

**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

**EO MEDIA GROUP**

East Oregonian • The Daily Astorian • Capital Press • Hermiston Herald  
Blue Mountain Eagle • Willowa County Chieftain • Chinook Observer • Coast River Business Journal  
Oregon Coast Today • Coast Weekend • Seaside Signal • Cannon Beach Gazette  
Eastern Oregon Real Estate Guide • Eastern Oregon Marketplace • Coast Marketplace  
OnlyAg.com • FarmSeller.com • Seaside-Sun.com • NorthwestOpinions.com • DiscoverOurCoast.com

**OUR VIEW**

# Expand your silo to avoid surprises

Did the results of Tuesday's election surprise you? Did you stay up until late at night, rubbing your disbelieving eyes?

You weren't alone. Even most data savvy journalists and the country's biggest Trump supporters were caught by surprise. Some found the surprise quite pleasant, others found it jarring.

Yet at a moment where everyone agrees America is as divided as it has been since the Civil War, why is it a surprise that neither side could hear what the other was saying?

In reality, the difference between a Trump win and a Clinton victory was about 2 percentage points. That was enough to tip Florida, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin to the Republican, thus giving him the election. Most data on Election Day eve showed those states were hovering on razor-thin margins, yet most analysis of the race leaned on the fact that Clinton only had to win two of those states to take the White House. Establishment thinkers couldn't comprehend that Clinton might *not* win two of them, and that Trump had a gambler's chance at winning the race. Something was lost between the data on the page and the thought process of a person who may not have spoken to many Trump supporters.

The division in American is accurate, and it's not just political. There is physical division — just take a look at the electoral map. Liberals are gathering in population centers and along the coasts. Conservatives in rural areas and the South and Rust Belt. There is generational division, too, as well as a division in education, gender and race.

The media, which is tasked with explaining and bridging that division, has fallen flat. Too much of the campaign coverage dealt with the entertaining but ultimately superficial horse race nature of it — who was up and who was down. Real dissection of policy, and really listening to voters, was noticeably absent.

On the face of it, the near infinite number of online news outlets should help disseminate truth, right? You no longer need a printing press to dissect policy or bullhorn the stories of average Americans. At the very least, there is plenty of space

available to check facts. Farhad Manjoo recently wrote an article in the *New York Times* titled: "How the internet is loosening our grip on the truth." He argues that while the internet offers plenty of sources of information, it also offers plenty of sources of disinformation. And it makes it difficult to tell the difference between the two.

"Psychologists and other social scientists have repeatedly shown that when confronted with diverse information choices, people rarely act like rational, civic-minded automatons," he wrote. "Instead, we are roiled by preconceptions and biases, and we usually do what feels easiest — we gorge on information that confirms our ideas, and we shun what does not."

Online businesses are dependent on clicks — not the truth — and too often people click on what they want to believe instead of what they should believe. When we silo ourselves around friendly information and people who share our view of the world, we do ourselves a disservice. And we set ourselves up for that shocking moment when we peek out of our silo and see that the rest of our state, country or world is different than we thought.

As we've argued in this space previously, it takes a stronger kind of person to confront facts that challenge their opinions. It is much easier to lend credence to vague conspiracies, to throw rocks at the wall of truth instead of doing the backbreaking work of building your own with supporting facts and studies and impassioned defense. Build that wall, Mr. Trump.

Media is, generally, conservative. And we mean conservative with a small c. We're biased toward long résumés, established practices, data that proves the point and historical comparisons. We're cynical of big promises without proof, we don't take a candidate's word for it, and we're wary of leaping without looking.

Like you, we are invested in our philosophy, our view and hope for the world. But filling that arsenal with facts, admitting mistakes and sensing advantage is the way to move forward, win over skeptics and restore trust and truth.

**When we silo ourselves around friendly information and people who share our view of the world, we do ourselves a disservice.**

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.

**LETTERS POLICY**

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and phone number. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.



**OTHER VIEWS**

## The view from Trump Tower

If your social circles are like mine, you spent Tuesday night swapping miserable texts. Not all, but many of my friends and family members were outraged, stunned, disgusted and devastated. This is victory for white supremacy, people wrote, for misogyny, nativism and authoritarianism. Fascism is descending.

I was on PBS trying to make sense of what was happening while trying to text various people off the ledge. At one point I was opining about the results while a disbelieving text flashed across my phone: "Change It! Change It! CHAAAANGE IT!"

Those emotional reactions were a fitting first-night response to the greatest political shock of our lifetimes. Still, this is probably not the best mentality for the coming era.

