



Background Guide

The Elephant in the Room:
2016 GOP Primary
(GOP 2016)

Under Secretary-General Fezaan Kazi
Chair Jackson Bell, Vice-Chair Sam Surette

IndianaMUNC VII

February 19-21 | Bloomington, IN
Paul H. O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs



Copyright Notice

This document is the copyrighted intellectual property of Indiana Model United Nations Inc and is solely intended for use by students attending IndianaMUNC VII. Any distribution, modification, or duplication of this document without express written authorization from the Corporation is strictly unlawful.



A Letter from the Chair

Greetings Delegates!

I am likely not the first and I will not likely be the last to welcome you to IndianaMUNC. However, I won't let that stop me. My name is Jackson Bell and I will be serving as your Chair for the Elephant in the Room 2016 GOP Primary. I have always wanted to run an election committee and am ecstatic to welcome you to my Model UN fantasy come to life. This is going to be a fantastic committee and I'm really looking forward to seeing the new future you guys make for the 2016 Republican Party! If you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to shoot me an email.

Some more about me, I am from Fishers, Indiana and was a Model UN journeyman throughout my four years at high school. I've competed and won awards across the country, and am looking forward to finally being able to hand out some awards to you lovely folks. I am a freshman at O'Neill school of Public and Environmental affairs majoring in Law and Public Policy and pursuing a certificate in Labor Studies. I currently am working with the office of Diversity Equity and inclusion at O'Neill as an undergraduate intern. While not doing model UN related activities I enjoy hockey, bath bombs, and birds.

Samuel Surette will be serving as your vice-chair and is my life long best friend who after a brief break with Model UN has decided to come back and is excited to share this journey with you.

Jackson Bell

belljad@iu.edu



Introduction to the Committee

It is January 1st, 2016 the dawn of a new year for the republican party, and exactly one month before the Iowa Caucus. Noting the importance of this election. Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House, has called key candidates of the 2016 presidential election and prominent members of the republican parties together to form a council of the most important living republicans. This council has been dubbed the Republican National Convention Victory Task Force (RNC VTF). The task? direct the purpose of the republican party during and after the 2016 primary with the goal of holding the house and senate as well as winning the presidency. The RNC VTF has been given the full authorization to use the powers of the RNC's available funds and potential actions within the party, and the ability to manipulate the party platform.

The Republicans face a possible popular vote deficit due to the greater than 50 percent approval rating of the Obama Administration. While the republican party currently holds power in both the house and the senate both of those could be in jeopardy following the 2016 general election.

The republican 2016 presidential primary is officially the largest open primary in United States history. Currently, 12 candidates remain. They are listed here ranked by the current position in the polls: Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, John Kasich Ben Carson, Chris Christie, Jeb Bush, Rand Paul,

¹Brockell, Gillian. 2016. "Outsiders in Politics: Not the Greatest Success Rate." *Washington Post*, July 16, 2016, sec. National. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/outside-in-politics-not-the-greatest-success-rate/2016/07/14/521d4dd6-4535-11e6-88d0-6adee48be8bc_story.html.

Carly Fiorina, Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum, and Jim Gilmore. There are four clear potential candidates that pull away from the pack Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and Ben Carson. While the RNC VTF cannot directly decide the victor of the primary they can certainly use a selective advertisement, strategic endorsements, and party platform to push the electorate.

Topic 1 | Outsider Outrage (Primary 2016)

History

The history of outsiders in American politics has had outsiders in politics as long as the ink dried on the constitution. Following social discontent with a perceived political establishment, there is commonly a surge of outsider momentum. From William Taft to Howard Hoover to Wendell Willkie, outsider candidates have experienced mixed success¹. Some are able to capitalize on alienation and populist rhetoric to political success. Others were fought tooth and nail by their own party and were unable to appeal to a real electorate.

