

An outsider's perspective on the gop debates

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The 2016 U. S. presidential elections have no doubt been on nearly every American's mind. As in 2008, when the first African-American was elected president, the 2016 primaries could cement further milestones in American politics: the inauguration of the first female president, the first Jewish president, the first Hispanic-American president, and so forth. Meanwhile, the international community awaits with keen interest to see who'll be the leader of the world's political and economic superpower.

However, this election cycle has also captured international audiences for another reason: The disheartening process of personality politics. The candidates focus on who can insult who more, rather than the policies and ideologies they represent. It is understandably difficult for presidential debates to be all smiles, and to keep to a happy-go-lucky atmosphere, nor should we expect this. Presidential debates are uncomfortable for the candidates. They are made to answer each question from the moderators within a minute, and in 30 seconds if another candidate mentions his/her name.

Often asked the same question, candidates are under pressure to outperform each other in eloquently and logically articulating their views, hoping to garner voter support. Both the Democratic and Republican debates have been dealing with highly sensitive and controversial issues, namely illegal immigration, gun control, minimum wage, climate change, refugee crises and global terror. So heated and impassioned discussions are inevitable. Nonetheless, candidates should exchange their views in a civilized manner—which, as of recent, hasn't been the case. This is especially true of the Republican Party's televised debates.

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When watching them, it becomes difficult to discern whether they are actual discussions or quarrels between schoolchildren. From what we see in the GOP debates today, it's hard to believe that current candidates embody the same political convictions as past presidents Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower, among others. The main purpose of these debates is to allow candidates to voice their positions on issues and let the voters evaluate which candidate's visions and positions best reflect their own. Recently, however, the presidential discussions have transformed into personal disputes centered on smearing other candidates' reputations. While many candidates have now left the race, examples of the candidates will linger for younger generations—both in America and elsewhere—to scratch their heads at.

Among the memorable quotes are Donald Trump derisively addressing Marco Rubio as “ little Marco,” and Ted Cruz helping Trump meditate during a heated moment, chanting, “ I now it's hard not to interrupt. Breathe, breathe, breathe. You can do it, breathe...I know it's hard, I know it's hard.” But the insults don't stop at the debates. At a rally, Rubio made a suggestive reference to Trump's “ small hands” (“ If they're small, something else must be small.

”), and shared with the public that Trump had a “ meltdown” during the debate the night before. According to Rubio, Trump had asked for a full-length mirror “ maybe to make sure that his pants weren't wet.” The appallingly unprofessional attacks expanded to the candidates' private lives, which included Trump and Cruz making derogatory comments about each other's wives. Not everyone, however, seems to be proud of the candidates' <https://assignbuster.com/an-outsiders-perspective-on-the-gop-debates/>

onstage conduct. John Kasich has stated, “ People say, everywhere I go, you seem to be the only adult on stage”—which, frankly, doesn’t seem like such a big accomplishment, and should not be the grounds to elect a person to the presidency.

One must also remember that these candidates aren’t the only ones to blame. The moderators have been criticized for asking “ gotcha” questions, and the audiences have nothing to be proud of either, with their incendiary booing and cheering, making the debates more akin to a wrestling match. Presidential candidates, and politicians in general, are certainly entitled to their opinions. When they stand behind a podium, they have a right to declare their viewpoints on whatever political issue, no matter how extreme and controversial their notions may be. It is disturbing to see, therefore, how the debates—and the campaigns at large—are now literally spats and squabbles between individuals instead of intellectual discussions among future leaders regarding important domestic and global issues.

Especially disconcerting are the implications these debates have for the youth. In the contemporary moment where anyone can easily view these presidential debates online, and access news broadcasts and newspapers online, one can’t help but be concerned about the message being sent out to schoolchildren and youth, in America and across the world. One can only hope that whoever becomes the next president of the United States will assume and demonstrate the qualities and characteristics of a good role model for younger generations everywhere.