

# EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
Managing Editor

**TIM TRAINOR**  
Opinion Page Editor

**MARISSA WILLIAMS**  
Regional Advertising Director

**MARCY ROSENBERG**  
Circulation Manager

**JANNA HEIMGARTNER**  
Business Office Manager

**MIKE JENSEN**  
Production Manager

## OUR VIEW

# Democracy will survive Trump

Donald Trump will be the 45th president of the United States.

A turn in the polls in the last few days put the New York billionaire on top of an election that caught pollsters and observers by surprise.

The nation must now grapple with a president-elect as mysterious and undisciplined as our country has ever seen. He has no strong bond to any political party, lacks concrete policies, made campaign promises that he can

never live up to and has a notoriously short temper. He likely will lead our country for the next four years.

Before we opine on just what a Trump presidency might look like, we must take a moment to speak for American democracy. This is a strong, moral country with mature and entrenched democratic traditions. It is scary to elect an outsider candidate who flirts with America's authoritarian enemies and seems to lack a basic code of decency. But this country is strong enough to weather it. Full stop. It might not be pretty, but we can and will survive it.

So what will happen? Because Republicans held onto the House and the Senate, Obamacare will disappear into the caverns of history — along with medical insurance for millions of Americans. Trump will kick Merrick Garland to the curb and put forward his own nominee to the Supreme Court.

Trump says he will amend the Constitution in his first 100 days in office, adding term limits to Congress. Republican-dominated officeholders will certainly have nothing to do with that, setting up perhaps the first struggle between Trump and party establishment.

Working class whites elected Trump and he must, somehow, improve their lives. Will building a wall do that? Will pulling out of NAFTA? Will rounding up and deporting undocumented immigrants satisfy them? Even if it doesn't improve the financial situation? What if it makes their life worse by increasing the cost of groceries and consumer goods?

Will Trump start a trade war with China? Will he start an actual war? Will he try to overturn Roe v. Wade?

Will he cut taxes for the rich?

The possibilities are endless, and because the media and voters couldn't nail down Trump's positions on any of these matters, we're all in the dark.

**"Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."**

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

But Trump has to do *something*, doesn't he? Will he build a wall along the Mexican border — at a cost of roughly \$25 billion — a tab that we all know Mexico is going to go nowhere near. Will he raise taxes to pay for its construction,

or will he just add the cost onto the national debt?

So many questions with no apparent answers.

But one can be answered: How did Democrats allow Trump to pull off the upset?

First, and most clearly, they misunderstood just how deeply many Americans despise the Clintons. And they misread the national pulse, putting forward an establishment candidate after six years of total Washington gridlock and ineptitude. Clinton's weakest points — her stance on trade, her ties to Wall Street and her hawkishness — were open sores that left her vulnerable to Trump's incessant pecking. And Clinton lacked the agility to pull the rug out from under Trump at every stage of the game.

Democrats also made gargantuan campaign errors. Clinton never set foot in Wisconsin during the general campaign — a state she lost — and their late scramble to hold onto Michigan was too little, too late. They misread the tea leaves so badly they were caught gazing into their own navels.

Barack Obama's election made many Americans feel scared, forgotten, confused and angry. Many people who felt that way were white people without college degrees, and they voted for Trump in tremendous numbers. The pendulum that brought Obama to power has swung back, and Donald Trump rose with it.

Trump's presidency is a stumble for America, and this country will face serious dangers. But the pendulum is always moving. Our nation has pushed it backward with force, yet it will soon come forward at an equal speed.

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.

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

## OTHER VIEWS



caglecartoons.com

# Homeless in America

I began election night writing a column that started with words from an immigrant, my friend Lesley Goldwasser, who came to America from Zimbabwe in the 1980s. Surveying our political scene a few years ago, Lesley remarked to me: "You Americans kick around your country like it's a football. But it's not a football. It's a Fabergé egg. You can break it."

With Donald Trump now elected president, I have more fear than I've ever had in my 63 years that we could do just that — break our country, that we could become so irreparably divided that our national government will not function.

