



The 2020 Presidential Race

Effect of Large Number of Candidates

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- **Personality-Driven Campaign:** focuses on the candidate's personal qualities rather than their policy positions or experiences
 - **Polarization & Extremism:** candidates adopt extremist rhetoric in order to stand out from the field
 - **Horse Race Mentality:** Voters follow opinion poll numbers to see who's winning rather than policy positions
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Tips for Successful Election Speeches

- Should reference specific poll numbers
- Should reference specific voter demographics
- Often require explicit comparisons between candidates, ex.
 - Which candidate is most likely to win the Democratic presidential nomination?
 - Which candidate won the Democratic presidential debate?
- Comparisons are most effectively made at the end of each point
- Focus on **actions** instead of **adjectives**
 - NOPE: Donald Trump has extremist views on immigration
 - YES: Donald Trump has advocated for mass deportation of undocumented immigrants

What Makes a Successful Campaign?

- Fundraising
- Name recognition
- Political baggage
- Ability to unify the party/endorsements
- Ability to reach out moderates, independents, and third party voters
- Strength of economy (helps or hurts incumbent)
- Support of the media/controlling the media narrative
- mOmeNTUM/dEBATe perFORmANCE
- Success with key demographics

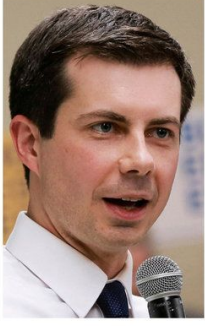
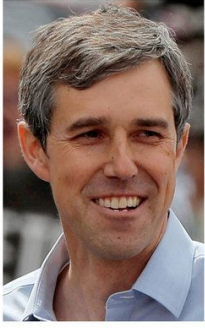
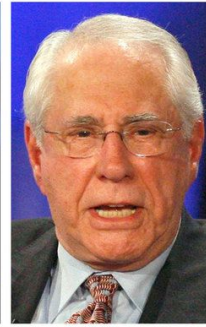
Let's Talk Primaries

The Worst Prediction in the History of Predictions, Maybe Ever



The Basics (and 2020)

- Before a general election, there's primary elections for basically every position
 - While the general election is pretty much always held in November, primary dates vary by state
 - In presidential years, Iowa and New Hampshire are always first
 - Conventional wisdom states that primaries drag candidates to the extremes (and favor those who appeal to the party's more hardcore supporters)
- In 2020, Trump was uncontested on the Republican side
- The Dems, however, were a mess
 - The presidential primaries are essentially over, but Congressional primaries are ongoing





I'M RIDIN WITH BIDEN

Timeline of Events

- On the eve of the Iowa caucuses, the major players
 - Biden, Sanders, Warren, Buttigieg, Klobuchar, Yang/Steuer (?)
 - Bloomberg (unconventional)
- Feb. 3rd: Buttigieg wins Iowa, Sanders second
- Feb. 11th: Sanders wins NH, Buttigieg 2nd, Klobuchar 3rd
 - Warren/Biden 3rd/4th
- Feb. 22nd: Sanders routs Nevada
 - At this point, people are predicting a clear Sanders win
 - Moderates start seriously considering a Bloomberg bid since Biden/Buttigieg/Klob don't have momentum
- Feb. 29th: Biden routs SC after Clyburn endorsement
- Mar. 1st and 2nd: Buttigieg and Klobuchar drop out
- Mar. 3rd: Biden sweeps Super Tuesday, Bloomberg shut out, Sanders falters
- March until now: Biden smooth sailing



How?

The Bernie Problem



Electability biggest concern among Dem voters

Moderates tend to perform better in general elections

Bernie relied heavily on youth voter turnout (which is a bad gamble almost always)

Didn't make a concerted effort to court minorities

Big enthusiasm but a smaller base

Black voters overwhelmingly voted for Joe Biden

He failed to build a coalition of older, moderate voters

Why Did Warren/Pete/Klob/etc. fail?

Warren and Bernie competed for a similar ideological ground but a different base

Warren lost support as Medicare-for-All was scrutinized, and had more legwork to do anyways

Pete and Klobuchar failed because they could not appeal to POC while being in the same ideological lane as Biden

Bloomberg entered late, too centrist, exposed in debates

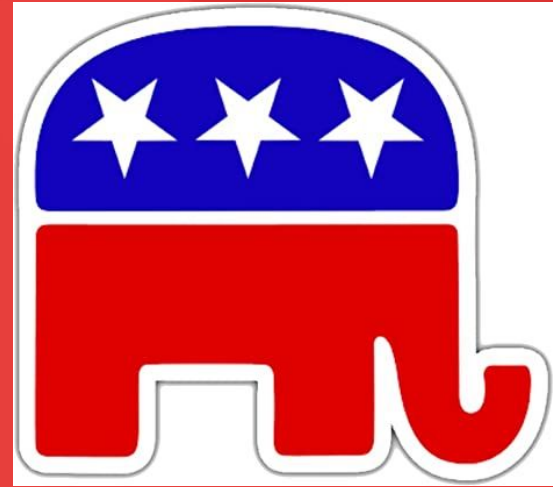
Big names who didn't make it to Iowa day:
Kamala, Beto, Kirsten

