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OUR VIEW



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

Bernie and Hillary sittin' in a tree

On Tuesday, Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton were finally on the same side of the fence.

You could almost see Hillary trying to slide closer while Bernie tried to keep his distance — a classic forced romance.

Clinton, though disliked by a majority of Americans, is likely the next president. Her election will do nothing to unite a divided nation, yet we shudder to think of the size of the divide if she were to lose. Trumpzilla has already enraged and insulted more than half the planet — and that's without having his hands on the levers of power that can put his threats into action.

Clinton won the Democratic primary fair and square — she won more votes and she won more contests. Sanders had to concede but he didn't have to endorse, and he did so only to help defeat Donald Trump. Had the Republican nominee been someone as benign as John McCain or Mitt Romney, Sanders may have kept fighting and become one of the most successful third-party candidates in history.

Sanders' desire to keep some distance was quite clear.

That's because Clinton's problems are real, and last week was a damaging one. It's no wonder that her campaign timed Sanders' endorsement to quickly follow the results of a Department of Justice inquiry into her private email server.

Republicans missed the boat when they chose to rail against the decision not to indict, instead of highlighting the immense and systemic problems the Department of Justice found with Clinton's email server.

The DOJ discovered the server was

incredibly easy to hack — easier than if Clinton was using a basic Gmail account. Clinton claimed multiple times that she had never sent classified information through the server but the DOJ said that was untrue — she had sent more than 100 such items. And she said her staff was very aware of the legal of their actions, but the DOJ said that was untrue too, noting that the entire operation was extremely careless about handling important information and had no idea where the legal boundaries were.

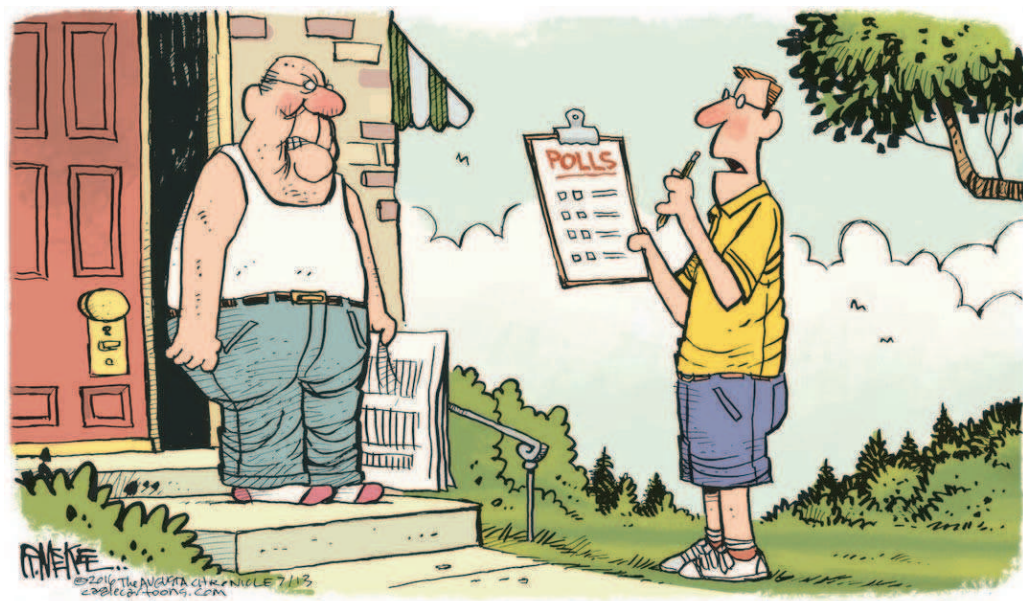
The DOJ also contradicted Hillary's claims that the email was about convenience — noting it was an unnecessarily complex setup with multiple servers for multiple devices and, ergo, multiple opportunities for sabotage. The investigation also contradicted Clinton's claims that her lawyers looked over her deleted emails, which means a good deal of public information was likely destroyed.

