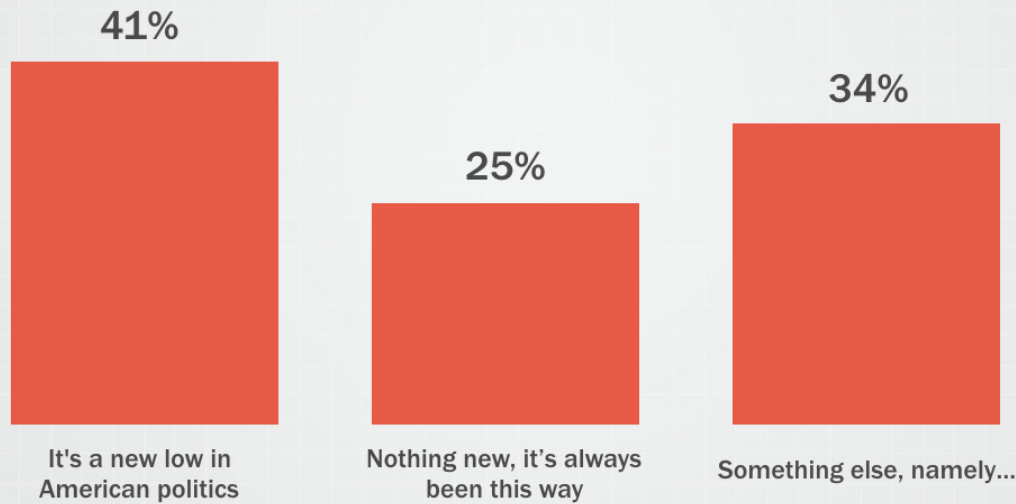


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 4 March 2016*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

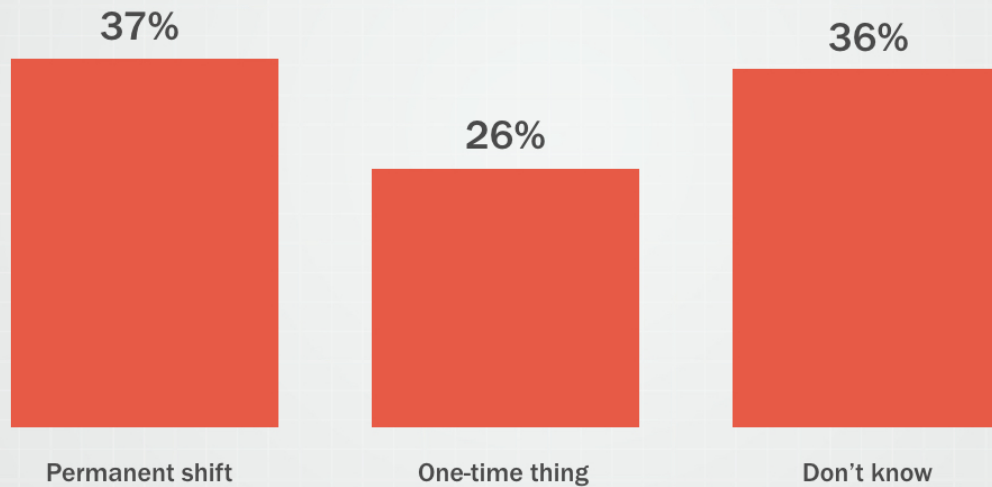
WHAT'S UP WITH ALL THE NAME-CALLING AMONG
GOP PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

