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**UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 2016**

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Aneta Sedláčková

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## ABSTRACT

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The object of this undergraduate thesis is United States presidential election of 2016. This work is divided into 6 parts. The introduction deals with the United States, it describes who can become the president of the USA, who can vote and what are the president's duties and powers. The second part introduces two the candidates – Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton and reveals the biggest issues concerning America before election. The third part explains how the presidential election process works. The fourth part of this bachelor thesis addresses the primary election. The fifth part deals with the general election, highlights scandals throughout the campaign and analyzes presidential debates and results. The last part summarizes the acquired pieces of information and mentions some of the accomplishments of first one hundred days of president Trump in the office.

*Keywords:* United States, Election, Presidential, America, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton

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## INTRODUCTION

The United States of America is a federal republic consisting of fifty states and the District of Columbia, with an area of 3,790,000 square miles, bordered by the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean, between Canada and Mexico. With over 324,853,000 people the USA ranks number 3 in the list of countries by population (U.S. Population, 2017). The USA is the world's biggest superpower, with a strong political influence. “The US accounts for 37% of global military spending, and spends more than four times what China, the world’s No. 2 spender, does on its military. The U.S. dominates across land, sea, air and space” (Bremmer, 2015).

The office of president of the United States is one of the most powerful in the world. To better understand the significance of this position one has to know what are the president's duties and powers. They are established in the US Constitution. The President shall be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several states, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment. He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: but the Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments. The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the



Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session (U.S. Const. art. II, § 2).

“Within the executive branch itself, the president has broad powers to manage national affairs and the workings of the federal government. The president can issue rules, regulations, and instructions called executive orders, which have the binding force of law upon federal agencies but do not require congressional approval. As commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the United States, the president may also call into federal service the state units of the National Guard. In times of war or national emergency, the Congress may grant the president even broader powers to manage the national economy and protect the security of the United States. The president has a major legislative role – he can veto any bill passed by Congress and, unless two-thirds of the members of each house vote to override the vote, the bill does not become law. With the secretary of state, the president manages all official contacts with foreign governments.” (Targonski, 2000, p.45-47).

According to the United States Constitution “no person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years, and been fourteen Years a resident within the United States.” (U.S. Const. art. II, § 1).

Overwhelming majority of presidents had careers in prominent government positions or in military. In the election of 2016, the winning candidate was an exception of that. With no previous political experience, businessman Donald Trump defeated former secretary of State Hillary Clinton. On January 20, 2017 Donald Trump become the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. After one of the most shocking election.

# 1 CANDIDATES

## 1.1 Hillary Clinton

Hillary Clinton has served as secretary of state, senator from New York, first lady of the United States, first lady of Arkansas, a practicing lawyer and law professor. While attending Yale, Hillary began dating one of her classmates, Bill Clinton (“Everything you need” n.d.). They got married in 1975, 3 years latter she become the first lady of Arkansas.

Bill Clinton was first elected president in 1992 and re-elected in 1996. “During the 1992 Democratic primaries, Clinton himself remarked that his wife would be a full partner if he became President, terming it a "two for one" deal. Within the first five days of becoming First Lady, Hillary Clinton was named by her husband to head the President's Task Force on Health Care Reform, overseeing research, investigatory trips, financial reports, numerous committees composed of medical and insurance professionals, lawmakers and other government officials, public service leaders, and consumer rights advocates. When the plan devised was attacked as too complicated or an intention leading to "socialized medicine" the Administration decided not to push for a vote and it never came to a vote in the Senate or House, abandoned in September of 1994. Perhaps the most successful component of her accomplishments as First Lady was initiating the Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997, a federal effort that provided state support for those children whose parents were unable to provide them with health coverage.

During the Lewinsky scandal, Hillary Clinton supported her husband's contentions of innocence regarding marital infidelity, believing the rumors, along with the other charges, to be the result of a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Her support of him at that critical juncture was believed by many media commentators at that emotionally heightened time to be an important factor, if not the greatest factor, in preventing a call for his resignation.

On November 7, 2000, Hillary Clinton became the first First Lady elected to public office, winning the U.S. Senate seat from New York State. In 2006, Senator Clinton sought re-election and won a second term as U.S. Senator. Just twenty days after beginning her second term as Senator she made known her intention to pursue the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination; she spent the first half of her final year in the Senate as a full-time contender for her party's bid for the highest office in the land. On January 20, 2007, Senator Clinton filed with the Federal Elections Commission to declare her formation of an exploratory presidential campaign committee. She made a video announcing her intentions on her website. Nine months later, she formally declared her candidacy for the U.S. Presidency. Although she had been predicted through 2007 as the favored candidate and likely nominee of her party, she found her Senate colleague Barack Obama, who represented her own native state of Illinois to be a formidable challenger. On June 3, 2008, Senator Obama won the necessary number of delegate pledges. Hillary Clinton suspended her campaign several days later.” (First Lady Biography: Hillary Clinton, n.d.)

After Barack Obama won the presidential race, she was offered to serve as a Secretary of State. Four years later Clinton stepped down stirring speculations whether she will run in 2016. On April 12, Hillary Clinton posted a video on her YouTube channel, where she announced her candidacy “I’m running for president. Everyday Americans need a champion. And I want to be that champion. So I’m hitting the road to earn your vote — because it’s your time. And I hope you’ll join me on this journey.” (Hillary Clinton, n.d.). Her campaign slogan was “Stronger Together”.

