGov. 2014. "15% 'know for sure' Obama was not born in the U.S." February 12. <https://today.yougov.com/news/2014/02/12/know-for-sure/>

5 FactCheck.org. 2016. "FactChecking the 11th GOP Debate" March 4. <http://www.factcheck.org/2016/03/factchecking-the-11th-gop-debate/>

6 Politifact. 2016. "Fact-Checking the 2016 GOP Presidential Candidates" March 3. <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/lists/people/fact-checking-2016-gop-presidential-candidates/>

7 CNN. 2016. "Exit Polls: Trump wins with multiple groups of voters" February 10. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/09/politics/new-hampshire-primary-exit-entrance-polls/>

Trump's claim that large groups of Muslims celebrated the events of 9/11 in New Jersey.⁸ This of course despite the fact such a claim lacks any evidence whatsoever to support it.

These issues of truth and falsehoods in politics also lack a clear solution. Simply dispersing the truth to citizens fails to completely correct the situation as a number of studies show that exposing misinformed partisans with correct facts can actually reinforce their beliefs.⁹ With this in mind, there still exists hope on the other end of the problem, since studies also show that politicians respond favorably when they are informed of direct electoral repercussions for using questionable statements.¹⁰ There, however, also stands a limit to this deterrent with recent court battles taking place on the constitutionality of legislation that actually criminalizes such behavior.¹¹ With politicians exercising free speech and their constitutional right to lie, the burden rests with the public to remain, at some degree, vigilant for falsehoods. Even though the truth about these untrue claims eventually comes out, not enough people embrace it. Politicians can easily assert a false statement to a large audience, and time and evidence do not necessarily reach the minds of all exposed to it. Election seasons in America often serve as a reminder of the way politicians deviate from the truth, though the effectiveness of this reminder remains in question.

8 PublicMind. 2015. "New Fairleigh Dickinson Poll Shows Trump Claim About Muslims Celebrating 9/11 in New Jersey Spotlights Differences Among Partisans" December 22. <http://view2.fdu.edu/publicmind/2015/151222/>

9 Keohane, Joe. 2010. "How Facts Backfire." *Boston.com*. http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2010/07/11/how_facts_backfire/?page=1 (March 27, 2016).

10 Nyhan, Brendan, and Jason Reifler. 2014. "The Effect Of Fact-Checking on Elites: A Field Experiment on U.S. State Legislators." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 628–40. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~nyhan/fact-checking-elites.pdf>.

11 Serwer, Adam. 2014. "Politicians May Still Have the Right to Lie after All..." *msnbc.com*. <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/supreme-court-susan-b-anthony-list-lying-politics-not-crime> (March 27, 2016).

America's New Political Era is Against the Establishment

Caio Goncalves

During this political cycle, it's easy to get caught up in the mud-slinging of candidates, the cable news punditry and its biases, but fail to realize that our country is experiencing a historic period in time. The political climate in America has shifted drastically. Talking heads laughed at and mocked Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders when they both announced their candidacies for president. Months later, the establishment is no longer laughing. Sanders has become a serious threat to the once inevitable Hillary Clinton, and the GOP is splitting in two because of Trump.

The constituency Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump have tapped into, is what is changing our current political landscape. The country has been dissatisfied with traditional politics for a long time now, and people are finally taking to the polls to voice this dissatisfaction. "Trump and Sanders succeed because they draw out popular feelings of dissatisfaction. But their effect is more than that: They have legitimized for discussion "fringe beliefs" that millions of Americans beforehand had been unsure of or too shy to fully embrace, but nonetheless felt strongly about. By unapologetically synthesizing and stating these different dissenting opinions, Sanders and Trump help these fringe beliefs flourish, and their expression is likely to outlive both candidates' campaigns. By unapologetically synthesizing and stating these different dissenting opinions, Sanders and Trump help these fringe beliefs flourish, and their expression is likely to outlive both candidates' campaigns."¹

