

Политический цинизм как фундамент успеха избирательной кампании Дональда Трампа

Данная статья посвящена особенностям избирательной кампании Дональда Трампа, проходившей в крайне неблагоприятных условиях для обоих кандидатов на пост 45 Президента США – высоком уровне политического цинизма, недоверия избирателей к государству и средствам массовой информации, но только ему удалось учесть общественные настроения и интегрировать их в свою политическую программу.

Ключевые слова: *Избирательные технологии, политический цинизм, Дональд Трамп, Хилари Клинтон.*

Political cynicism as a basis of the success of Donal Trump's election campaign

This article is about aspects of Donald Trump's presidential campaign that took place in rather unfriendly surrounding to both candidates, due to rise of political cynicism and voters' distrust to politicians and mass media, but only Donald Trump has managed, to exploit unrest to his benefit.

Keywords: *Electoral technologies, political cynicism, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton.*

Object of study is political image of Donald Trump.

Subject of study is methods, technologies and instruments of creation of image of Donald Trump during his election campaign.

The goal of the study is to analyze the specifics of the creation of political image of Donald Trump. The goal is reached by completing the next objectives:

1. Study the impact of high levels of political cynicism during on 2016 presidential election.
2. Analyze the role of mass media in societies with high levels of political cynicism distrust to government.
3. Compare images of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during presidential campaign 2016 and tactics used to cement these images.

Methodology of study consists of systematic analysis, structure functional analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis. Factors of creation of political image were studied with the help of systematic analysis. Structure functional analysis was used to study the main strategies of creating of political image, especially in the context of escalation of political cynicism and distrust to government and political leaders in general. Comparative analysis was used to study, how internet users perceived images of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. Content analysis was used to study popular trends in mass media and social networks.

This study uses materials of Gallup, Pew research center and mass media such as CNN, PBS content of social networks such as twitter and Facebook.

2016 Elections of 45 President of United states of America can be considered the most intense political process since Watergate scandal, and Donald Trump is definitely one of the most unusual political leaders, that has run unconventional presidential campaign.

Conventional presidential campaign of political leader consists of next steps:

1. Increasing name recognition of presidential candidate in quick succession.
2. Creation of positive image of political leader through demonstration of candidates' moral qualities and professional achievements to the audience.
3. Domination in media space of political advertisements, creating contrast with other candidates by focusing on strength and values of desired political leader.
4. Demonstration of endorsement and support of numerous common citizens and celebrities in order to create bandwagon effect and get even more support from voters.

Any election campaign cannot be analyzed without social context, and 2016 elections are no exception. They can be characterized by uniquely high levels of political cynicism and distrust to both presidential candidates: Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. The state of society let them almost no room for improvement of their political images, so the candidate of Republican Party has concentrated on the destruction of political image of his opponents and decreasing voters' turnout among voters that were not supporting him [Tarrance, 2016].

During several years until 2016, the number of citizens, that don't associate themselves with either democratic or republican party, was increasing.

After 2008, when Barak Obama was elected as President, the situation got worse, as decline of party members was higher among Democrats. That indirectly supports the theory of dissatisfaction of electorate with politics of 44 President of United States, its social and economic trends, and it has led to increase of distrust of independent voters toward government.