Chozick (2015) estimates that “Clinton will embark on her latest - and perhaps last - bid for the White House with nearly universal name recognition and a strong base of support, particularly among women. But in a campaign that will inevitably be about the future,

Mrs. Clinton, 67, enters as a quintessential baby boomer, associated with the 1990s and with the drama of the Bill Clinton years. This campaign will begin on a small scale and build up to an effort likely to cost more than any presidential bid waged before, with Mrs. Clinton's supporters and outside "super PACs" looking to raise as much as \$2.5 billion in a blitz of donations from Democrats who overwhelmingly support her candidacy. Much of that enthusiasm is tied to the chance to make history by electing a woman to the presidency. But some, too, owes to the lack of compelling alternatives in a party trying desperately to hold on to the White House when Republicans control the House and the senate.

Mrs. Clinton wants to reintroduce herself in a series of intimate but critical campaign events in Iowa and New Hampshire. She will use them to lay out the central theme of her candidacy: improving the economic fortunes of the middle class, with an emphasis on increasing wages and reducing income inequality. Unlike in her 2008 campaign, when she played down gender and sought to show she was tough enough to be president, Mrs. Clinton plans to highlight that she is a grandmother and trumpet her chance to make history." (Chozick, 2015). Clinton's budget was extensively used on TV adds, whereas Trump attracted a lot of media coverage thanks to his bold and often offensive statements, combined with his self-assurance, he gained huge amounts of publicity every day.

## **1.2 Donald J. Trump**

Donald J. Trump was born on June 14, 1946, New York. He is a formal businessman and a television star. As a nominee for the Republican Party he became the 45th President of the United States. Trump was also a real-estate developer who amassed vast hotel, casino, and other real-estate properties in the New York City area and around the world. (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017). Donald Trump was born to a father of German heritage. His grandfather actually came to America and made a fortune out in the Yukon, where he served up meals and alcohol and beds to the miners who were seeking their fortunes in the gold fields. His mother is of Scottish stock. She came over in the late 1920s. (D'Antonio, 2016). “After graduating from the Wharton School of Finance, Mr. Trump followed in his father’s footsteps as a real estate developer, and he entered the world of real estate development in New York.” (President Donald J. Trump, 2017).

“In the 1970s he made a series of shrewd property purchases in Manhattan, obtaining generous tax concessions from the city, which was eager for new investment at a time of severe fiscal crisis. Trump bought and renovated several aging hotel complexes and apartment towers in Manhattan and built new ones there as well. In 1989 Trump had bought an East Coast air shuttle service from American Airlines. During his period of financial difficulties in 1991 it was taken over by USAir. Though Trump had been caught in the real-estate downturn at the end of the 1980s, and in June 1990 he missed payments to banks and bondholders, he was able to secure additional loans and thereby avoid bankruptcy. Estimates of his personal fortune during that period ranged from \$2 billion to zero. His fortunes rebounded with the strong economy of the 1990s. In 1996 Trump partnered with NBC to purchase the Miss Universe Organization, which produces the Miss America, Miss USA, and Miss Teen USA beauty pageants. By the early 21st century Trump had begun developing several major hotel and residential complexes around the world, including Trump World

Tower in New York City, Trump International Hotel and Tower in Chicago, Trump Hotel Las Vegas, and the Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida. In addition, in 2004 Trump premiered a reality television series, *The Apprentice*, which featured contestants competing in various challenges to become one of his employees. The Emmy-nominated series, in which Trump starred, popularized the phrase “You’re fired” and solidified Trump’s reputation as a shrewd outspoken businessman.

In 2008 the show was revamped as *The Celebrity Apprentice*, with newsmakers and entertainers as contestants.” (The Editors of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2017). Moreover, he coauthored over 14 books. In his newest book *Crippled America* Trump (2015) estimates that his “net worth is more than ten billion dollars” (p.129). However, this amount is not verified, because Donald Trump never showed his tax returns to the public.

“Trump was also active in politics. In 1999 he switched his voter registration from Republican to the Reform Party and established a presidential exploratory committee. Though he ultimately declined to run, he set forth his socially liberal and economically conservative political views in *The America We Deserve* (2000). Trump later rejoined the Republican Party, and he maintained a high public profile during the 2012 presidential election - gaining much attention for questioning the citizenship of Pres. Barack Obama.” (The Editors of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2017).

Donald Trump announced his candidacy on July 16, 2015 at the Trump Tower in New York. In his speech he introduced the campaign's slogan “Make America Great Again“. He talked about key issues such as immigration, trade, terrorism and offshoring American jobs. Trump declared that “Our country is in serious trouble. We don’t have victories anymore. We used to have victories, but we don’t have them. When was the last time anybody saw us beating, let’s say, China in a trade deal? They kill us. I beat China all the time. All the time. When do we beat Mexico at the border? They’re laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now

they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically. When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people. We need somebody that literally will take this country and make it great again. So ladies and gentlemen, I am officially running for president of the United States." (Donald J. Trump for President, n.d.).

DelReal (2015) points out that "Trump began indicating earlier this year that he was seriously considering a 2016 run. In addition to launching a presidential exploratory committee in March, he also decided to delay production on his long-running reality show, "The Apprentice," in order to focus his efforts on a potential campaign. In February, he began hiring staff in early voting states.