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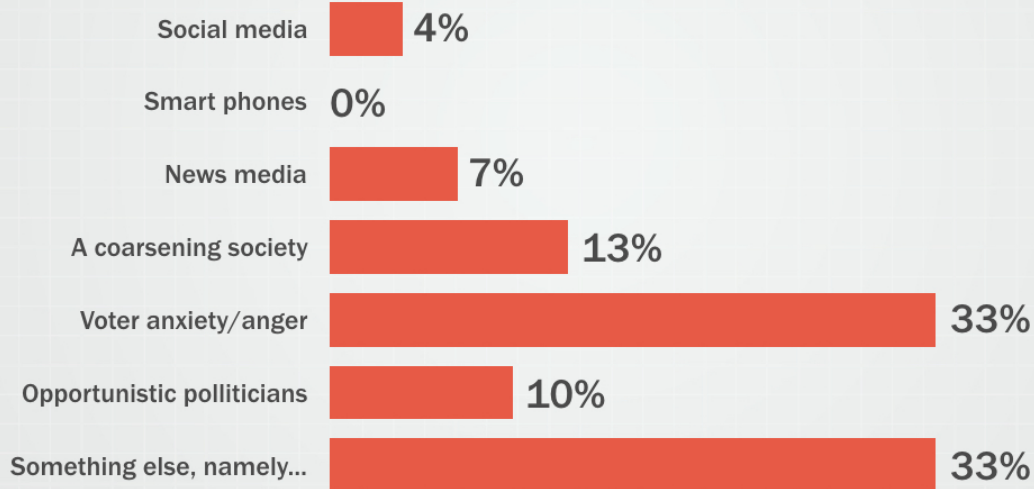
DOES THIS YEAR'S ELECTORAL DISRUPTIONS MARK A PERMANENT SHIFT, OR IS THIS JUST A ONE-TIME THING?



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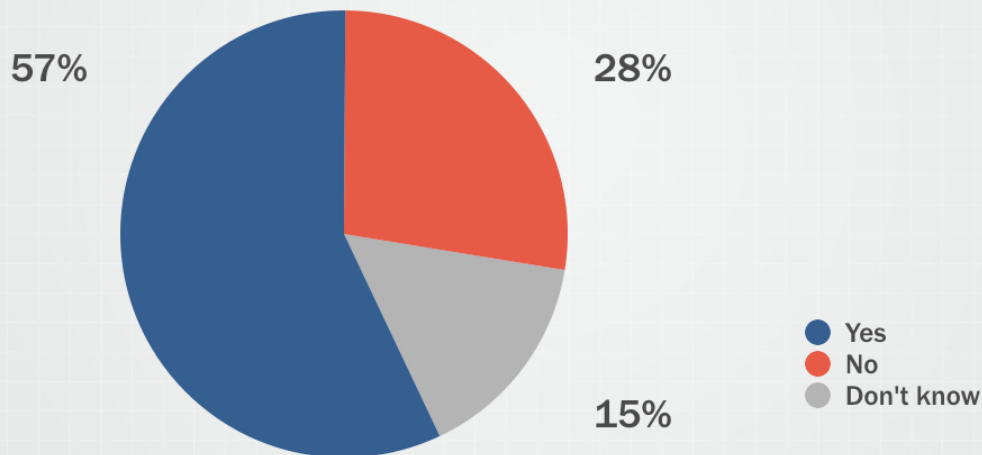
IF THE POLITICAL PARTIES ARE FALLING APART,
_____ IS/ARE THE REASONS WHY



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WILL A MAJOR POLITICAL PARTY SPLINTER INTO TWO OR MORE PARTIES IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS?



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What's up with all the name-calling among GOP presidential contenders?

- "We're becoming British in our political rhetoric."
- "The way Trump has dominated the news cycle has forced Rubio & Cruz to imitate the behavior. It is childish, but seems to be effective. That says more about the electorate than the candidates!"
- "When issues and policy don't matter, there is only the path of perdition and adolescent blather."
- "RINOs do have horns, ya know."
- "The fact is the American electorate is fed up with D.C. politics and stalemates. This country has serious issues to deal with, such as social security, national debt, terrorism, and infrastructure. We the People are fed up!"
- "Trump scares the establishment — sort of like negative campaigning on a personal level."
- "It is a new low in American politics, but sadly it is the result of the disrespect shown over the last few years! The level of disrespect shown to the President has been unfathomable."