In Intercept, Glenn Greenwald made a convincing case that had Hillary not been Hillary, the Obama Administration would have tried to not just indict her, but put her in prison for a long time. They've done the same with Chelsea Manning, Daniel Ellsberg and Tom Drake — and will with Edward Snowden if they get their hands on him. Security and secrecy have been hallmarks of the Obama presidency, who like our own governor talks big about transparency but often comes up well short of a stated goal.

When politicians so clearly attempt to hide information and subvert public scrutiny, it's no wonder that voters are not inclined to support them. Americans have a decision to make in November, but no good options.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

OTHER VIEWS



"OK, AS A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION, WHICH CANDIDATE'S GUTS DO YOU HATE THE LEAST?"

As Trump won, media coverage turned negative

A new report from Harvard University says press coverage of Donald Trump's presidential campaign became progressively more negative as Trump built a lead in the Republican primaries — and soared after Trump clinched the GOP nomination.

A graph in the report from the Shorenstein Center of Media, Politics and Public Policy forms an almost perfect "X," as Trump coverage went from 57 percent positive and 43 percent negative during the early Republican primaries to 61 percent negative and 39 percent positive after Trump defeated his last Republican rivals.

"The tone of Trump's press coverage during the last month of the primaries was negative," writes scholar Thomas Patterson. "The mostly favorable coverage he had received earlier in the primary season had turned sharply downward. Negative statements about his candidacy outnumbered positive statements by 61 percent to 39 percent. His coverage was more negative than that of any other victorious candidate of either party at any stage of the primaries."

The explanation is not terribly complicated. The Harvard study looks at two kinds of campaign coverage — on one hand, horserace and process stories, and on the other substance, or issue, stories.

Like so much academic press analysis, the study rues the dominance of horserace coverage.

Good or bad, Patterson concludes the emphasis on horserace helped Trump in the early weeks of primary and caucus voting: Trump's coverage was at its most positive when the campaign was in its most intense horserace stage. Coverage at that point in any race is about who's winning, who's losing, who's moving up, and who's moving down. Trump was moving up.

Patterson found that 65 percent of coverage in the first month of contests — voting in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada — concerned the horserace, while just 6 percent could be characterized as focusing on issues. By Super Tuesday, the horserace was



BYRON YORK
Comment

even more dominant, consuming 71 percent of coverage, versus five percent on issues. Trump thrived.

But then, as Trump took command and there was progressively less suspense in the race, the emphasis on horserace went down — to 57 percent midway through the campaign, and to 40 percent in its final month — while coverage of substance went up. According to Patterson, issue coverage was 12 percent of coverage in the middle stage, and 16 percent in the final month.

Issues coverage of Trump was negative from the beginning; it's just that there wasn't much of it in the early, heavily horserace

Emphasis on the "horserace" helped Trump in the early weeks of the primary and caucus voting.

period. But when the horserace died down, there was more issues coverage, and it was just as negative as always. Presto — the overall coverage became more negative.

"The unfavorable tone of Trump's coverage owed to a shift in its content," writes Patterson. "The primary victories that moved him ever closer to a delegate majority were a source of positive news. But victories in the absence of competitors

are less newsworthy, opening up news time and space for other subjects.

In the campaign's final month, journalists increasingly probed Trump's character and policy positions, framing them through the lens of Trump as a possible president rather than Trump as a striving candidate. News references to Trump's character and policies, which in earlier stages had never accounted for even as much as 10 percent of his coverage, jumped to 19 percent of it. The tone was cutting. Negative statements outpaced positive ones by 10 to 1."

Some Republicans, at least the ones who strongly support Trump, will attribute the negativity to media bias rather than any coverage "shift in content." But Trump's amazing run through the primaries did keep a lot of journalists and analysts transfixed on the amazing run. Once it was over, and Trump was the Republican nominee, there was never any doubt that would change, for whatever reason.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.