Trump enters the race with nearly unmatched name recognition and a powerful real estate brand, but a reputation for a quick temper and attention-grabbing celebrity feuds. The business mogul, who has never held public office, enters an extremely crowded field of Republican presidential hopefuls, now numbering a dozen major candidates."

### **1.3 The Main Issues of the Campaign**

#### **Economy**

In polls, voters consistently rank the economy as their top concern. On the one hand, the economy has improved dramatically under President Obama. The unemployment rate has fallen to 5 percent, from 7.8 percent when Obama took office in 2009 and a high of 10 percent that same year, and job growth has been consistently strong. Corporate profits and financial markets have both rebounded strongly from their recession-era lows, and overall economic output has been resilient in the face of challenges domestic and foreign. All of that should work to the advantage of the party that has controlled the White House for the past eight years. But Democrats haven't seemed eager to embrace Obama's legacy. Sanders takes every opportunity to rail against an economy that benefits primarily "millionaires and billionaires." And though Hillary Clinton is more measured, she has sounded similar notes; in a major economic speech over the summer, she said the economy "still isn't delivering" for ordinary Americans. Republican candidates blamed Obama and the Democrats for stagnant wages, persistent inequality and lackluster economic growth.

#### **Environment and Science**

Aschwanden (2015) states that climate change is one of the most partisan issues in the presidential race. Although Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders — who are running for the Democratic presidential nomination — argue about which of them is doing enough to fight climate change, the leading Republican presidential candidates dispute the scientific consensus that global warming is driven by human activities. (Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio acknowledge that warming is happening but question the extent to which it's human-caused). Other energy issues in the campaigns include Environmental Protection Agency regulations on power plant emissions, fracking regulations, tax credits and subsidies for renewable energy, drilling in the Arctic and carbon taxes.



## **Gun Control**

“The subject of guns divides voters by party. Most of the Republican candidates assert their support for Second Amendment rights. They oppose reinstatement of the assault-weapons ban and defend the right to carry concealed firearms. Democratic candidates support more gun control — and disagree among themselves about how much. Front-runner Clinton says she will expand background checks and make it harder to buy guns online and at gun shows. Sanders and Clinton use the phrase “black lives matter” to reference the goals of the Black Lives Matter movement to focus attention on the victims of police violence who are black. Clinton pledges to fight campus sexual assault, which other candidates don’t mention in their platforms but is a widespread problem receiving increasing attention.” (Bialik, 2015).

## **Health Care**

Poll after poll shows that high drug prices are the leading health care concern in the United States. Recent polls have found that the majority of people think pharmaceutical companies are to blame and that the government should negotiate prices for Medicare and force companies to release pricing information. Calls to restructure Medicare, the national insurance program for people over 65, divide Republican candidates. Medicaid, the public insurance program for poor people and people with disabilities, is also polarizing. Democrats want to expand the program, and many Republicans call for reducing and privatizing it. The most discussed is Obamacare. All of the Republican candidates say they will repeal the law, while the Democratic candidates pledge to uphold it (Barry-Jester, 2015).

## **Education**

Munguia (2015) notices that the education subject the candidates have spoken about most often is college affordability, which is one of the few things in the education sphere that most people can agree on, regardless of political affiliation. All of the Democratic candidates have made the high cost of college a key part of their campaigns, and many of the Republican

candidates, including Ben Carson, Marco Rubio, Rand Paul and Chris Christie, have laid out their own plans for how to deal with the issue. Democratic candidates' platforms focus on, among other things, either eliminating tuition (Hillary Clinton's plan would make community college free, and Bernie Sanders's would make all public colleges and universities free) or dramatically reducing it.

### **Supreme Court**

As stated by Minton (2016) the Supreme Court is the most important issue of the election. At this time, there are eight Supreme Court Justices, four are conservative, and four are liberal-ish. Only one is under 60, three are 78-84 years old. The next President will determine the make up of the Court for at least the next generation, and probably longer. Supreme Court Justices serve for life. With the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, a far right conservative, in 2016, the Court is already short one Justice. The Congress refused to act on the nomination of Merrick Garland, a moderate, the next President will very likely be called upon to nominate not just one, but potentially four, Justices.

## **2        PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION PROCESS**

An election of president of the United States is held every four years. American citizens must be registered to vote, they have to be more than 18 years old and they have to meet their state's residency requirements. Candidates for the presidency are chosen by political parties several months before the presidential election. Election Day is on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

### **2.1 Electoral College**

According to Targonski (2000) “the method of electing the president is peculiar to the American system. Although the names of the candidate appear on the ballots, the people technically do not vote directly for the president (and the vice president). Instead, the voters of each state select a slate of presidential “electors“, equal to the number of senators and representatives that state has in Congress. The candidate with the highest number of votes in each state wins all the “electoral votes” of that state. The electors of all 50 states and the District of Columbia—a total of 538 persons—make up what is known as the electoral college. The electors in each state gather in their state capital shortly after the election and cast their votes for the candidate with the largest number of popular votes in their state. To be successful, a candidate for the presidency must receive 270 electoral votes out of the possible 538.” (Targonski, 2000, p.42-43).

The electoral college has its disadvantages. In 2016, for the fifth time in the US history, the winning candidate actually received less votes than his opponent. Donald Trump won the electoral vote by 304 to 227 over Hillary Clinton, but lost the popular vote. Clinton received nearly 2.9 million more votes than Trump.