While outsider politicians have not always been conservative (see current democratic candidate Bernard Sanders² run at established political force Hillary Clinton) there is a trend towards rightist ideology. This conservative tradition has run true with international outsiders too like Margret Thatcher in the UK or Steven Harper in Canada.³ Most outsiders come at least partly from business or are monied in some way that allows them to pay

² Sanders, Bernard, Huck Gutman, Nina Turner, and John Nichols. 2019. *Outsider in the White House*. London ; Brooklyn, Ny: Verso, The Imprint Of New Left Books.

³ King, Anthony. "The Outsider as Political Leader: The Case of Margaret Thatcher." *British Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 3 (2002): 435-54. Accessed November 7, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092248>.



for the enormous amount that political campaigns cost without the support of the party dime. This means more wealthy persons become political outsiders and demographically wealthy people are more conservative and being outsiders who are pushing away standard activity of the party tends to be more populist and ideologically extreme.

Outsiders in politics have led to some of the largest wins in recent republican history like the tea party that caused massive gains during the 2010 and 2014 midterms.⁴ For whatever reason have failed to carry momentum in the general election years losing house seats and control of the senate in 2012. While there have been moderately large movements for populous outsiders. The republican party has generally rejected them being in as large a spotlight as the nomination exemplified by Romney's nomination for the 2012 election.

Current Situation

This primary field in the Republican field is distinct in two ways. 1. It's massive size and 2. Donald John Trump. Who if elected would be the first president without any government experience. His campaign has embraced the label of an outsider to both politics and the republican party. Donald Trump declared his candidacy on June 16th, 2015 then shot up in the polls taking Jeb Bush's lead just a month later on July 20th. He has been incredibly controversial with many news organizations calling his actions: racist, xenophobic, and misogynistic.

However, he has exploded in the polls and separated himself from the huge pack of Republican hopefuls. The only one who has meaningfully challenged him was Ben Carson,

⁴ Canon, David T. (2010) "The Year of the Outsider: Political Amateurs in the U.S. Congress," *The Forum*: Vol. 8: iss. 4, Article 6.

also a political outsider, but after a strong debate for Trump⁵ and faltering momentum, Carson has now dropped down to fourth in the polls, while still possible that he could make a run at the nomination his odds are significantly diminished from what they were in November. The Ben Carson/Donald Trump dichotomy also shows the range of views of outsiders. While Carson tends to skew more moderate and more neoconservative, Trump is a far-right populist, A far-right populist who is winning.

There are two scenarios in which Trump could plausibly still face defeat despite his huge polling lead. Firstly, most of or all the other major candidates could drop out and endorse a compromise candidate who then has a serious chance of beating outright. Secondly, if many candidates stay in the race it and/or endorse disparate candidates. They might still have a chance at a brokered convention. A brokered convention is one in which the "first ballot" does not immediately return a winner at the RNC because no candidate has won a majority of delegates. After this point electors are free to vote for whomever they choose meaning that candidates without the plurality of votes or even someone who previously was not in the running for president could win the parties nomination. This, however, is extremely rare in the days of modern primaries and could be seen as infighting that would turn away voters who see the non-brokered convention party as more stable.

Bloc Positions

Outsiders | This will obviously include the two outsider candidates of Carson and Trump, but also those who think that the republican party needs restructuring to win. They believe that the traditional party establishment has grown

⁵ Canon, David T. (2010) "The Year of the Outsider: Political Amateurs in the U.S. Congress," *The Forum*: Vol. 8: iss. 4, Article 6.



complacent with minority governance and should seek to make big changes, but “draining the swamp” and putting more outsiders into Washington.

Party Establishment | This block includes party leaders in both the house and senate along with older more experienced politicians in the primary like Jeb Bush or Scott Walker. The party establishment believes that this will be their year and that they would be successful running a standard republican so that the election can serve as another mandate on Obama, but one they think they have a high probability of winning this time.

Rising Stars | Many of the major presidential candidates are in a space in between establishment and outsider. These include people like Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio. They have held political office, but are rising stars in the field and toe the party lines on most issues while having key disagreements that make them stand out from the other candidates. These delegates will seek to strike a balance between outsiders and establishment republicans so that they ensure that no matter what they have a place in the party.