The Republican establishment is worried about a Trump nomination, and what it could mean for the future of the party beyond this election. Top Republican donors who have so far spent millions on the anti-Trump movement backing failed candidates, are holding secret meetings to decide whether or not to back Trump or continue on the offensive against him. One thing is for certain, the anti-establishment types are threatening to burst the establishment's bubble and their message is resonating with voters on an unprecedented level.²

The political machines of this country are being challenged in a way that had never seemed possible, as both political parties and their donors are left scratching their heads wondering how these outsiders have managed to capture such gargantuan support. American voters do not trust Washington types, and they want the real change they President Obama promised for in 2008.

In January of 2015 when Mitt Romney decided he wasn't going to run for a third time, *The Washington Post* declared Jeb Bush as the GOP's undisputed frontrunner. "It's a great day for Jeb Bush," said Brian Ballard, a lobbyist who led Romney's 2012 fundraising effort in Florida and switched to Bush this time around. "I think Jeb had 75 percent of the money folks here. This brings in the other 25 percent."³

Bush's entire campaign ended up being a devastating and humiliating blow to the Bush family, but early on, Bush was declared the frontrunner mostly on the basis of donors and bundlers. Bush had no good showing anywhere, yet on his name recognition alone, he was backed by a Super PAC which went on to raise hundreds of millions of dollars.

Two things can be taken away from Bush's failure: he is not a gifted politician, and as a result, he posed no real threat, lacking a showing anywhere which forced him to bow out before they even got to his home state of

1 Campbell, Troy. "Yes, Trump and Sanders Are Actually Changing America." *POLITICO Magazine*. January 4, 2016. Accessed March 3, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/01/donald-trump-bernie-sanders-2016-changing-america-213503>.

2 Vogel, Kenneth P., Isaac Arnsdorf, and Jake Sherman. "Ryan Huddles with Anti-Trump Donors." *POLITICO*. March 17, 2016. Accessed March 17, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/03/paul-ryan-mega-donors-donald-trump-220948>.

3 Tumulty, Karen, and Matea Gold. "Jeb Bush Has Become the GOP Front-runner for 2016 - an Envious Position That Carries Some Peril." *Washington Post*. January 31, 2016. Accessed March 6, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/jeb-bush-has-become-the-gop-front-runner-for-2016--so-now-what/2015/01/31/0105ca68-a96e-11e4-a06b-9df2002b86a0_story.html.

Florida. The more important point here, is despite all the money and the media praise, the base of the Republican Party ran away from him and candidates like him such as Gov. Scott Walker and Gov. Chris Christie.

Bush's complete inability to understand the populist appeal fueling Donald Trump's campaign to crush his competitors one by one doomed his own campaign. "But by far his biggest liability, aides and advisers concede, was a pedigree he could do nothing to erase or dilute: He was a Bush through and through, at a time when voters sneered at the political and economic establishment that his family name embodied."⁴

The Republican establishment has been waiting to coalesce behind their man but no campaign has caught fire quite like Donald Trump's. He's won state after state while capitalizing on excellent marketing and making incendiary remarks that garner him constant press off of the 24-hour news cycle. Sen. Ted Cruz has been the sole candidate who has challenged Trump, but it is uncertain if all players of the establishment who also hate Cruz can eventually get behind him in order to knock Trump out. Jeb Bush has endorsed Cruz, and Sen. Lindsey Graham told The Daily Show's Trevor Noah that he is "picking his poison," and endorsing Cruz, despite the fact that Cruz was his "fifteenth choice."⁵

University of Connecticut political science professor Ronald Schurin offered his insight to the Republican race.

"It didn't surprise me that Rubio only took one state on Super Tuesday," Schurin said. "What it shows is that the establishment, if it still exists at all, is incredibly fractured."

Schurin said that if Sen. Marco Rubio had had then, as big of a lead as Donald Trump has now, the race would be over. He argued that Trump may be very close to winning the nomination.