In 2016 Barack Obama was finishing his second term in office. He was not eligible

to seek reelection to a third term due to “the twenty-second Amendment, ratified in 1951, which limits the president to two terms of office.” (Targonski, 2000, p.42).

## **2.2 Nomination process**

The USA has a two-party system, without the support of the Republican party or the Democratic party it is unlikely that a candidate can win the general election. Therefore, candidates seek a presidential nomination.

Schnartz (1996) says “In order to formally gain the presidential nomination, both major political parties require a candidate to win a majority of the delegate support at the party's national convention. The delegates to the convention are mostly selected in a local caucus-state, the District of Columbia, and those territories allocated delegates by the national party committees” (p. 13). “Each state, through its legislative process, chooses a method and date for delegate selection. In some states the parties have an option regarding their nomination method. Basically, the states and state parties choose one of the methods: either a local caucus-state convention process or a presidential primary” (Schnartz,1996, p. 16). Primaries and caucuses start in February, traditionally in New Hampshire and Iowa, and continue until early June during the election year.

## 3 PRIMARY ELECTION

### 3.1 Democratic Party Primaries

In total 6 candidates entered the race. Three withdrew before the primaries, Martin O' Malley (Governor of Maryland) dropped out after the Iowa Caucus thus the primaries became a two-man race between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Even though Clinton was the front-runner and had a strong support from the Democratic National Committee, Sanders became as a strong opponent. Elliot and Frizell (2016) noted that "Sanders didn't expect to win; he wanted to make some points and push a progressive agenda - 15\$ federal minimum wage, paid family leave, carbon tax, tuition-free public college and medical care for all." Sanders' campaign resonated with millennials, he was the first candidate, who spoke about student debt, and believed that climate change is the biggest threat to the planet. Clinton had problem appealing to young voters, nevertheless, she gained 2,382 delegate votes she needed to win. After a long fight Sanders endorsed Clinton and pushed some of his agenda into her program. "Hillary Clinton will make an outstanding president and I am proud to stand with her here today." (Sanders Endorses Clinton, 2016). Hillary Clinton become the first female to be nominated for a major political party.

### **3.2 Republican Party Primaries**

The Republican field began with 17 candidates, 16 of whom have dropped out. Donald Trump, John Kasich (Ohio governor), Ted Cruz (United States senator), Marco Rubio (United States senator), Ben Carson (Retired neurosurgeon) Jeb Bush (Former Florida governor), Chris Christie (New Jersey governor), Carly Fiorina (Former business executive of Hewlett-Packard), Lindsey Graham (United States senator) and 8 others (“Who Is Running”, 2016). Six of them withdrew before the primaries.

After the election in 2012, many people speculated whether the next race will be Jeb Bush against Hillary Clinton. Martin (2012) claims “his gravitas, fundraising capability, Florida roots and entree to Hispanics makes him the most formidable Republican on a sparkling roster of potential 2016 contenders”. As a son of one president and brother of another Jeb Bush had deep contacts and connections within the Republican Party. However, republican voters were looking for a change. They found it in Donald Trump.

At the beginning of the primary season three candidates had clearly emerged ahead of the rest of the field: Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and Donald Trump. Trump knew, how to distinguish himself from other republican candidates. According to Cassidy (2016) “there was virtually nothing he wouldn’t say to tar his rivals or anyone else who dared to challenge him. This is the candidate who referred to Rick Perry as a dimwit; criticized Carly Fiorina’s appearance; claimed that John McCain wasn’t a war hero and appeared to suggest, during an interview on CNN, that Megyn Kelly was menstruating. Ultimately, none of these statements did much damage to Trump’s campaign. Arguably, they enhanced it.”

“He was also able to tap into many Republicans’ anger, some of it tinged with racism, about President Obama and his policies; into broader fears of terrorism and economic decline; and into a general disgust with professional politicians. A decade and a half marked by foreign wars, terrorist threats, recession, slow growth, political gridlock, culture wars, and (for many

voters) declining incomes have further undermined faith in the political system, creating space for insurgent candidates like Trump and Bernie Sanders. In responding to fears of terrorism, Trump made a similar calculation. When he called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States and a registry system for Muslims who already live here, he must have known that the media and most of his Republican rivals would react with outrage. But Trump perhaps sensed that his illiberal proposals would prove popular with ordinary G.O.P. voters, and he turned out to be right, especially after the gun massacre in San Bernardino, California, in December. He has promised to rebuild the nation's crumbling infrastructure—such as roads, airports, schools, and hospitals. Trump's biggest heresy was to abandon free trade. Claiming that NAFTA and other trade agreements have cost countless jobs, he threatened to impose hefty tariffs on countries such as China, which export a lot of cheap goods to the United States. He has also criticized American corporations for shifting jobs to foreign countries, and has threatened to punish them. It gives him something to say to Republican voters who have seen factories close down, jobs lost, and wages stagnate. "We're going to bring back our jobs, and we are going to save our jobs," he said at Trump Tower. If U.S. companies insist on moving them overseas, he went on, "there will be consequences, and there will be very serious consequences." After a decisive victory in the Indiana primary Ted Cruz dropped out of the race. To win the nomination Trump needed to secure 1,237 delegates. In total Donald Trump secured 2,472.