Questions to Consider

- Should the VTF try to influence the election to support a candidate they prefer?
- Should the GOP try to contain the outsider movement in it's party? Etc.
- Should the Republican party structurally reform its party to allow for more outsiders to gain notoriety?
- What should the RNC do if there is brokered convention?
- How will endorsements and drop outs of members of the VTF affect the race?

Bibliography

Brockell, Gillian. 2016. “Outsiders in Politics: Not the Greatest Success Rate.” *Washington Post*, July 16, 2016, sec. National.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/outside-in-politics-not-the-greatest-success-rate/2016/07/14/521d4dd6-4535-11e6-88d0-6adee48be8bc_story.html.

Canon, David T. (2010) “The Year of the Outsider: Political Amateurs in the U.S. Congress,” *The Forum*: Vol. 8: iss. 4, Article 6.

King, Anthony. "The Outsider as Political Leader: The Case of Margaret Thatcher." *British Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 3 (2002): 435-54. Accessed November 7, 2020.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092248>.

Rueda, David. "Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties." *The American Political Science Review* 99, no. 1 (2005): 61-74. Accessed November 6, 2020.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30038919>.

Sanders, Bernard, Huck Gutman, Nina Turner, and John Nichols. 2019. *Outsider in the White House*. London ; Brooklyn, Ny: Verso, The Imprint Of New Left Books.

Stewart, JA (2018) In Through the Out Door: Examining the Use of Outsider Appeals in Presidential Debates. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 48



Topic 2 | Swing State Snafu (General Election 2016)

History

Republican presidential victories have come a long way since the election of Abraham Lincoln, the first republican president, in 1860. The republican party by virtue of its deep history has a vast history of presidential victories to learn from. However, since that internet and cable news campaigning has completely changed from what it was in Lincoln's era and the republicans have had to adapt to a new more socially progressive, and informed electorate. Examining the good and the bad of Republican presidents in the last 50 years would serve this committee well in informing good and bad strategies that will lead to a win for the republican in the white house.

There is one clear republican stand-out in electoral victories. Ronald Reagan. In Reagan's two elections he lost a total of 7 states and carried 93. His popularity is still unparalleled in the modern republican party. So, why was Reagan so successful? The answer is complicated. Ronald Reagan was an outsider rising from a movie star to president. Political Scientist Alvin Felzenberg⁶ attributes his success to his clear political vision of the country. While democrats appeared to offer more of the status quo he offered a charming face to a new free market, conservative, and Christian government. Reagan was able to capitalize off of preserved negatives in the democratic camp by showing an optimistic brighter future-forward, making it easy to justify a vote for him and hard to justify a vote for Carter then Mondale.

⁶ Walsh, Kenneth T. "The Most Consequential Elections in History: Ronald Reagan and the Election of 1980." *U.S. News & World Report*, U.S. News & World Report, 25 Sept. 2008, www.usnews.com/news/articles/2008/09/25/the-most-

Post-Reagan the biggest republican was Senator Bob Dole in his unsuccessful run against Clinton in 1996. Bob Dole was facing a massive disadvantage going into '96 Clinton was popular and the economy was booming much as the Republicans do this year. Dole's strategy was a more moderate approach to presidential politics. Presenting the optimism and patriotism of Reagan while shedding the hard-line conservative rhetoric while still holding true many of the conservative principles of Reagan like lower taxes and regressive social policy. Dole failed to fill a niche. He didn't energize hardline Republicans like Reagan and Nixon did, but his moderate speech failed to win him over the middle as well with moderate either voting for Ross Perot's energetically moderate campaign or defaulting to an incumbent vote for Clinton because of the economy. Bob Dole was an extremely effective legislator for the republican party but was a fairly milquetoast and unexciting nominee.