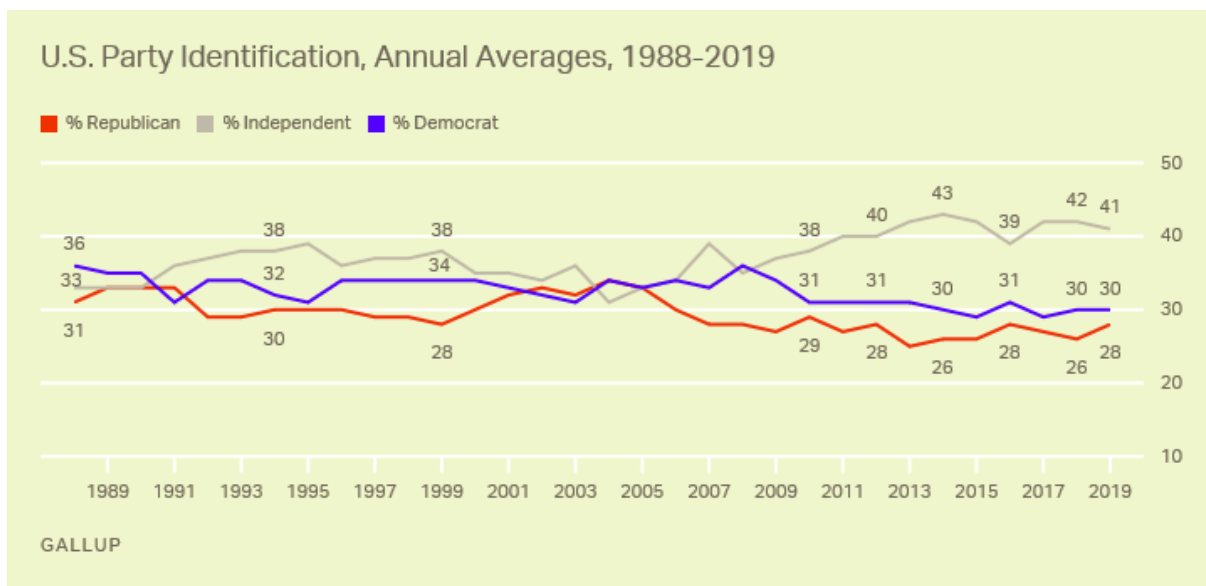


Fig. 1 Party Preferences Steady During Trump Era [Jones, 2020]

In intensive political fight for support of independent and indecisive voters, the society got disappointed with candidates of both major political parties, so demand for new political leaders was established, as it can be confirmed by the Gallup's studies, during 13 presidential elections, citizens have tried to change their congress for 9 times [Jones, 2018].

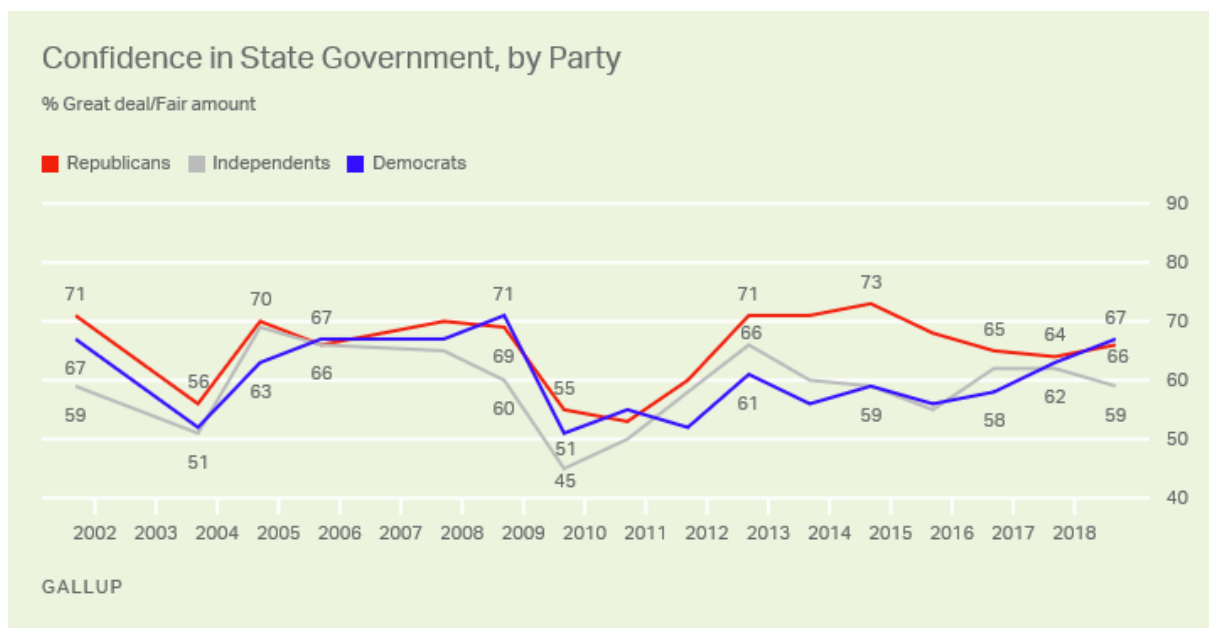


Fig. 2 Confidence in State Government, by party [McCarthy, 2018]

If we are talking about satisfaction of voters of democratic government, than during 2016 only 28% of total numbers of citizens were satisfied with it. The portion of Republicans, Democrats and independent voters was 8%, 49% and 24% respectively, it means that Republicans and independent voters were more consistent in their disapproval of current government [Smith, 2016].