"Trump quickly turned his fire on Clinton, saying she would be a "poor president." He also said she "doesn't understand trade" and lashed out at the "deep carnage" he said had been wrought by the North American Free Trade Agreement that was ratified during the presidency of her husband, Bill Clinton. But the Clinton camp quickly hit back, signaling that with Trump's ascension to presumptive nominee status, the tone of the 2016 race has changed. Campaign chairman John Podesta issued a statement saying that Trump would be a "risky

choice" for president, saying he was neither prepared to keep Americans safe nor to help working families get ahead. "Donald Trump has demonstrated that he's too divisive and lacks the temperament to lead our nation and the free world," Podesta said. (Collinson, 2016)

### **3.3 Nominal Conventions**

After the primaries and caucuses political parties hold national conventions to finalize their choice for their Presidential and Vice Presidential nominees. The national conventions typically confirm the candidate who has already won the required number of delegates through the primaries and caucuses ("Presidential Election Process", n.d.). Many guests appear on the stage to praise the candidate, to introduce the program and to celebrate the victory. The Republican National Convention nominated Donald Trump for president and Mike Pence for Vice President. Choosing Mike Pence, a conservative Indiana Governor, later showed as a smart choice. His role was often to defend and moderate Trump's controversial statements. Next to politicians, a lot of speakers at the National Democratic Convention were celebrities. Which even more raged Trump's supporters to fight against "elites". Clinton was endorsed by president Barack Obama and the first Lady Michelle Obama. Clinton chose Senator Tim Kaine from Virginia to be her running mate.

### **3.4 Third Party Candidates**

The term "Third Party" is used for any political party other than the Republican and Democratic party. Third party candidates have minimal chance of winning, nevertheless, they still have an influence on the outcome of the election. They can take votes from one of the candidate and tip the balance to the other. Libertarian Party's candidate Gary Johnson (Governor of New Mexico) and Green Party's Jill Stein did relatively well this year. Chalabi



(2016) wrote “Gary Johnson gained over 3% of the popular vote, and the Green party’s Jill Stein got 1%. Altogether, candidates who did not represent either of the two main parties got around 4.9% of the popular vote (in 2012, third-party candidates only managed 1.7%, and in 2008, 1.4%).”

## **4 GENERAL ELECTION**

“The general election campaign has traditionally stretched from Labor Day (1<sup>st</sup> of May) to Election Day. In a campaign, each party seeks to maintain its base of support and to add enough additional electoral votes to win” (Schnartz, 1996, p. 25). Candidates travel the country to gain more votes. They pay special attention to swing states – states where both candidates have similar chance of winning. “Today, roughly two-thirds of the states are written off as the province of one party or the other before the first primary votes are even cast. The reason is simple: 33 states have voted for the same party in the past 5 presidential elections, and 40 of the 50 states have voted for the same party since 2000.” (Mathesian, 2016). Politico lists states which decided this election: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. (Mathesian, 2016). During the last six weeks before voters go to the polls, candidates meet three times during televised debates.

### **4.1 Scandals**

Throughout the election season many scandals came up to the surface. One of the most crucial emerged in March. Clinton used personal email addresses connected to a privately-owned server, rather than a government email, during her four years as President Barack Obama's first-term secretary of state. "Clinton's lawyers turned over 55,000 pages of emails to the State Department, and the department has since processed those - releasing some, under a judge's orders, at the end of each month. Clinton has chalked it all up to convenience, saying she preferred not to carry two phones - one with a personal email address and one with a work email. But having her own personal server also gave Clinton - as well as her closest aides - much greater control over which emails were accessible under public records requests. There are laws intended to keep government records transparent - but one that requires officials to

transfer emails sent to private addresses onto government servers wasn't enacted until 2014, after Clinton departed the State Department" (Bradner, 2016). FBI started investigating allegations that some of the emails contained classified information. Clinton turned over about half of the 60 thousand emails that were on her server, after telling the State Department that the emails she deleted - about 30,000 - were personal (Reid, 2016). On July, the director of Federal Bureau of Investigation James Comey (2016) announced "Although we did not find clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws governing the handling of classified information, there is evidence that they were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information." Clinton's emails haunted her during the campaign. One week before the election day director Comey notified Congress that more Hillary Clinton's emails from her private server were discovered in a separate investigation of Anthony Weiner's sexting scandal. Weiner is husband of Huma Abedin, who is one of the closest Clinton's aides. Only one day before the election, Comey said the agency is not recommending criminal charges against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton over her emails.

In 2012, during an attack on American diplomatic compound in Lybia, four U.S. citizens were killed. Obama's Administration was criticized for diplomatic miscalculations, security failures, and a lengthy delay in rescue efforts, denying requests for additional security at the consulate prior to the attack which contributed these deaths.

Investigation of Clinton took two year, she testified before the Select Committee on Benghazi for more than 8 hours. Herzenhorn (2016) summarizes that "previous investigations concluded that State Department officials had erred in not better securing the diplomatic compound amid reports of a deteriorating security situation. But they also determined that the attacks had come with little warning and that it would have been difficult to intervene once they had begun. But the lack of any clear finding of professional misconduct or dereliction of duty was certain to fuel further criticism of the length of the investigation — more than two

years — and the expense, estimated at more than \$7 million. It also bolstered Democrats' allegations that the inquiry was specifically intended to damage Mrs. Clinton's presidential prospects."

## **4.2 Debates**

It has become customary that the two major candidates meet during the election process and discuss current issues. These televised debates have a strong influence to the outcome of the election, both candidates have an opportunity to reach undecided voters.