"There's a lot more antipathy to Trump than probably any candidate in history," Schurin said. "I read an article that said Trump has about an 80% chance of winning now, and I think that sounds about right."⁶

Although Rubio and the establishment who flip flop between him and Gov. John Kasich, are hung on to a message of optimism looking forward, but there's not much left for either candidate. CNN pundit and Rubio cheerleader S.E. Cupp admitted on CNN's live coverage of Super Tuesday, that while Rubio's star quality was once what the party hoped would defeat Hillary Clinton in the general election, has now left him with, "an almost impossible pathway to the nomination."⁷

"Rubio's candidacy failed for a number of reasons. Above all, Donald Trump has emerged as a nearly unstoppable force. But there were other festering problems, from his canned answers and over-programmed style to the unfortunate fact that he is a youngish, Hispanic man who speaks about his hopes and dreams for America to a Republican electorate that is white, old, and hopelessly depressed about an increasingly Hispanic America."⁸

It can be argued that Trump's appeal is more emotional than rational, his anti-establishment celebrity persona is not the only reason why he has done so well. Trump's message typically resonates with blue collared Caucasian voters who do not have a high level of education. Exit polls following the South Carolina primary showed that nearly half of Republicans who voted in the state want undocumented immigrants to be deported immediately.⁹

Trump's unapologetic stance of immigration from the first day of his campaign, galvanized an anti-immigration movement which is particularly popular in the red Southern states. While other Republican candidates acknowledge the problem of immigration and can say firmly they do not support a pathway to citizenship, as Cruz states over and over, no candidate uses the same frame as Trump does. His supporters call it authentic, while others, many even in his own party, call it racist, bigoted and deeply xenophobic.

4 Barbaro, Michael, and Ashley Parker. "The New York Times." Jeb Bush Bows Out of Campaign, Humbled and Outmaneuvered. February 20, 2016. Accessed March 6, 2016. <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/02/21/us/politics/jeb-bush.html>.

5 The Daily Show, Comedy Central

6 Ronald Schurin, UConn Political Science Professor

7 S.E. Cupp, CNN Conservative Pundit

8 Chotiner, Isaac. "What Went Wrong for Marco Rubio." Slate Magazine. March 2, 2016. Accessed March 6, 2016. http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2016/03/marco_rubio_failed_here_s_why.html.

9 Vavreck, Lynn. "Measuring Donald Trump's Supporters for Intolerance." The New York Times. February 23, 2016. Accessed March 6, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/25/upshot/measuring-donald-trumps-supporters-for-intolerance.html>.

Bernie Sanders' CT Progressives field organizer, Josh Elliott said he is not all surprised by Trump's momentum and the failure of establishment candidates.

"The Republican Party has been really cultivating this base of voters for decades now, using disguised terminology to speak to those voters," Elliott said. "Trump is just the beast the party has created and he is capitalizing on that base of Republicans because he is sort of unhinged and says the outrageous things Republicans have been hinting at for decades."¹⁰

On the Democratic side, the same trend of rebuke by voters towards the establishment is clear--though not as much as on the Republican side. This is because the GOP desperately wants to get a Republican in the White House, but voters just aren't backing the type of candidates they have backed before in establishment moderates like Mitt Romney and John McCain, both of whom lost to President Obama in 2008 and 2012.

Clinton is the candidate the establishment favors, and that is in part what has propelled Sanders' popularity, particularly among young voters. While Hillary Clinton still remains the favorite to win the party's nomination, Sen. Bernie Sanders has become increasingly more competitive, winning purple states such as Colorado and New Hampshire, taking a shocking victory in the state of Michigan, and surprisingly out-fundraising Hillary Clinton by millions all the while closing in on her national lead, and surpassing it just this month.