We have devolved into a nation of raging race baiting, wacko conservative, hate spouting people."

- "Frustration with business as usual in Washington is finally boiling over."
- "It's the disintegration of the national GOP. Perhaps Texas can lead the way back."
- "Racism's rearing its ugly head again because the black guy won TWICE!"
- "Seeing Trump's antics, it's a new low. It's a limbo stick campaign. But we can go lower."
- "Well, not quite a new low — remember Adams/Jefferson — but a new low for my lifetime. And I first voted for Jimmy Carter!!"
- "Recent campaigning is rather tame, but in the good ol' days politics was truly a contact sport and today's 'attacks' pale in comparison. I mean, 'Ma! Ma! Where's my pa?' compared to misrepresenting a procedural vote as support/opposition for a bill."
- "The American electorate has proven that these stories are more interesting than anything substantive. As long as voters are staying on a channel while Trump and other idiocy is being covered, those are the stories the media will run with and the actions of the candidates will follow. Whether you vote for Trump or not, anyone who watches his coverage has helped to create this atmosphere (myself included)."

• "Welcome to the World Wrestling Federation. That's where Trump learned to be a larger than life jerk."

- "A new kind of low, at least. Fighting fire (Trump) with fire (adolescent name-calling)."
- "This is why we should not legalize drug usage."
- "They're all following Trump's lead."
- "Used to be done by surrogates."
- "The kids from the 70's who grew up reading Al Jaffee's Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions in Mad Magazine are now running the show. But, yes, this is nothing new."
- "This is the intersection of economic inequality (and the fear/anger it provokes), the dumbing down of the American electorate through a reality TV/infotainment culture, and a thirty year project to polarize our politics."
- "It speaks to the low we have reached in the type of politician we have running for president."
- "Dramatic change in the R party. Trump is bringing in populists, nationalists, and other disaffected to challenge both the far right and the establishment. They don't like it one bit, which explains the nastiness. Hillary will push them together. And, if Trump has any discipline, he has a good chance to be president."
- "In the wake of Obama's 'fundamental transformation' of America, the people are willing to openly debate who they think can best put the country back

onto a healthy footing. That's a very good thing."

- "Yawn. Get over this notion that mud slinging is new. Can you say Lincoln Douglas? Really?"
- "NONE OF THEM ARE TRULY QUALIFIED TO BE PRESIDENT, MUCH LESS SENATORS..."
- "When a reality TV star is leading in the polls, it's bound to get trashy!"

Does this year's electoral disruptions mark a permanent shift, or is this just a one-time thing?

- "If this is permanent, it will discourage good people from seeking public office."
- "What electoral disruption? Four incumbents beat on election night. Big deal. What disruption are you talking about?"
- "It could be seismic and ongoing if the Republican fault line leaves a gaping hole of poor performance in November."
- "Still too early to tell. However, we are seeing the anti-establishment BS is not being 'bought' by the Texas electorate. So if you are still waiting for a permanent shift, you must still wait."
- "I MUST believe that things will move back towards the center — once the wackos are defeated, they will hopefully take their toys, go home and NEVER come back."
- "It's another step along the path of personality politics and away from

• "It's unavoidable that when you place a reality television star in the role of the candidate that he/she will turn the entire affair into a reality show. Because Trump was getting so much more attention and oxygen in this election cycle for those remaining contestants."

- "TERRIBLE!!!"
- "Excuse me, small hands, gotta pee."

politics based on issues and institutions."