Debates are sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. Below are mentioned some of the highlights of one vice presidential and three presidential debates.

### **The First Presidential Debate**

The First Presidential Debate was hosted by Lester Holt anchor of "NBC Nightly News. The 90-minute debate explored three topic areas: Achieving prosperity; America's direction; and securing America. Clinton stepped onto the debate stage perfectly prepared. She was clearly ready for every question and attack. Trump on the other hand was spontaneous, he stayed on message at the beginning, but later started interrupting Clinton. Bradner (2016) notices that "he couldn't resist attacks, even when it was obvious they would backfire - such as his criticism of Clinton for dropping off the campaign trail ahead of the debate to prepare." "Yes, I did. And you know what else I prepared for?" "I prepared to be president." Clinton shot back."

Holt asked Trump about his refusal to show his tax returns and Trump's excuse that he is under an audit backfired. Clinton (2016) said "Maybe he is not as rich as he says he is, maybe he is not as charitable as he claims to be... Maybe he doesn't want the American people to

know that he has paid nothing in federal taxes."There is something he is hiding."

Bradner (2016) also points out that Trump lost his cool -- at a cost. He came close to admitting that he didn't pay federal taxes, saying that "makes me smart" and that the money "would be squandered" anyway. Trump criticized Clinton for praising the Trans-Pacific Partnership as the "gold standard" of trade deals and later opposing it, suggesting that president Barack Obama poorly negotiated the deal.

At the end of the debate Clinton reminded Trump's statements about women "this is a man who has called women pigs, slobs and dogs, and someone who has said pregnancy is an inconvenience to employers... And one of the worst things he said was about a woman in a beauty contest... And he called this woman "Miss Piggy." Then he called her "Miss Housekeeping," because she was Latina. Donald, she has a name. Her name is Alicia Machado. And she's going to vote this November (2016)." The next day an interview with Machado was released as a television spot. This debate was the most watched debate in American history, with over 80 million people tuning in.

### **The Vice Presidential Debate**

There was only one debate between Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia and Gov. Mike Pence of Indiana. Most of the time Kaine was on the attack, while Pence had to defend Trump. The role of the attack dog didn't suit Kaine well. Pence's restraint, poise and the overall tone brought more points to him. Confessore and Flegenheimer (2016) reported that "Kaine challenged Mr. Pence repeatedly to defend statements or proposals made by Donald J. Trump during his chaotic and improvisational presidential campaign, forcing Mr. Pence to filibuster and dodge for minutes on end. Mr. Pence's tone and his calm delivery never wavered, and he continued to deflect and deny questions about Mr. Trump's ideas while turning back to the Obama administration's foreign policy record."

## **The Second Presidential Debate**

Two days before the next debate The Washington Post obtained a video in which Trump bragged about sexually assaulting women. His private conversation with Billy Bush was caught on a hot microphone. Trump (2015) says “You know I’m automatically attracted to beautiful — I just start kissing them. It’s like a magnet. Just kiss. I don’t even wait... And when you’re a star, they let you do it... You can do anything... Grab them by the p---y. You can do anything.” The video became viral in few hours, Trump facing a wave of criticism released a statement “This was locker-room banter, a private conversation that took place many years ago. Bill Clinton has said far worse to me on the golf course — not even close. I apologize if anyone was offended (2016).” Trump was also criticized by members of his own party. "House Speaker Paul D. Ryan, who said he is “sickened” by Trump’s comments, said the Republican presidential candidate will no longer appear with him at a campaign event in Wisconsin on Saturday." (Fahrenthold, 2016). More than two dozen high-profile Republicans withdrew their support. Just before the debate Trump held a surprise event with several women who have in the past accused former President Bill Clinton of various forms of sexual assault. And he attacked Clinton over her husband's behavior during the debate.

The second presidential debate was a town hall format, members of the audience gave direct questions to the candidates, co-hosts Martha Raddatz and Anderson Cooper asked additional questions.

When entering the stage Trump and Clinton did not shake hands. Trump was forced at the opening of the debate to address the controversy "This was locker room talk," Trump said. "I'm not proud of it. I apologize to my family; I apologize to the American people. Certainly I'm not proud of it, but this is locker room talk (2016)."

Bradner (2016) reports "Trump arrived Sunday with two tricks up his sleeve: The pre-game Bill Clinton attack and a heightened attack on Clinton over her private email server." If I

win, I am going to instruct my attorney general to get a special prosecutor to look into your situation," Trump said, "because there has never been so many lies, so much deception." Clinton attempted to turn the moment into an attack on Trump's biggest weakness - his temperament. "Good that someone with the temperament of Donald Trump is not in charge of the law in our country," she said. To that, Trump shot back: "You'd be in jail."

Clinton showed hardly any emotions, Trump was more energetic in this debate. He said that he doesn't agree with his running mate that the United States should be ready to use military force in Syria. He was able to drive messages on Clinton's email, the Clinton Foundation and Benghazi. The debate ended on a positive note, when candidates complimented each other - request from an audience member. Clinton praised Trump's children and Trump said that Clinton is a fighter and that she never gives up – contradicting his statement from the first debate, that she doesn't have the stamina to be president.