When Sanders first announced his candidacy back in April of 2015, Clinton had a national lead in the polls of over 60 points over him. Fast forward to April of 2016, and Sanders has taken the lead at 49% against Clinton's 47%, according to a McClatchy-Marist poll.¹¹

Elliott chalked the impressive closing of the gap by Sanders in national polls to a successful campaign which has helped him gain name recognition nation-wide.

"Bernie's problem is name recognition, not his platform," Elliott said. "He doesn't lose support like Hillary, he only gains support the more voters get to know what he's about."

The rejection of Hillary Clinton is evident among young voters. 84% of voters under 30 voted for Sanders in the Iowa caucus. "Some 53,000 young Iowans defined as voters age 17-29, participated Monday night, making up 15% of total-caucus goers, according to the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University. Clinton narrowly won the caucuses, according to the state Democratic Party, but the Associated Press never called the race and Sanders called it a "virtual tie."¹²

This race can and will be categorized as the race of the outsiders for decades to come. Carly Fiorina and Ben Carson both experienced their days when they did well in the polls, only to eventually crash and burn. The brief success of these two candidates can perhaps be dismissed as the political flavors of the month, as what similarly happened in the weak GOP field of 2012, when the race had a new favorite every week.

But both Trump and Sanders, outsiders in their own right, have managed to strong arm the establishment and win various states, leading many to believe that these two may actually take down the establishment candidates all together and face each other in November.

Sanders' appeal on his number one issue, to get money out of politics and to go after Wall Street corruption, appeals to the many people in the middle class, and as previously stated, millennials and Occupy Wall Street sympathizers. Trump's message is a bit more muddled and not all of his positions are clear, but what's working is that he vows to be tough on our enemies, expand trade, and of course, build that wall to eliminate illegal immigration from Mexico.

Sanders calls to his supporters for a, "political revolution," and we are not too far from that if the nominees end up being two outsiders who are hated by the established--and this possibility is looking more likely than ever.

¹⁰ Josh Elliott, CT Progressives for Bernie Sanders Field Organizer

¹¹ Savransky, Rebecca. "Poll: Sanders Holds Slim Lead over Clinton Nationally." The Hill. April 06, 2016. Accessed April 08, 2016. <http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/presidential-races/275369-poll-sanders-edges-out-clinton-nationally>

¹² White, Daniel. "Young Voters Give Bernie Sanders a Lift in Iowa Caucuses." Time. February 2, 2016. Accessed March 06, 2016. <http://time.com/4204331/iowa-caucus-results-bernie-sanders-young-voters>

Don't Hinder Political Progress

Deniz Akman

Society is an institute and, like any institute, it is shaped by the opinions and attitudes of the people who comprise it. Therefore, as the times change, society must adapt in order to accommodate for these shifting perspectives. A concept from this ongoing evolution is political correctness, a movement originating from a long history of human rights abuses. Specifically, abuses minorities and women have been subjected to at the hands of a predominantly white, male ruling class. This movement attempts to force people to avoid any form of expression that can possibly exclude or disenfranchise a group of people perceived as socially disadvantaged, such as African Americans or women.

This is a noble goal at its core, but political correctness has moved from protecting the marginalized to hindering political progress. It has become taboo to speak on anything remotely offensive to anybody, creating an environment where people are hesitant to express ideas for fear of being ostracized. This causes a shortage of new ideas and makes it borderline impossible to pursue the progressive goal of “improving the human condition” since any new idea is at risk of discrediting or offending somebody. When people are restricted in this manner it becomes difficult to foster an efficient political system. People begin to prefer silence to possible negative publicity.

Another major component of political progress is education. The more education the general population has access to, the more society will develop and improve the quality of life for its citizens. Political correctness severely limits the capacity of education by limiting peoples’ exposure to new ideas, censoring them from perspectives that could otherwise be freely voiced. As President Barack Obama said in his North High School speech in Des Moines in September 2015:

I’ve heard of some college campuses where they don’t want to have a guest speaker who is too conservative. Or they don’t want to read a book if it has language that is offensive to African-Americans, or somehow sends a demeaning signal towards women. And I’ve got to tell you, I don’t agree with that either. I don’t agree that you, when you become students at colleges, have to be coddled and protected from different points of views.

