

# The media trump and the presidential election

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This paper explores the way that the media influenced the 2016 presidential election. More specifically the way news sources reported on Trump's jarring and obscene language, easily digestible for click-bait audiences instead of policy positions. This paper will identify how reporters focused on Donald Trump's tailored comments that were purposely meant to attract media attention.

The author of a Harvard study, Thomas Patterson said, the mainstream press highlights what's wrong with politics without also telling us what's right,. It's a version of politics that rewards a particular brand of politics. When everything and everybody is portrayed as deeply flawed, there's no sense making distinctions on that score, which works to the advantage of those who are more deeply flawed, Patterson said. This paper will explore the effect that influenced voters had on and attributed to the election of Donald Trump.

The way media outlets comment and report on candidates has a large impact on public opinion. During the 2016 election, coverage of candidates was focused on the negative. The phrases lesser of two evils and they're all bad options were frequently used when describing the candidates. Patterson hypothesized that negative news stories have a corrosive effect and also a neutralizing effect. If negative news stories are featured about all candidates then it levels the playing field and allows for charlatans to enter the arena. The study found that over the course of the general election Hillary Clinton was the target of fewer negative news stories than Donald Trump. However, over the course of the whole campaign Hillary was targeted more than Donald Trump. This coverage has huge effects on public opinion of Hillary

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Clinton and Donald Trump. The platform Donald Trump created, backed by the media, allowed him to win over the minds of Americans he wouldn't have otherwise. The nationwide, 24/7 coverage, click-bait news stories about Donald Trump was reversly used to his advantage. The provocative things that Donald Trump said gained him news coverage and ended up helping his campaign more than hurting it.

Julia Azari, associate professor of Political Science at Marquette University, believes the news media aided the election of Donald Trump by being anti-establishment. She argues that the news media works within the political institutions and has major effects on political decisions. Azari sees the election of Donald Trump as the president as a direct action of the news media. Donald Trump's vague and nonspecific anti-establishment and anti-government driven messages were reported on by every major media outlet. Though Trump was a businessman, television icon and unfit as a political candidate, Azari claims by simply by covering Trump, the media made his behavior seem presidential. Coverage of Trump, perhaps unwittingly, places him squarely within our expectations of the presidency, Azari said. The media also gave the office of president unrealistic power by covering Trump's claims that he was going to perform all of these actions that a president cannot perform alone. Media tropes present a false picture of the presidency, presidents can rarely shape policy alone, Azari said. The cause and effect relationship between the media and its influence on elections requires background knowledge on the functioning of political institutions and how partisan media affects the electorate. For some voters, headlines on social media had the most influence.

An article from NPR outlines how the social media boom created a political uproar and changed the tone for discussing politics. It describes how on Facebook people would delete their friends who had different political values from them in friend purges. On twitter, negative re-tweets and sarcastic messages were a similar defense to people with different views. The article points out that political strife was taboo but now it is encouraged. The way Donald Trump uses social media was one of the large focal points of the public throughout the election season. Pictures of his tweets could be found on any social media website, subjecting anyone with Internet access to a constant barrage of political arguments and happenings. It is this constant coverage that allows people to slowly become normalized to the outrageousness of Donald Trump's campaign. Because of how common it was for an incendiary tweet to be put out by the presidential candidate, it became normal. A major reason that these stories were clogging up people's news feeds and dashboards is because of the format of social media sites. The article notes that no thoughtful political conversation can happen in one tweet of 140 characters, and those who attempt at such a conversation end up in a loud mess. The article shows a particular interaction between Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton, over twitter.

This type of interaction happened daily during the election season. Sarcastic and aggressive types of political arguments made Donald Trump's hateful messages less shocking and this type of language normal for politicians. Another issue seen in the social media age is the use of bots to stir political arguments and perpetuate a sense of tension between ideologies. Bots spouting out hateful messages such as crooked Hillary and Donald Trump

the puppet created a false political environment for the regular people browsing social media sites. Glen Smith, a political researcher, published an article describing how the timing of certain partisan news stories affects a presidential election. Smith wanted to understand at which point voters were most susceptible to partisan biased media. It is known that the effect of partisan media input weakens as an election period continues. However, Smith focused on exactly how, and among what populations, this effect weakened. The primacy effect occurs because new information is processed based on prior opinions. In a process termed hot cognition, Smith said. The feelings brought to mind by one's prior affect toward the candidates influences their motivations when processing new information. Smith finds in his study that a politically uneducated person is more likely to continue to be affected by partisan media throughout the election process. Whereas a politically educated person is more likely to follow the trend and not be as affected later on in the election. Donald Trump had the more votes from politically uneducated and previously politically inactive populations. One can draw the conclusion that the media may have influenced these populations more than others. News stories from fake media sources surfaced near the end of the election and the convenient timing of the re-opening of a FBI investigation. A false news story that Donald Trump was endorsed by the pope was seen across the nation.

According to Smith, the education level and political affiliation of individuals determines how affected they are by media at different points throughout the election. The large amount of uneducated people who voted for Donald Trump may have been solidified in their support due to a false news story or

clickbait headline. The re- opening of the investigation into Hillary Clinton days before the election also would have a huge effect on these populations even though it was late in the election. The presidential election is hard to understand and complex to determine the causes because of how many factors and different types of people participate in elections. Each election has its own set of variables as society continues to change. In this particular election the evolution of the ways people communicated changed the way elections are won and the political establishment suffered a loss to Donald Trump. Donald Trump's campaign used lack of trust with government and negative campaign methods to their advantage. Donald Trump won the election however without the indirect help of the news media institutions that did not understand the effect they were having by covering Donald Trump so closely, he may not have. Politics as a whole was so shaken by the victory of Donald Trump a lot of research has gone into exactly how he was elected. This media- centered research will be in mind during the next election cycle.