- "If it works — that is, if Trump wins the nomination or even national election — we'll get more monkeyshines in future races than you see at the primate house of the Helsinki zoo."
- "I'm going to remain optimistic that this is a one time thing. Hopefully we all will learn a valuable lesson after this cycle — change the channel when idiocy is getting airtime and the dialogue will change."
- "We must really hope so."
- "The Republican Party is breaking up. The rank-and-file is now longer buying what Big Money and the Religious Right are selling. The Democratic Party is holding it together, at least until the Baby Boomers are eclipsed by the much more progressive Millennials."
- "Politics are spinning out of control. Qualified, properly motivated

candidates are demonized. Candidates with no philosophical grounding are leading. Unbelievable."

- "The permanent shift among the Republican Party towards viciousness has become public, but it is not new. There's not much new about the Democratic Party and its internal politics, there has always been moderate versus liberal factions."
- "Could be a four way race like 1860."
- "Just another cycle. Keep the U.S. weird."
- "I do not believe this is static. I fear to imagine how far this can go in coming years, especially when this anger is no longer directed through electoral channels."
- "Remains to be seen. Can Democrats capitalize with a clear economic message that resonates with the old Reagan Democrats and bring them home? Will the Republican establishment embrace or dump

If the political parties are falling apart, _____ is/are the reason why.

- "The middle class and blue collar non-protected class of voters are mad as hell and they aren't going to take it any more. They feel political correctness and a pro bias toward minorities pursued by their government is disadvantaging them and their children."
- "Sheer ignorance"
- "Actually, all of the above."

Trump? Run a third party candidate?
Too many unanswered questions..."

- "It may depend on the extent to which the anti-establishment, anti-incumbent types get what they want, only to find they didn't really get what they wanted."
- "Or am I kidding myself."
- "Could be a permanent shift if Trump wins. Could blow up the hold both the hard right and hard left have had on American politics and the dysfunction. Could be very good for the country."
- "I tremble for my country when I consider the possibility of a Trump presidency. It would indicate how far the voters have fallen from our Founders' principles."
- "Unless the Kardashians decide to run in 2020."
- "Don't know how involved the Donald will be."
- "It's not new!"

- "How about all of the above? We are in a 24-hour news cycle and are more knowledgeable and aware of what is happening around them."
- "KOCH Brothers financing — it and the Tea Party spreading their message of hate!"
- "Political parties have been declining in importance for 60 years, ever since 'reform' took nominating power away

from party veterans and gave it to general public."

- "Television. It's television. All the other things on your list are derivatives of television. And I say that as someone who loves television every bit as much as the next person."

- "Social media, smart phones and the news media are all components of our instant entertainment consumption society — one for which an increasing number of people is unaffordable. So even though there's nothing really valuable to be had, people still feel anxious, angry and left out."

- "Racist peckerwoods crawling out of their hiding places and being given a voice with Fox 'News' and social media."

- "Uneducated and unsophisticated voters. It's been reported that many folks are angry that nothing is being done in Washington, D.C., that the Tea Party darlings they sent to D.C. aren't doing enough (aside from Fight!). Do they not understand the balance of powers and which parties control the White House and Congress?"

- "24/7 News — reporters are desperate for content and will go anywhere to get it. In the day of the nightly news hour, valuable air time was reserved for real news stories, not manufactured drama."

- "On the right: fear of change and loss of gender/ethnic privilege. On the left: reaction against neoliberalism with its high degree of income inequality, lack of social mobility."

- "All of the above. It is disgusting and disheartening."

- "People are tired of being lied to, the results are that they are mad and the extremes on both ends have taken over."

- "Both parties concerned about staying in power, idiocracy of America, plus Anglos scared that their time of supremacy is almost over and that there will be retribution."

- "All of the above."

- "Social media and improved communications are part of the reason, but the inability of the two parties to work with each other is frustrating to everyone and ultimately ruining the country. Best example is the Republican hatred of Pres. Obama to the point of grinding the judicial system to a halt with their refusal to approve federal judges. It is INSANE and both parties participate in it — the Republicans have just mastered the partisan insanity."

- "Lack of rules in media that give equal time to people to respond to lies and lack of requirement of news on public airways."

- "All the above."