From the moment Trump emerged as a candidate, I've taken seriously the possibility that he could win; this column never predicted otherwise, although it certainly wished for it. That doesn't mean the reality of it is not shocking to me.

As much as I knew that it was a possibility, the stark fact that a majority of Americans wanted radical, disruptive change so badly and simply did not care who the change agent was, what sort of role model he could be for our children, whether he really had any ability to execute on his plan — or even really had a plan to execute on — is profoundly disturbing.

Before I lay out all my fears, is there any silver lining to be found in this vote? I've been searching for hours, and the only one I can find is this: I don't think Trump was truly committed to a single word or policy he offered during the campaign, except one phrase: "I want to win."

But Donald Trump cannot be a winner unless he undergoes a radical change in personality and politics and becomes everything he was not in this campaign. He has to become a healer instead of a divider; a compulsive truth-teller rather than a compulsive liar; someone ready to study problems and make decisions based on evidence, not someone who just shoots from the hip; someone who tells people what they need to hear, not what they want to hear; and someone who appreciates that an interdependent world can thrive only on win-win relationships, not zero-sum ones.

I can only hope that he does. Because if he doesn't, all of you who voted for him — overlooking all of his obvious flaws — because you wanted radical, disruptive change, well, you're going to get it.

I assume that Trump will not want to go down as the worst president in history, let alone the one who presided over the deepest fracturing of our country since the Civil War. It would shake the whole world. Therefore, I can only hope that he will, as president, seek to surround himself with the best people he can, which surely doesn't include the likes of Rudy Giuliani or Newt Gingrich, let alone the alt-right extremists who energized his campaign.

But there is also a deeply worrying side to

Trump's obsession with "winning." For him, life is always a zero-sum game: I win, you lose. But when you're running the United States of America, everything can't be a zero-sum game.

"The world only stays stable when countries are embedded in win-win relationships, in healthy interdependencies," observed Dov Seidman, the CEO of LRN, which advises companies on leadership, and the author of the book "How."

For instance, America undertook the Marshall Plan after World War II — giving millions of dollars to Europe — to build it up into a trading partner and into a relationship that turned out to be of great mutual benefit.

Does Trump understand that? Do those who voted for him understand how many of their jobs depend on America being embedded in healthy interdependencies around the world?

How do I explain Trump's victory? Way too soon to say for sure, but my gut tells me that it has much less to do with trade or income gaps and much more to do with culture and many Americans' feeling of "homelessness."

There is nothing that can make people more angry or disoriented than feeling they have lost their home. For some it is because America is

becoming a minority-majority country and this has threatened the sense of community of many middle-class whites, particularly those living outside the more cosmopolitan urban areas.

For others it is the dizzying whirlwind of technological change we're now caught up in. It has either wiped out their job or transformed their workplace in ways they find disorienting — or has put stressful demands on them for lifelong learning. When the two most important things in your life are upended — the workplace and community that anchor you and give you identity — it's not surprising that people are disoriented and reach for the simplistic solutions touted by a would-be strongman.

What I do know for certain is this: The Republican Party and Donald Trump will have control of all the levers of government, from the courts to the Congress to the White House. That is an awesome responsibility, and it is all going to be on them. Do they understand that?

Personally, I will not wish them ill. Too much is at stake for my country and my children. Unlike the Republican Party for the last eight years, I am not going to try to make my president fail. If he fails, we all fail. So yes, I will hope that a better man emerges than we saw in this campaign.

But at the moment I am in anguish, frightened for my country and for our unity. And for the first time, I feel homeless in America.

Thomas L. Friedman won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, his third Pulitzer for *The New York Times*. He became the paper's foreign-affairs Op-Ed columnist in 1995.

**There is nothing that can make people more angry or disoriented than feeling they have lost their home.**



THOMAS FRIEDMAN  
Comment

# Gritting our teeth and giving President Trump a chance

Sure, if you're in the approximately 52 percent majority of voters who supported someone other than Donald Trump, go ahead and mourn. When a former Ku Klux Klan leader like David Duke is giddily celebrating a political triumph for his values, how can we not ache for our own?