OTHER VIEWS

Ideas to reform Oregon's flagging education system

The (Eugene) Register-Guard

Figuring out how to improve public education is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Hundreds of different pieces are on the table — different sizes, different shapes — but until someone steps up and puts them together, there is no clear picture.

Many people, non-profit groups and government agencies in Oregon have been working to put the pieces together. Here and there on the tabletop, parts of the puzzle are coming together. But there's still a long way to go before a complete picture emerges.

School funding from tax revenues will always be a major part of the puzzle. But, absent major reforms that would funnel more money into schools, many districts continue to look for ways to improve educational outcomes.

One of the key parts of the picture that has been emerging in recent years is the critical importance of pre-kindergarten learning.

The sheer volume of information available — from research done by universities and foundations to one-page tip sheets for parents that can be downloaded free from the state Department of Education — can be overwhelming.

And the information serves little purpose unless people caring for and educating children know this information is out there and how to gain access to it.

While Oregon has made full-day kindergarten a reality

across the state, a laudable achievement, it's increasingly well-understood that much of brain development occurs long before age five.

This means that first grade, or even kindergarten, is too late to begin tackling educational challenges.

Achievement gaps between children already exist by the time they enter kindergarten. And these gaps — which often are linked to a family's income level — widen each passing year, with children who lagged initially falling further and further behind.

Children who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to not graduate from high school than those who have mastered reading, according to research from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Add poverty into the mix, researchers found, and those third-graders who can't read well are more than six times more likely to not graduate.

But, while evidence of the importance of pre-kindergarten education continues to mount, educators and parents often struggle with how to transfer the reams of information produced by foundations, universities and government agencies into the real world. It is often difficult to find ways to connect resources and the people who can make best use of them — parents and others who care for the youngest children.

What makes this particularly difficult is that funding for public schools generally isn't provided for the pre-kindergarten programs.

Money for these programs would have to be diverted from kindergarten through high school programs, many of which are already stretched thin financially.

But there have been some encouraging developments in Lane County in recent years, where partnerships of non-profit groups, schools and parents have found funding for successful programs targeting the critical pre-kindergarten years.

Among these is the Kids in Transition to School (KITS) project — which began as a pilot project in the Bethel and Springfield school districts in collaboration with United Way of Lane County and the Oregon Social Learning Center.

Among other things, KITS teaches pre-schoolers pre-reading skills, such as letter names and sounds, and social skills, such as taking turns, that prepare them for kindergarten. Parents also are invited to workshops on topics such as how to prepare their kids for a strong start in school and establishing homework routines.

KITS has been successful in finding grant funding through United Way, but not all districts are able to, or know how to, gain access to this type of financial support.

How this was accomplished

in Lane County, and the results the program is showing, could be useful to other districts in the state. But, without a central

clearinghouse, or system, for sharing this type of information across the state, it is difficult to disseminate the how-tos of success stories such as this.

Many districts struggle with similar issues, particularly when it comes to the pre-kindergarten years that can set up a child for success in school or doom them to failure.

Finding children who need help before they enter school, reaching parents who are often working long hours, and sometimes dealing with language barriers, can be challenges for many school districts and early-education programs.

The KITS program has been able to overcome many of these hurdles, in part because it was able to build on an existing cadre of

dedicated volunteers in the Bethel and Springfield districts. This, too, is a success story that other districts around the state could learn from.

What is happening locally is part of a larger picture, which is that parents, educators and taxpayers all have an interest in seeing children succeed and that a comprehensive, coordinated approach — starting in the key years before kindergarten — would help everyone.

Too often school districts, teachers and parents are working in isolation, unable or uncertain how to find the information and resources they need. This has become more evident with the growing body of research showing the importance of early learning, which operates mainly outside the existing public education system.

This is why a big step forward would include setting up a centralized system to share information on programs that are working, including funding sources, that could be replicated, or modified for use, elsewhere.

If less time is spent reinventing the wheel, and more time spent moving the cart forward, everyone benefits.

LETTERS POLICY

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