- "Everyone is brave on social media. Just like the telegraph, this new technology will ruin us."

- "A combination of these factors."

- "Political parties have not met the needs of the American public. The globalist policy choices of the corporate elite and their functionaries in

government have consciously dislocated many. Their chickens are coming home to roost."

- "Preponderance of ignorant, racist, isolationist, xenophobic attitudes, which devolved from the original intent of the tea party movement."
- "If the 'political parties are falling apart' (a premise with which I do not agree), but if they are, it might well be attributable to an outbreak of common sense on the part of the people."
- "Their dysfunction. They need a blowing up."
- "The emperor has no clothes, i.e. the establishment. The base in both parties is tired of being lied to by pols who say re-elect or elect me and you will be

Will a major political party splinter into two or more parties in the next 20 years?

- "People are more afraid of change than they are of the current system."
- "The two party system will be hard pressed to accommodate the many tribes in this rapid splintering of national identity along the lines of geography, ideology, ethnicity, morality and incivility. Not a totally new phenomenon, just the most recent and significant since the 1960's."
- "The Republican Party could be on the brink. Remember, the Republican Party was born from the Whig Party."
- "Republicans are going down."
- "Could happen."

represented. Liars! I am tired of hearing the clueless media and establishment question the success of Trump and Bernie. Get a freaking clue, people."

- "The question is based upon a faulty premise. They are falling apart, they are circling the toilet bowl."
- "Everything!"
- "Combination of 24/7 news and no filter."
- "The puritanical purging of candidates who do not adhere to a very strict ideology have put partisan identity at a new low. I don't anticipate that coming back."

- "The GOP will eventually be rebuilt."
- "IF that happens, it will be the GOP."
- "We may end up in more of a Euro-style political environment over the long run. The Democratic Party will become the de facto socialist party, the Republicans will become what the Ds are now, and a small, right wing Nationalist party will pop up to bedevil what remains of the GOP. Race may become a more prominent feature and with fewer apologies than now."
- "Quite possibly."
- "We could have four parties this year."

- "We could end up with three or four, ranging from racist nationalism on the right to social democracy on the left."
- "With luck, the rational people left in both parties will splinter and join together."
- "The GOP center cannot hold. But don't crow, Ds — once there are more choices on the right, the D coalition will also split apart. Eventually, we will be like every other Western democracy and have multiple parties."
- "One can almost see the more conservative liberals and the less conservative conservatives grouping together into the party of the middle, if they could find a compelling champion. Maybe we call it the Formerly Silent Majority Party?"
- "The Republicans already have."
- "There will be a lot of talk of this. Some fools may split off. It never works out."
- "When the Democrats can't find a difference between themselves and Socialists, then maybe it's time to call it what it is: Socialist Party of the USA."
- "But, I do think there will ultimately be an opportunity for an independent candidate if they can dismantle the Federal Election Commission."
- "Maybe Trump picks Sen. Burton as his running mate. Birds of a feather..."

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Brandon Alderete, Clyde Alexander, Jay Arnold, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Raif Calvert, Lydia Camarillo, Elna Christopher, Kevin Cooper, Randy Cubriel, Beth Cubriel, Curtis Culwell, Denise Davis, June Deadrick, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jon Fisher, Tom Forbes, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, Jim Grace, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Steve Holzheuser, Laura Huffman, Kathy Hutto, Shanna Igo, Deborah Ingersoll, Mark Jones, Lisa Kaufman, Robert Kepple, Richard Khouri, Tom Kleinworth, Sandy Kress, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, James LeBas, Luke Legate, Myra Leo, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Jason McElvaney, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Gary Polland, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, A.J. Rodriguez, Grant Ruckel, Andy Sansom, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Robert Scott, Bruce Scott, Ben Sebree, Christopher Shields, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Mark Smith, Larry Soward, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Tom Spilman, Sherry Sylvester, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Ware Wendell, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.