Again, with centuries-long history books could and have been written about the different lessons that can be learned from republican general elections for president, however, in showing you both sides of the spectrum this brief history will hopefully allow the VTF to learn from the good and discard the bad.

Current Situation

While Republicans are generally seen to be unfavored in the presidential election they have multiple paths to victory in the electoral college. Three stand out as the key strategies.

[consequential-elections-in-history-ronald-reagan-and-the-election-of-1980.](#)



The first is the most obvious. The states that are set to swing in 2016 are a diverse range of states. Some have high areas of minorities like Nevada others are extremely homogeneous like Ohio still others like Virginia are a mix. The republican party should take less of a region-based approach and focus on running a solid campaign that appeals to all different kinds of voters. The drawbacks to this are that resources might run thin as the party takes a more decentralized approach. Republicans must also win almost every key swing state if they are to embark on this strategy. This might result in a McCain or Romney like outcome where they come close in many key states, but ultimately fell because of their lack of ability to focus on a couple of states specifically.

The second is an approach that looks towards largely minority-based states in the south and the southwest and tries to win there. More moderate candidates may be able to better appeal to blacks and Latinos both of which are more religious than the average voter and so when Barack Obama is not running may flip to republicans or at the very least stay home because of lack of enthusiasm leaving the more rural white areas of the states to decide this election. Key states in this election model would be Florida, Arizona, and Nevada. With all the south and southwest states in hand, republicans need only win about half of the remaining electoral votes including easy victories like Ohio and Iowa.

The last strategy is a risky gambit and has a higher chance of backfiring into a big loss than the other two. The Midwest has been home to the highest competitive battleground states, but

this year republicans may be able to make a play at a prize they have been eyeing for years. The Blue Wall. Wisconsin, Michigan Pennsylvania. They are currently favored by the democrats. However, with republican momentum towards non-college-educated whites in the primaries being apparent they may be able to capitalize on suburbs and working-class areas of these states with a populous right-wing candidate/message⁷. If the republicans could capture the midwestern swing states, they need only capture about a quarter of the remaining votes. Just Florida plus the Midwest would do it.

These three strategies while certainly not exclusive they are some of the republican's best chances of snatching victory from 2016. The VTF must carefully consider all of these strategies and how to fuse them or isolate them into winning strategies. The VTF needs to be flexible in their victory. October surprises, big polling shifts, and debate swings are bound to happen. Using a planned but flexible strategy will be key to the VTF during this election cycle. The VTF need also consider other avenues of strategy such as how much social media presence the group plans to have⁸, where and how much fundraising should be a priority, and who would most effectively serve as surrogates to the president. As well as more strategic goals like where ideologically the VTF can change the party platform to effectively appeal to moderates by going more centrist, using more humor⁹, and appealing to unity or appealing to a base with more right-wing rhetoric.

Bloc Positions

⁷ Kuhn, David. "Sorry liberals. Bigotry didn't elect Donald Trump." *The New York Times*. Last modified December 26, 2016. <https://davidpaulkuhn.com/about/Articles/2009%20to%202012%20%20clips/2016%2012-26%20New%20York%20Times%20Column%20by%20David%20Paul%20Kuhn%20on%20how%20Bigotry%20Did%20Not%20Elect%20Trump.pdf>.

⁸ Hendricks J.A., Schill D. (2017) *The Social Media Election of 2016*. In: Denton Jr R. (eds) *The 2016 US Presidential Campaign. Political Campaigning and Communication*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52599-0_5

⁹ Smirnova, Michelle. "Small Hands, Nasty Women, and Bad Hombres: Hegemonic Masculinity and Humor in the 2016 Presidential Election." *Socius*, (January 2018). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023117749380>.