### **The Third Presidential Debate**

The third debate was hosted by Chris Wallace of Fox News, the format was identical to the first presidential debate. Wallace focused on issues, which distinguished the candidates the most - Supreme Court, gun rights, abortion and immigration Concerning the supreme court Clinton declared that “the Supreme Court needs to stand on the side of the American people. Not on the side of the powerful corporations and the wealthy. For me, that means that we need a Supreme Court that will stand up on behalf of women's rights, on behalf of the rights of the LGBT community, that will stand up and say no to Citizens United, a decision that has undermined the election system in our country because of the way it permits dark, unaccountable money to come into our electoral system (2016).” Trump argued “We need a Supreme Court that in my opinion is going to uphold the second amendment and all amendments, but the second amendment which is under absolute siege...The constitution the way it was meant to be. And those are the people that I will appoint (2016).”

On immigration policy, Trump said he wanted to strengthen security at the U.S.-Mexico border and “keep the drugs out of our country...One of my first acts will be to get all of the drug lords, all of the bad ones, we have some bad, bad people in this country that have to go out. We’re going to get them out, secure the border, and once the border is secured at a later date we’ll make a determination as to the rest (2016).”

Wallace brought up Clinton's quote “My dream is a hemispheric common market with open trade and open borders.” Clinton tried to pivot, she said “I was talking about energy” and redirected her answer to Russian President Vladimir Putin and whether or not Russia is behind the recent leaks of emails from the Clinton campaign. Clinton suggested that Trump would be Putin's puppet.

Trump lambasted Clinton' 30 years in the public sphere "You were very much involved in every aspect of this country," he said. "And you do have experience. I say the one thing you have over me is experience, but it's bad experience, because what you've done has turned out badly." Clinton had a brisk answer for that “You know, back in the 1970s, I worked for the children's defense fund and I was taking on discrimination against African-American kids in schools. He was getting sued by the Justice Department for racial discrimination in his apartment buildings. In the 1980s, I was working to reform the schools in Arkansas. He was borrowing \$14 million from his father to start his businesses. In the 1990s, I went to Beijing and I said women's rights are human rights. He insulted a former Miss Universe, Alicia Machado, and called her an eating machine. And on the day when I was in the situation room monitoring the raid that brought Osama bin Laden to justice, he was hosting The Celebrity Apprentice (2016)".

In the end Trump refused to say whether he would accept the results of the election if he loses. “I’ll keep you in suspense (2016)”. Prior to this debate, Trump claimed that the election is going to be rigged.



### **4.3. Influences on the Outcome of This Election**

“There are so many major moments that lead up to Election Day: debates, caucuses, primaries. But the moments that matter most won’t make major headlines. They’ll happen quietly and quickly in micro-moments, when undecided voters become decided voters, often by going online. Today’s voters want a quick way to catch up on the latest election buzz and they’ve found it in online video. Since April 2015, people have watched more than 110 million hours of candidate- and issues-related content on YouTube. That’s 100X the amount of time it would take to watch all content ever aired on CNN, C-Span, MSNBC, and Fox News combined. Whether voters are looking for a debate sound bit or instructions on how to vote they turn to YouTube. Being there for voters in critical micro-moments means knowing what they’re looking for. To get a map of voter wants and needs when it comes to video, we use Google Trends and filter by YouTube”. These micro-moments might occur before, during, or after a debate or in reaction to a cultural event. They might happen when voters need a question answered fast, like "how to caucus in Iowa". In an effort to get out the vote, Donald Trump's "Find Your Iowa Caucus Location" video and Bernie Sanders' "How to Caucus in Iowa" explained to Iowans how to register and caucus (Stanford, 2016)”. The problem is that a significant number of videos and posts on YouTube or Facebook are fake and some social media users have difficulty distinguishing what is real and what is fake. Some fake news are made by “trolls” just for fun, but some have political purpose.

U.S. law enforcement and intelligence services concluded that Russian president Vladimir Putin ordered an escalating campaign of influence operations targeting the 2016 U.S. election. The goals, according to a January consensus assessment by the intelligence community, were to undermine U.S. democracy, weaken Hillary Clinton and, if possible, help Trump win the White House. The campaign included hacking, fake news and other propaganda.” (Frizell, Miller, Rebala & Wilson, 2016). “Russian hackers made repeated

attempts before this year's election to get into major US institutions, including the White House and the state department. The tactics were simple: send out volleys of phishing emails and hope that someone clicked." (Harding, 2016). They managed to access 60,000 emails of Clinton's campaign chairman John Podesta, which they released on the WikiLeaks website, damaging Clinton's campaign. Russians also hacked the Republican National Committee's computer systems, but nothing was released.

Putin and Clinton showed dislikes toward each other, he accused her of meddling in Russia's 2012 election. The USA is not the only country dealing with Russian hackers. Similar attempts were reported in many European states including Germany, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland and more.

