Trumped: How Donald J. Trump Defied the Odds and Won the Presidency

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Against all odds, Donald J. Trump shocked the world when he won the 2016 presidential election and became the 45th President of the United States. The following is our explanation and analysis of how and why he won.

**Make America Great Again**

Several key aspects of Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” campaign combined to facilitate his Electoral College victory

- **Social Media**
  - Trump’s controversial yet strategic use of social media caused the size of his audience to skyrocket (and at little to no monetary expense to him or his campaign)

- **Populist movement**
  - Trump’s policy positions were better suited to appeal to an increasingly popular Populist movement

- **Campaign Trail**
  - Trump held considerably more rallies in key swing states than did his opponent Hillary Clinton

**Strong Policies and Mixed Enthusiasm**

Donald Trump won not only because of the strength of his policy positions, but also because of the weaknesses of his opponent, Hillary Clinton. The Trump campaign’s gravitational pull of those on the outskirts of the political arena contributed greatly to him winning the presidency.

Trump’s policies appealed to those who had lost influence in the Post-Cold War era. There were some studies that predicted Trump’s win through economic dissatisfaction due to mergers and acquisitions, globalization, and automation. In addition, a majority of white, non-college graduate voters voted for Trump because they thought that the national economy was in a poor state and that illegal immigrants should be deported back to their own countries (CNN 2016).

A large factor in Clinton’s loss was that she was a weak candidate. In one study, 61% of drop-off voters (those who only vote during presidential elections) decided not to vote ahead of time. Their reasons included statements such as “I did not like either candidate”, “I think both candidates were not a good fit for president” and that “Neither candidate was trustworthy.” (Global Strategy Group, and Gairn Hart Yang).

**Obama-Trump drop-off voters**

Would you say that your vote for president was more a vote for Donald Trump, more a vote against Hillary Clinton, or neither?

- **Diversity Affects the Outcome**
  - Diversity produces different social outcomes depending on the level of diversity in a given area. As an integrated local people, people of all races generally become more tolerant of each other as their misconceptions of other races are dispelled. But at the same time, diversity on a larger scale with limited positive contact between races produces the opposite effect: among all races, tolerance goes down and racial resentment increases as the perceived social and economic ‘threats’ from other races increase.

Consequently, public perception of the Democratic party is generally that it is the party of minorities. Under conditions where diversity has driven racial resentment up, the Democratic party’s minority-centered public image is driving white voters away and, in many cases, to the Republican party, which the public generally perceives as the non-minority, or white, party.

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