Swing State Strategists | Those who wish to focus on all the swing states at once for a more versatile and flexible approach will likely fall either in the center of moderates and populists or be more pragmatic in their approach to this election, as this strategy is far more easily shapeable to surprises that may come down the road and could eventually be molded down into a winning strategy. These delegates will still have big target states like Florida, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, but these are based more on their large electoral vote counts than the region that they consist of. Swing state strategists may include Mitt Romney, Mitch McConnell, and Paul Ryan

Southern Schemers | Those who wish to pursue the South and Southwest based swing states will generally be on the moderate side and those that represent minorities in the republican party. The goal to flip areas like Nevada and Florida is to appeal to minorities. While it is near impossible for republicans to flip minorities from nearly a ten-fold deficit to a win in one election cycle a marginal victory could very well decide these states. Look for delegates like Marco Rubio, Ben Carson, and John McCain for their wish to take the party in a more moderate direction, and regional delegates who may benefit from increased republican funding in the states they are representatives of.

Midwest Masterminds | Those who want to gamble on flipping the Midwest are going to tend towards the more conservative side of the spectrum, but perhaps a better indicator is the amount these delegates are willing to embrace populism to get low-education white voters to

¹⁰ Farley, John E. 2019. "Five Decisive States: Examining How and Why Donald Trump Won the 2016 Election." *Sociological Quarterly* 60(3): 337-53.

swing to their candidate in areas like Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Those who have built their candidacy off of right-wing populism like Palin and Trump¹⁰ may end up here. Though not expressly related this group will also tend to be more keen to use social media to appeal to a more extreme audience that may stay home for a centrist¹¹

Questions to Consider

- How should the VTF interpret Regans success and how can that be applied today?
- Similarly, how should the VTF interpret Dole's failure and how should that be applied to this election?
- What swing states are critical to republicans success in 2016
- What swing states should be given less attention?
- Is it a lost cause to go after blue "non-swing states"?
- Which swing state strategy or mixture of the aforementioned strategies should the VTF engage in?
- What other factors are there in general election strategy besides the states targeted? (Ex: Social media, Fundraisers, Surrogates)

Bibliography

Enli, Gunn. "Twitter as Arena for the Authentic Outsider: Exploring the Social Media Campaigns of Trump and Clinton in the 2016 US Presidential Election." *European Journal of Communication* 32,

¹¹ Enli, Gunn. "Twitter as Arena for the Authentic Outsider: Exploring the Social Media Campaigns of Trump and Clinton in the 2016 US Presidential Election." *European Journal of Communication* 32, no. 1 (February 2017): 50-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323116682802>



no. 1 (February 2017): 50–
61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323116682802>.

Farley, John E. 2019. “Five Decisive States: Examining How and Why Donald Trump Won the 2016 Election.” *Sociological Quarterly* 60(3): 337–53.

Hendricks J.A., Schill D. (2017) The Social Media Election of 2016. In: Denton Jr R.(eds) The 2016 US Presidential Campaign. Political Campaigning and Communication. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52599-0_5.

Kuhn, David. "Sorry liberals. Bigotry didn't elect Donald Trump." *The New York Times*. Last modified December 26, 2016. <https://davidpaulkuhn.com/about/Articles/2009%20to%202012%20%20clips/2016%2012-26%20New%20York%20Times%20Column%20by%20David%20Paul%20Kuhn%20on%20how%20Bigotry%20Did%20Not%20Elect%20Trump.pdf>.

Smirnova, Michelle. “Small Hands, Nasty Women, and Bad Hombres: Hegemonic Masculinity and Humor in the 2016 Presidential Election.” *Socius*, (January 2018). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023117749380>.

Walsh, Kenneth T. “The Most Consequential Elections in History: Ronald Reagan and the Election of 1980.” *U.S. News & World Report*, U.S. News & World Report, 25 Sept. 2008, www.usnews.com/news/articles/2008/09/25/the-most-consequential-elections-in-history-ronald-reagan-and-the-election-of-1980.

¹² Graham, Jack. "Why there's more to the US Election than Trump and Clinton." *LSE Department of Government Blog* (2016).

