



# NEWS

## WE AM TRUMP, OR THE MAN WHO ISN'T THERE

Maggots have spiracles (breathing holes) near their ass ends, which grant them the ability to eat for as long as they please without stopping for breath. This natural science factoid crossed my mind Friday, as Republican autophile Donald Trump proclaimed his glory, at length, to more than 3,500 adoring fans (*EW*'s count).

Counting down to Trump's short-notice Eugene rally, the city clenched up nervously for the arrival of an angry rightwing cyclone-circus invasion of hillbillies, country music radio and riot cops.

Anti-Trump factions characterize his followers as dim rubes, led yet again to self-slaughter by a slick pretender. And some part of me was eager to smell, firsthand, the sickening fear-sweat hate froth so commonly described in news stories about The Donald's rise to political fame.

But that's not what I found.

I spoke with mothers who shared concerns about the world in which their kids are growing up. I listened to former Democrats who crossed over after Obama's first term. A teenage boy wearing a T-shirt bearing the slogan "Trump that bitch!" told me not to sweat Trump's bigotry; he's only inciting conflict to get attention.

All agreed: Hillary Clinton is by far the greatest of looming evils.

Trump's detractors have good reasons to feel afraid. Many seem to think King Trump will hammer the country down to fit his own weird vision of America, which might look like a 3.8-million square-mile police state Las Vegas.

But the Hitler analogies fizzle the moment you realize the great and powerful orange billionaire offers up zilch.

Witnessing up close the furious bluster helped me to see the candidate as he really is: a blinking fluorescent tube at the end of dark alley, around which swarms a gaggle of apolitical git-'er-done Americans who share more DNA with lotus-eating Berners than either group is comfortable admitting.

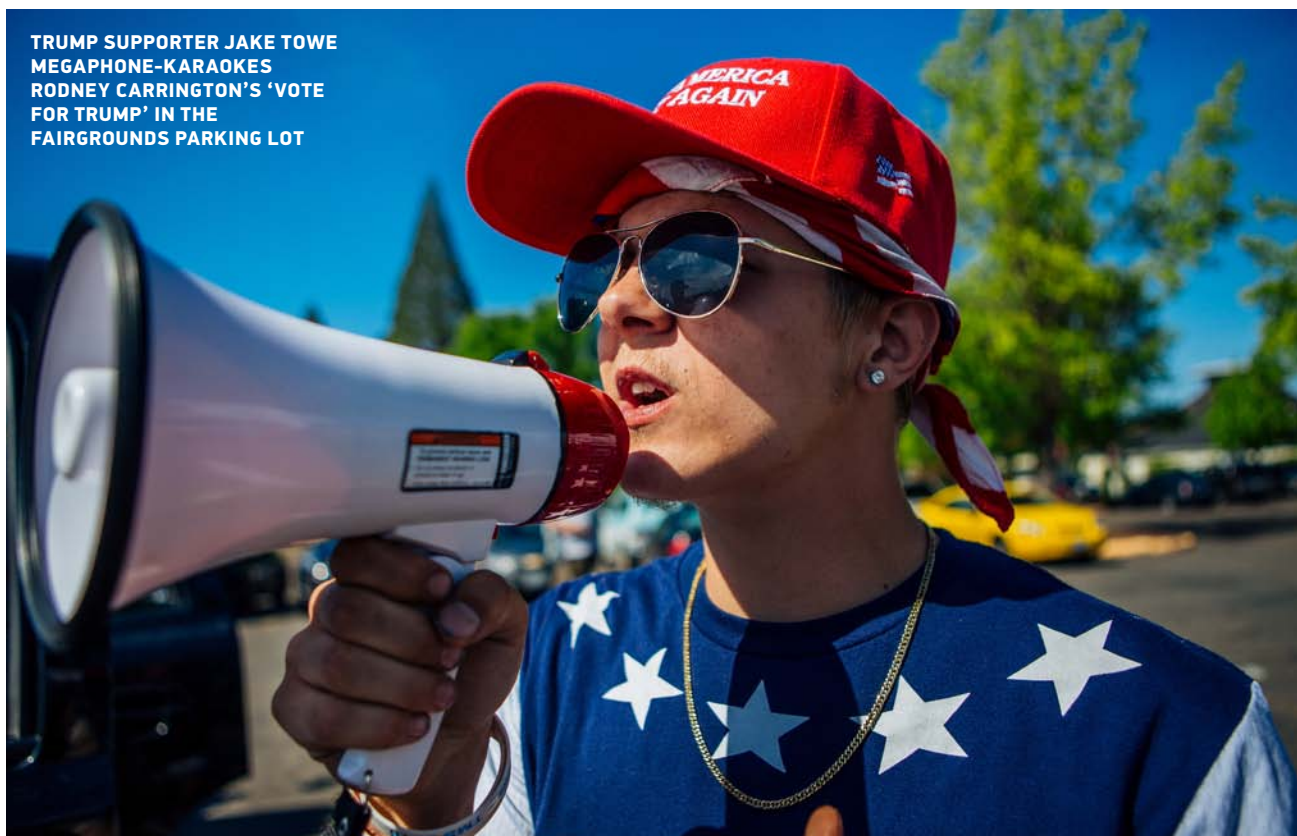
Trump's message is primarily subliminal. Racism and clumsy misogyny hide the simplest platform on offer this election season: Career politicians are venal and newspeople are a sort of vampire.

If Trump's people look like a thousand living punchlines to a thousand Jeff Foxworthy jokes, it's because rural poor and working class Americans have held these truths to be self-evident for centuries.

And they're not wrong. — Ben Ricker



THIS PROTESTER CLARIFIED TO CONFUSED TRUMPERS THAT HE ISN'T PRO-TRUMP, HE'S 'PRO-CIRCUS'



TRUMP SUPPORTER JAKE TOWE MEGAPHONE-KARAOKES RODNEY CARRINGTON'S 'VOTE FOR TRUMP' IN THE FAIRGROUNDS PARKING LOT