Donald Trump has understood these tendencies in time, and used them in his favor during presidential campaign as he was building his image as absolutely new,

atypical political leader, that counteracts toward current government and typical representatives of political elite.

It should be noted that both main candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton had a remarkably low levels of trust among voters, however their negative characteristics were perceived by society in different ways.

Most of Hillary Clintons’ supporters were guided by their antipathy, considering that Donald Trump is not just unqualified, but not sane enough to be President of United States of America [Mccarthy, 2016].

Republicans distrust to Hillary Clinton had completely different nature. According to Gallup, 13% of responders were indifferent to her personality or described her as unpleasant, 27% of responders rated democrat candidate as absolutely dishonest person, questioning her moral and ethics. 8% suspected her in corruption and criminal activity, another 3 % said that they see no difference between her and 44 president of United States Barack Obama.

Summarizing, it can be said, that while most electors didn’t like Donald Trump as a person, Hillary Clinton was considered as another typical politician whose goal is to become president

Table 1 Top Unaided reactions to “Hillary Clinton” and “Donald Trump”.

Hillary Clinton		Donald Trump	
Don’t trust/ Dishonest/ Unethical	7	Dislike him / Negative view	6
Dislike/ Don’t care for her	3	Idiot /Joke /Embarrassing/ Crazy	2
Capable of her being president / Qualified/ Experienced	2	Racist / Bigot / Anti-woman/ hater	0
Crook/ Criminal/ Corrupt/ Should be in jail		Reckless /Unpredictable/ Dangerous/ Scary	
Strong/ Ambitious/ Confident/ Good leadership abilities		Speaks without thinking / Big mouth / Boisterous	
She’s a woman/ Need a woman/ Equality for woman		Strong /Businessmen/ Leader	
Bill is her husband/ History/ Familiar with the whole presidential process		Will turn things around / New/ Different Ideas	
Benghazi		Arrogant /Narcissist /Egoistical/ Spoiled/ Selfish	
Insider / Career politician/ Same as Obama		Big bully / Dictator/ Demagogue	
Like her/ Good person/ Good qualities		Con artist/ Liar/ Don’t trust	
		Inexperienced/ Unqualified	
		Best/ Good Choice/ Like him/ Only choice	
		Honest /Trustworthy/ Says it like it is	

So it can be said. That due to voter's fatigue of current political reality, political cynicism and distrust to Democratic Party had a negative effect on Hillary Clinton image of political leader that as a result was one of the reasons of the success of Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

One of Key factors that has influenced the distribution of votes during 2016 elections were young voters, or so called millennials, generation Z, whose participation in political processes is increasing steadily, especially amid decrease of political activity of previous generations[Fry, 2017]. This should be noted especially as only 32% of millennials were agreed with current political trends [Norman, 2016].

It should be noted that the most popular candidate among 20 to 36 years voters was Bernie Sanders – Hillary Clinton's rival from Democratic Party famous for his socialist ideas.

Iowa scandal about potential election fraud during 2016 primaries, that presumably was organized by Hillary Clinton led to Bernie Sanders drop of democrat and as result raised distrust to the only democrat candidate left – Hillary Clinton. Increased level of political cynicism and distrust to both main Candidates voters caused turnout during 2016 elections to be the lowest through American history [Wallace, 2016]. Interestingly, Iowa, Wisconsin, Ohio brought victory to Barack Obama during 2008 and 2012 elections [Regan, 2016], but in 2016 voters living in these states have supported Donald Trump and predetermined his victory.