Topic 3 | Congressional Calamity (Legislature 2016)

History

While United States history classes focus almost exclusively on the executive branch of the US governmental system the legislative branch is as if not more important in terms of accomplishing party policy goals¹². Therefore, it is certainly important that legislative races are at the front of the VTF's mind when they are deciding on the republican party messaging for 2020.

Before the presidency of Bill Clinton, the legislative branch of government was dominated by democrats. They maintained control of the house of representatives during the extremely popular Reagan presidency and enjoyed a stretch of complete dominance from '57-'81 in both the house and senate. However, the tide shifted with Bill Clinton's presidency were 6 out of his 8 years both chambers were republican controlled. The last decade has been competitive between both parties with the democrats able to take huge wins in 2008 on the back of Obama and turn them into consistent senate control. While Republicans were able to use tea party momentum to take the house of representatives. Currently, Republicans control both the house and senate for the first time since George W. Bush and control it with large margins because of the effective messaging in the 2014 midterm elections.



The Republican strategy for legislative races necessarily fluctuates heavily based on the candidates and the seat they are running for. The demographic and political differences are simply too much to run a singular strategy for all areas and expect to win. Republican wins have so far been based on two key elements: effective and highly visible leadership and the tea party, which will be covered in the “Current Situation” section.

Currently, the legislative leaders of the Republican party are Paul Ryan, who is the speaker of the house, and Mitch McConnell, who is the Senate majority leader. They are both extremely strong leaders who showcase two very different but currently united branches of Republicans. Paul Ryan is an example of the young, fresh, more moderate Republican center, while Mitch McConnell is an old-guard conservative who isn't afraid to be unpopular in order to be legislatively effective. Both are strong leaders of the Republican party and their faces after Romney's defeat in 2012. Newt Gingrich, while long retired at this point, is the model for a conservative legislative leader. He was popular, effective, and ruled a traditionally Democrat-run house of representatives for six years. Continuing to have a unified, but diverse Republican legislature is key to holding the house and senate.

Overall, the legislative branch has been a historically important branch of government with the Republican party especially aware of how majority control in congress can stifle a presidency. Though members of the VTF will argue over how much weight to put on these races vs. the presidency, all members can

¹³ Darlington, Rolda. "In Florida, Marco Rubio looks set to win a Senate race that will have lasting impact on US politics." USApp—American Politics and Policy Blog (2016).

¹⁴ Scattergood, Wendy (2016) In Wisconsin's Senate race, Johnson vs. Feingold has gone from a sure-thing to a potential trend-buster. USApp – American Politics and Policy Blog (03 Nov 2016)

certainly agree that holding the house and Senate are key objectives of this 2016 campaign.

Current Situation

While it may initially appear that the legislature will be a strong point for the Republicans' 2016 campaign as the merely need to hold rather than retake congress. This is not the case. Blank ballot polling has Republicans behind in the house and teetering on the edge in the senate. The while senate numbers are fairly strong the problem is Republicans have 24 seats up for defence while the Democrats have only 10. Democrats also have an easy pick up in Illinois to flip one seat right out of the gate. The positive of this is that Democrats are behind by so much in the senate they need to flip 5 seats and win the presidency or 6 without the presidency.

To accomplish the defense of the Republican's senate, lead the Republicans will need to focus on key races in the senate while helping house members more broadly with Super PAC money or clear messaging that appeals to the American people. Senate key races include Illinois, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Nevada, Missouri, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Florida¹³. Illinois, Wisconsin¹⁴, and Pennsylvania are Democrats' most obvious pickups, but Democrats to flip the senate would need to make gains in deep red states like Missouri. If the VTF are looking to flip a state of their own Nevada is the most obvious pick up. Presidential strategy is also key to victories in these areas¹⁵ as split ticket voting is at an all time low meaning the winner of the presidency at the state level and the senate seat will likely

¹⁵ Boatright, Robert G. "Damage Control: The Effect of the Trump Campaign on House and Senate Races," 2017. <https://www.idc.ac.il/en/schools/government/uselections/documents/boatright-robert.pdf>



match in most cases. The little split ticket voting there is still certainly has an impact though as all of these races will be close and it is likely that either aggressive turnout from one side or split ticket voters could make or break a republican victory¹⁶.