The 2016 election was the first presidential contest in 50 years without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), because the Supreme Court ruled in *Shelby County v. Holder* that states with a long history of discrimination no longer need to have their proposed voting changes approved by the federal government. Partly as a consequence, 14 states had new voting restrictions in effect for the first time in 2016-including important swing states like Wisconsin and Ohio. We'll never know how many people were kept from the polls by these restrictions, but in states like Wisconsin, they had at least some impact on the outcome. Donald Trump carried the state by 27,000 votes, but 300,000 registered voters, according to a federal court, lacked the required forms of voter ID. Turnout in Wisconsin was at its lowest level in 20 years and fell by 52,000 in Milwaukee, where 70 percent of the state's African-America population lives. Wisconsin wasn't the only state where people had trouble voting. On Election Day, there were 868 fewer polling places in states with a long history of voting discrimination, like Arizona, Texas, and North Carolina. These changes impacted hundreds of thousands of voters, yet received almost no coverage in the media. In North Carolina, as my colleague Joan Walsh reported, black turnout decreased 16 percent during the

first week of early voting because “in 40 heavily black counties, there were 158 fewer early polling places. Republicans set the early voting hours and locations for all 100 counties, and black turnout decreased the most in the 17 counties that had only one polling place for the first week of early voting. Far too many in the media ignored the GOP’s attack on voting rights. There were 26 debates during the presidential primaries and general election, and not a single question about the gutting of the VRA. Cable news devoted hours and hours to Trump’s absurd claim that the election was rigged against him, while spending precious little time on the real threat that voters faced. The election results showed that when more people vote, Democrats do better. That’s why the GOP is so invested in voter suppression (Berman, 2016).

#### **4.4. RESULTS**

As the election was coming to an end polls tightened. But none of them predicted the stunning take over. Trump told his followers not to believe the polls and he was right.

November 8, 2016, Americans elected Donald J. Trump the president of the United States.

Approximately, 138.8 million Americans voted in this election. It is estimated that 48.5% of voters cast their ballot for Hillary Clinton, whereas 46% voters voted for Donald Trump.

Nevertheless, Donald J. Trump won 306 Electoral Votes and Hillary Clinton only received 232 Electoral Votes (“Presidential Results” n.d.)

Trump needed to win Democrats' longstanding firewall, carrying Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, states that hadn't voted for a GOP presidential candidate since the 1980s. He also managed to win all of the competitive battleground states Florida, Ohio, North Carolina, Michigan and Iowa.

Clinton called her Republican rival to concede. In the early morning the president-elect Donald Trump made his victory speech in New York. He said "Now it's time for

America to bind the wounds of division, have to get together. To all Republicans and Democrats and independents across this nation, I say it is time for us to come together as one united people. It's time. I pledge to every citizen of our land that I will be president for all Americans, and this is so important to me. For those who have chosen not to support me in the past, of which there were a few people, I'm reaching out to you for your guidance and your help so that we can work together and unify our great country. The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer (2016)".

After the election, there has been an attempt to recount the votes. The recount was carried out by partisan group, their goal was to study the strength of America's system. After all, Trump himself had warned that the election was “rigged” and the FBI later uncovered evidence that Russian hackers had launched a coordinated effort to defeat Clinton. If there was ever going to be an election where we should double-check the results this was it. They wanted to conduct recount Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan, but only a presidential candidate could call for a recount, therefore Jill Stein joined the team. The way Stein handled her fund-raising efforts didn't help. On November 23, she told supporters that she needed to raise \$2.5 million to cover the initial filing fees for recounts. After the initial goal was reached in less than 12 hours, the figure rose to \$4.5 million, then to \$7 million, later to \$9.5 million. Each time, Stein cited unexpected expenses. After spending \$7 million to force hundreds of county officials across three states to inspect millions of ballots, recount advocates could not provide a single piece of evidence that the election results had been manipulated or miscounted. Judge dismissed Stein's lawsuit and ended the recount. (Friess, 2017).

January 20, on the Inauguration Day Donald J. Trump became the 45th president of the United States, swearing that he will support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

## CONCLUSION

If everything above is to be taken into consideration, it can be asserted that the year 2016 was a year of change. Americans said no to elites and voted for an outsider. Mostly the dissatisfied white working-class chose Donald Trump, a man who has been rich from the day he was born, to be their champion. In 2016, people preferred easy solutions, slogans like “Build a wall” and “Drain the swamp” resonated among people more than prepared speeches. Compared to Trump's spontaneity, Hillary Clinton was not authentic enough. Clinton focused a lot of her attention on minorities, Hispanic and African Americans, but she did not offer much to the white-working class. She took for granted the Rust Belt states and she lost them.

After almost one hundred days in office Trump was able to nominate Neil Gorsuch for Supreme Court, he signed an executive order temporarily banning citizens of six predominantly Muslim countries Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen from coming to America. It sparked immediate outrage and confusion as many people were detained in airports. Later federal judge blocked the government from carrying out the ban. In recent days President Trump proposed new tax reform, which would cut the corporate tax from 35% to 15% resulting in boosting the economy. So far, government refused to fund the wall on border with Mexico.

Trump's rise was remarkable, confirming a trend seen in Europe where nationalists and populists are gaining more power.

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## Abstract

Tématem této bakalářské práce je volba amerického prezidenta 2016. Práce je rozdělena do 6 částí. V úvodu jsou popsány Spojené státy americké, prezidentovi pravomoce a povinnosti, kdo se může stát kandidátem a kdo má právo volit. V druhé části jsou představeni hlavní kandidáti – Donald Trump a Hillary Clintonová. Dále jsou zde vyjmenována nejdůležitější témata voleb. Třetí část se zaměřuje na primární volby a zmiňuje další soupeře a výběr viceprezidentů. Čtvrtá část se zabývá samotnými volbami, shrnuje televizní debaty, skandály, výsledky voleb a zmiňuje různé vlivy na výsledek. Poslední část této práce shrnuje získané poznatky a zmiňuje výsledky prvních sto dní prezidenta Trumpa v úřadu.