Another important factor that has influenced the distribution of votes during 2016 elections is gap in welfare between citizens, and density of population in different states. Despite the fact, that there is more citizens in United States who support Democratic Party, that republican voters, most of democrat supporters live in states with the most density like New York, California, Illinois [Jones, 2016], however, if it is taken into account, that president is elected not by a direct vote, but by Electoral College, the result can be paradoxical. While Hillary Clinton got the most direct votes, it was Donald Trump who won elections, as most States representatives voted for him.

One of key principles of strategy of Donald Trump was ease of usage without losing any effectiveness. For example, in order to minimize the damage to his reputation, he often accused mass media in creation of fake news. The effectiveness of such tactic can be proven by Gallup Studies, as the trust to mass media among republican and independent voters was decreasing steadily since 1997. The similar tendency among democrats has started in 2005 and was lasting till 2016 elections [Brenan, 2019].

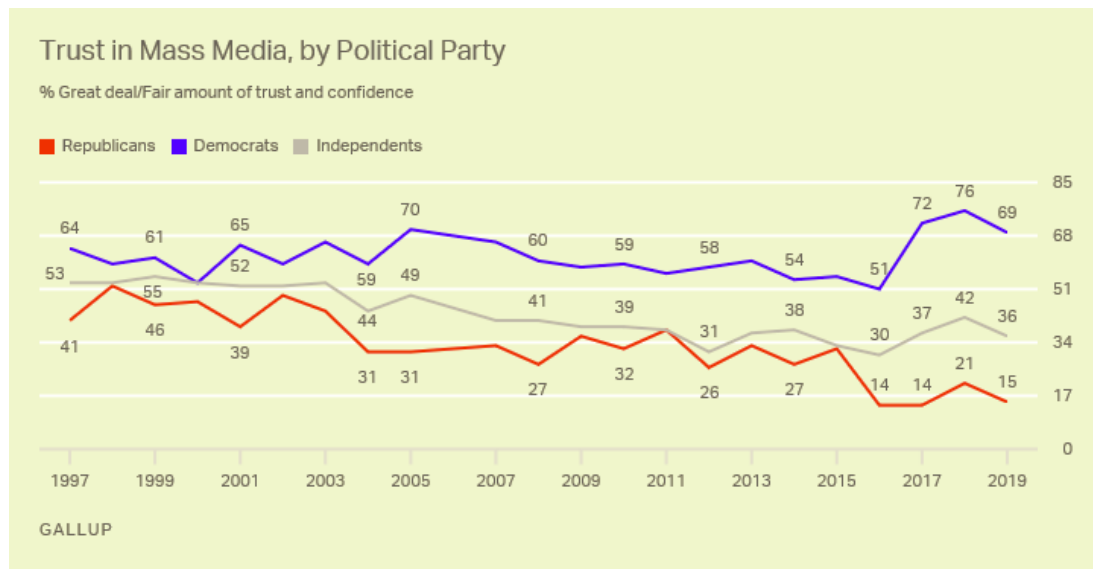


Fig. 3 Trust in Mass media, by Political Party [Brenan, 2019]

The data suggests that, it was republicans that actively showed their distrust to mass media. So it can be said, that effectiveness of strategy of Donald Trump is based on the usage of growing atmosphere of political cynicism, while simultaneously rising distrust to public media among his supporters.

In conclusion it can be said, the uniqueness of 2016 USA Presidential elections is non-typical presidential campaign of republican nominee, that nevertheless was effective, especially due to political cynicism.

Usually tactics of presidential candidates is to create the most positive political image, and this exactly tactic was used by Hillary Clinton, when Donald Trump decided to deliberately destroy personality of his political opponent, an as it can be seen now, this tactic showed its effectiveness.

Another common tactic is to get support from mass media. Due to his negative image, Donald Trump got negative attention from Mass media, but he has negated it with the help of political cynicism and citizens distrust to Mass media by claiming that most news, especially that criticize him are fake.

If presidential candidates try to avoid scandals, as they are the main danger to their campaigns and their image, or at least they try to minimize its effect and to cancel unwanted attention in the beginning, Donald Trump has preferred no only not to avoid scandals, bat actively initiated them, drawing his opponents in it.

So it can be said, that Donald Trumps' strategy most likely would be not so effective in peaceful state of society, but the high levels of unrest, political cynicism and distrusts of society to political leaders became basis of his success and in the end let him to become 45 President of the United States.

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