In the first place, emotions like disgust don't do justice to the complexity of Donald Trump's supporters. The disgusted posture risks turning politics into a Manichaeian civil war between the alleged children of light and the alleged children of darkness — between us enlightened, college-educated tolerant people and the supposed primitive horde driven by dark fears and prejudices. That crude and ignorant condescension is what feeds the Trump phenomenon in the first place.

Second, we simply don't yet know how much racism or misogyny motivated Trump voters. It is true that those voters are willing to tolerate a lot more bigotry in their candidate than I'd be willing to tolerate.

But if you were stuck in a jobless town, watching your friends OD on opiates, scrambling every month to pay the electric bill, and then along came a guy who seemed able to fix your problems and hear your voice, maybe you would stomach some ugliness, too.

Third, outrage and disgust impede learning. This century is still being formed and none of us understands it yet. The century really began on 9/11, and so far it has been marked by strong reactions against globalism and cosmopolitanism — by terrorism, tribalism and authoritarianism.

Populism of the Trump/Le Pen/Brexit variety has always been a warning sign, a warning sign that there is some deeper dysfunction in our economic, social and cultural systems. If you want to take that warning sign and dismiss it as simple bigotry, you're never going to pause to understand what's going on and you will never know how to constructively respond.

Finally, it seems important to be humbled and taught by this horrific election result. Trump's main problem in governing is not going to be some fascistic ideology; his main problem is going to be his own attention span, ignorance and incompetence. If he's left to blaviate while others are left to run the country and push through infrastructure



DAVID BROOKS  
Comment

plans, maybe things won't be disastrous.

The job for the rest of us is to rebind the fabric of society, community by community, and to construct a political movement for the post-Trump era. I suspect the coming political movements will be identified on two axes: open and closed and individual and social.

Those who believe in open believe in open trade, relatively open immigration, an active foreign policy and racial integration. Those who believe in closed believe in protective trade, closed borders, a withdrawn foreign policy and ethnic separatism.

Those who favor individual believe in individual initiative, designing programs to incentivize enterprise and removing regulatory barriers. Those who believe in social believe that social mobility

**Trump will probably resign or be impeached within a year.**

happens within rich communities — that people can undertake daring adventures when they have a secure social and emotional base.

Donald Trump is probably going to make the GOP the party of individual/closed. He's going to start with the traditional Republican agenda of getting government out of the way, and he's going to add walls, protectionism and xenophobia. That will leave people isolated in the face of the challenges of the information age economy, and it will close off the dynamism and diversity that always marked this crossroads of the nation.

The Democrats are probably going to be the party of social/closed. The coming Sanders-Warren party will advocate proposals that help communities with early education programs and the like, but that party will close off trade, withdraw from the world, close off integration with hyper-race-conscious categories and close off debate with political correctness.

Which is why I've been thinking we need a third party that is social/open. This compassionate globalist party would support the free trade and skilled immigration that fuel growth. But it would also flood the zone for those challenged in the high-skill global economy — offering programs to rebuild community, foster economic security and boost mobility. It would integrate the white working class and minority groups by emphasizing that we are all part of a single American idea.

Trump's bigotry, dishonesty and promise-breaking will have to be denounced. We can't go morally numb. But he needs to be replaced with a program that addresses the problems that fueled his ascent.

After all, the guy will probably resign or be impeached within a year. The future is closer than you think.

David Brooks became a *New York Times* Op-Ed columnist in 2003. He is currently a commentator on PBS.

**CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES**

**U.S. President**

**Barack Obama**  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Comments: 202-456-1111  
Switchboard: 202-456-1414  
Email: www.whitehouse.gov/contact

La Grande office:  
541-962-7691

**Jeff Merkley**  
Washington office:  
313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-3753  
Pendleton office:  
541-278-1129

La Grande office:  
541-624-2400

**Governor**

**Kate Brown**  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301-4047  
503-378-4582

**State Representatives**

**Greg Barreto, District 58**  
900 Court St. NE, H-38  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1458  
Rep.GregBarreto@state.or.us

**U.S. Senators**

**Ron Wyden**  
Washington office:  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-5244

**U.S. Representative**

**Greg Walden**  
Washington office:  
185 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-6730

**Senator**

**Bill Hansell, District 29**  
900 Court St. NE, S-423  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1729  
Sen.BillHansell@state.or.us

**Greg Smith, District 57**

900 Court St. NE, H-482  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1457  
Rep.GregSmith@state.or.us