Yet, like it or not, we Americans have a new president-elect, and it's time to buck up. I've seen past elections that were regarded as the end of the world — including, in many Democratic circles, the Reagan triumph of 1980 — and the republic survived. This time as well, our institutions are stronger than any one man. We are not Weimar Germany.

It was disgraceful that many Republicans eight years ago tried to make President Barack Obama fail. That's not the path to emulate. Today, having lost, we owe it to our nation to grit our teeth and give President-elect Trump a chance.

Having said that, Trump has talked about repealing Obamacare, deporting millions of our neighbors, instituting religious tests, overturning Obama's actions on climate change, and moving the Supreme Court far to the right. How can progressives respond with anything but resistance — or emigration? As it became clear that Trump



NICHOLAS KRISTOF  
Comment

had been elected, Canada's website for immigration crashed from too much traffic.

It's complicated, but let me offer a few reasons to hold off on your visa application:

• Trump is inexperienced and makes extreme statements, but he's not ideological. He used to be pro-choice, then suggested that women should be punished for getting an abortion, but neither is a core view — because Trump

doesn't have a core. He is an opportunist. He blustered about building a wall and banning Muslims but won't do either, because they are unworkable.

The area where Trump would be most dangerous is foreign affairs, because there he can act largely at will, unconstrained by law. Yet it is perfectly possible that Trump will appoint as secretary of state an experienced Republican like Richard Haass, with Stephen Hadley as secretary of defense, thus signaling that adults are in charge of foreign policy.

The thought of Trump with the nuclear codes is terrifying, but if Trump were to give a crazy order, no one knows if aides would circumvent it. In 1974, when President Richard Nixon was drinking heavily during the Watergate crisis, his defense secretary, James Schlesinger, ordered the military not

to obey any presidential instruction for a nuclear attack without checking further.

• Democrats are too quick to caricature Trump supporters as deplorable. Sure, some are racists or misogynists, but many are good people who had voted for Obama in the past. My rural hometown, Yamhill, Oregon, is pro-Trump, and I can tell you: The voters there are not all bigoted monsters, but well-meaning people upended by economic changes such as the disappearance of good manufacturing jobs. They feel betrayed by the Democratic and Republican establishments, and finally a candidate spoke to them.

Liberals condemn the stereotyping of Latinos or Muslims, but have been too quick to stereotype Trump voters.

Look, ordinary Americans have not somehow lurched into bigotry, even if they have backed a man I consider a bigot. A Bloomberg poll found that if Obama had been allowed to seek a third term, he would have defeated Trump in a landslide, 53 to 41 percent. And just four years ago, the presidential election was between the African-American son of a single mom and a Mormon.

• Trump was absolutely right that the economic system is broken for ordinary Americans, especially working-class men. Since 1979, real hourly wages for men have essentially been unchanged for the bottom

half of Americans by income.

Today, we're a country divided not only by ideology but also by identity. Whites voted for Trump by 21 percentage points; blacks for Clinton by 80 percentage points. If it had been only women voting, Clinton would have won in a landslide. (Thank God for women and people of color!)

Unfortunately, Trump's proposed policies would exacerbate the inequity that he campaigned on. And normal checks and balances will not apply, for he will be working with a Republican Senate, a Republican House and a majority Republican Supreme Court.

One crucial check could be the news media — if we are up to it. I've been very critical this year of the role that we in the media, especially cable television, played in Trump's rise. We need to be watchdogs, not lap dogs.

The time for ranting is over, and it's time to accept the inevitable. Trump has surprised us in many ways this year, and let's hope and pray that he will stun us once again by repairing the tears he made in our social fabric. Let's give him a chance — for those are our democratic values.

And if he falls short, let's hold him accountable — for the sake of those same values.

Nicholas Kristof, *The New York Times*