The VTF has many options when it comes to how to help senate candidates. From diverting RNC funds to those candidates or running attack ads on their opponents. Depending on the VTF strategy they could even take the president off the campaign trail for a day or two to help campaign in key senate races. For more broad legislative goals offering a substantive and popular platform like Newt Gingrich's contract for America has been shown to be a winning strategy and strong social media campaigns¹⁷, but taking money from the presidential campaign and distributing it to congress men and women in battle ground districts could also prove effective.

The main difference on VTF for legislative seats won't so much be based on their different strategies but on where the Republican priorities should lie. Essentially which is more important the presidency or congress. While it is extremely possible that both could be one. Prioritizing one or the other would certainly give the RNC a distinct advantage in that branch vs. Democrats who appear to be going for a broad campaign targeted at a clean sweep of the Senate, House, and Presidency.

Bloc Positions

Congressional Focus | Many high-ranking legislative officials in the VTF's will advocate for this focus for the RNC agenda. Many high-ranking legislative officials also will recognize that republicans have struggled to maintain momentum in the presidency in past decades, but from a "minority" have been effective in gaining support. You'll see McConnell, Ryan, and their allies in this bloc.

¹⁶ Paul, Newly. "Turnout could be key in North Carolina's tight Senate race." USApp—American Politics and Policy Blog (2016).

¹⁷ Borah, P. (2016). Political Facebook use: Campaign strategies used in 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. Journal of Information

Presidential Focus | This may be one of the weaker blocs as it will likely include the presidential nominee and some old guard conservatives who prefer to focus on the more symbolic victories. The reason for focusing on the presidential role is to take it back for the republicans so as to not contribute to a media narrative about conservative failure in government.

All-in Gamble | This while the biggest risk for achieving nothing has the greatest boon to achieve everything. If the democrats are going all in then those who associate with this bloc are calling right away. This group plans an equitable distribution of funds between Congress and the Presidency equivalent to need. Those who want to play high stakes in this election and go with this strategy will likely be a broad coalition of those who won't be content with one chamber and likely don't have much to lose if they get a bad beat on the flop including Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and Mitt Romney.

Questions to Consider

- How can Republicans learn from previous legislative victories and failures?
- How can the VTF exploit democratic weaknesses in the legislature?
- Should the republicans try to defend or attack by flipping house seats and Nevada?
- In what way can the VTF help senate and house candidates win if it wants to?
- Should the VTF focus on the presidency? The legislature? Or both?

Technology & Politics , 13 (4), 326–338.

doi:10.1080/19331681.2016.1163519 [Taylor & Francis Online], [Web of Science ®],[Google Scholar]



Bibliography

Boatright, Robert G. "Damage Control: The Effect of the Trump Campaign on House and Senate Races," 2017. <https://www.idc.ac.il/en/schools/government/uselections/documents/boatright-robert.pdf>.

Borah, P. (2016). Political Facebook use: Campaign strategies used in 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 13 (4), 326–338. doi:10.1080/19331681.2016.1163519 [Taylor & Francis Online], [Web of Science®], [Google Scholar]

Darlington, Rolda. "In Florida, Marco Rubio looks set to win a Senate race that will have a lasting impact on US politics." *US App–American Politics and Policy Blog* (2016).

Graham, Jack. "Why there's more to the US Election than Trump and Clinton." *LSE Department of Government Blog* (2016)

Paul, Newly. "Turnout could be key in North Carolina's tight Senate race." *US App–American Politics and Policy Blog* (2016).

Scattergood, Wendy (2016) In Wisconsin's Senate race, Johnson vs. Feingold has gone from a sure-thing to a potential trend-buster. *US App – American Politics and Policy Blog* (03 Nov 2016)