In his speech, President Obama voiced concerns that the limitations placed on experience by political correctness can inadvertently limits the education of students. When barriers are placed on what people can and should be exposed to, it also puts ceilings on development of the individual and, in turn, society as a whole. Many United States citizens share this worldview, in a trend that transcends political lines. In fact, based on a recent poll conducted by Fairleigh Dickinson University in October 2015, 68% of a random sample of 1,026 adults agreed with the statement that “A big problem this country has is being politically correct” with 62% of self-identified Democrats, 68% of independents, and 81% of Republicans in the survey agreeing.¹ Though these people may have different conceptions of political correctness, the general sentiment that speech is being limited seems evident

However, a significant proportion of the population would rather preserve the precedent of political correctness. As seen in the student protests in Yale and the University of Missouri (Mizzou) in 2015, a large part of this population consists of college students. At Yale University students protested when a Yale lecturer named Erika Christakis defended the students’ rights to wear offensive Halloween costumes claiming: “Is there no room anymore for a child or young person to be a little bit obnoxious, a little bit inappropriate or provocative or, yes,

¹ Fairleigh Dickinson University. 2015. “Trump Taints America’s Views on Political Correctness” October 30. <http://view2.fdu.edu/publicmind/2015/151030/>

offensive?”² Students were outraged by such a remark, and protested that using costumes to misrepresent or disenfranchise an ethnicity was not freedom of expression but outright racism.

A similar situation resulted in Mizzou when students perceived the University and its President Tim Wolfe as ignorant of racial attacks on students. A student (Johnathan Butler) initiated a hunger strike when Wolfe refused to converse with students on the matter of the racial incidents which quickly spiraled into protests and a student revolt against media on campus.³

Both protests resulted in the resignation of the offending parties, Christakis of Yale and Wolfe of the University of Missouri. Cases like these show there is still a major movement against those who refuse to treat everybody around them in an exceedingly fragile manner. The protests at Yale vilified a highly esteemed lecturer for defending the right for young people to be a “little bit offensive”, resulting in her feeling the need to resign in the face of major adversity from students. While her opinion is an unpopular one, she had every right to share her view that students have been domesticated to the point that there is no room left to be express themselves without fear of cultural upheaval. While socially accepting blackface and red face paint on Halloween is not the answer, students attacking this woman’s character was also extreme.

On the other hand, students in Mizzou had a more valid reason to protest because of President Wolfe’s refusal to engage them in a conversation about the alleged problems. However the protest continued even after he resigned from office, when students physically pushed reporters and denied them access to the center of the University square or individual students for fear of them “getting the headline wrong.” This indicates an irrational fear possessed by the students of their message being misconstrued and suggests that the platform of political correctness might have been an excuse to protest for the sake of protest.

Censorship using political correctness as a foundation is not the solution. Forcing people to walk the thin line between “acceptable” and “politically incorrect” creates unnecessary tension between ethnic groups and hinders the political process. Instead, we need to maintain an open, respectful dialogue both in politics and daily interactions so that ideas can be explored and acted upon without fear of harsh judgment or social exclusion. However, the possibility of racial discrimination is also very real and care must be taken so that freedom of speech does not become an excuse to disenfranchise people based on ethnicity or cultural differences. As long as we behave considerately and tolerantly of other’s viewpoints, there is no reason we cannot improve the human condition without excessive application of political correctness.

² New York Times. 2015. “Yale Lecturer Resigns After Email on Halloween Costumes” December 7. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/08/us/yale-lecturer-resigns-after-email-on-halloween-costumes.html>

³ New York Times. 2015. “The Seduction of Safety, on Campus and Beyond” November 13. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/15/opinion/sunday/the-seduction-of-safety-on-campus-and-beyond.html>