Could not build a coalition—lower name recognition

Plain bad luck

Most fizzled out early without major support, Yang and Steyer stuck around (Yang hardcore base, Steyer hardcore spending)

The Republican Side





Wariness of
Bernie/Warren

Coalition of
Moderates

Teflon Joe

Source List

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/2/25/21152538/bernie-sanders-electability-president-moderates-data>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Results_of_the_2020_Democratic_Party_presidential_primaries

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<https://www.vox.com/2020/2/23/21149365/nevada-caucuses-pete-buttigieg-amy-klobuchar-african-american-voters-entrance-polls>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/why-medicare-all-wrecked-elizabeth-warren-not-bernie-sanders-n1150691>

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/02/20/michael-bloombergs-monumental-failure-to-prepare-116285>

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/09/30/politics/andrew-yang-2020-presidential-campaign/index.html>

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-bernie-sanders-lost/>

https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/04/21/is_joe_biden_troubled_or_teflon_142990.html

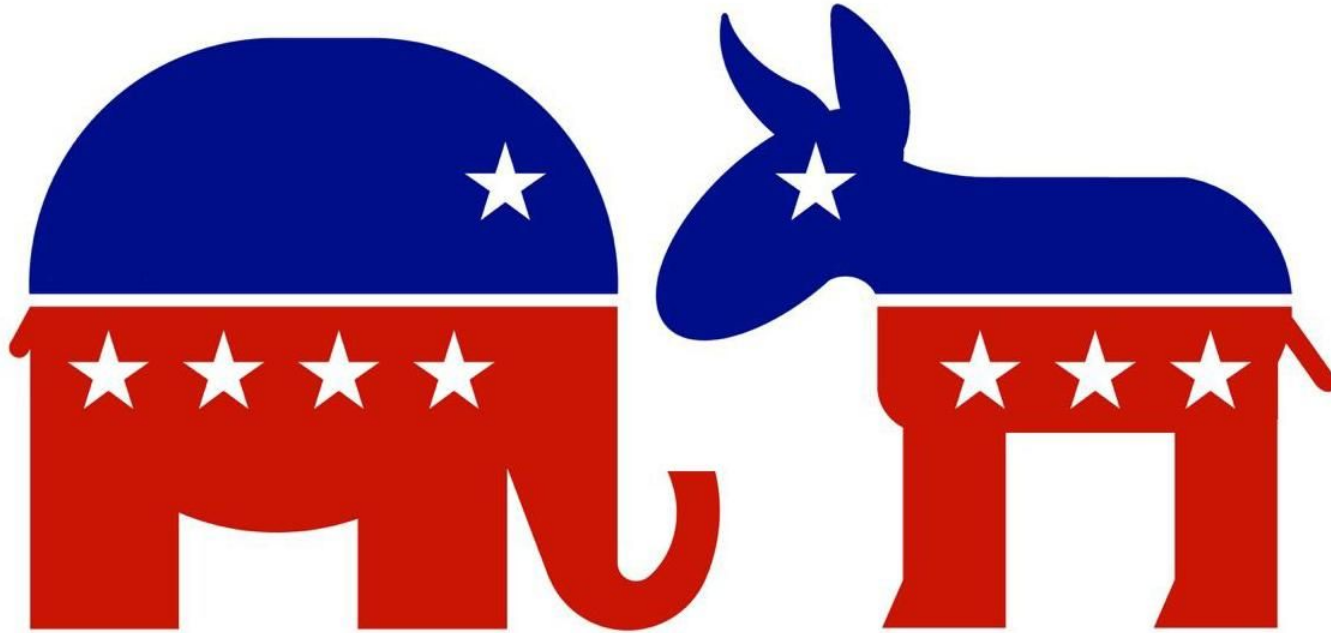
Source List

<https://www.newsweek.com/why-donald-trump-approval-rating-so-high-republicans-1511435>

A Quick Talk About the Presidential Election



What about Congress?



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

435 MEMBERS

232 DEMOCRATS • 197 REPUBLICANS
1 INDEPENDENT

- 9 - Open seats currently held by a Democrat
- 28 - Open seats currently held by a Republican
- 3 - Seats with a Republican incumbent carried by Clinton
- 31 - Seats with a Democratic incumbent carried by Trump

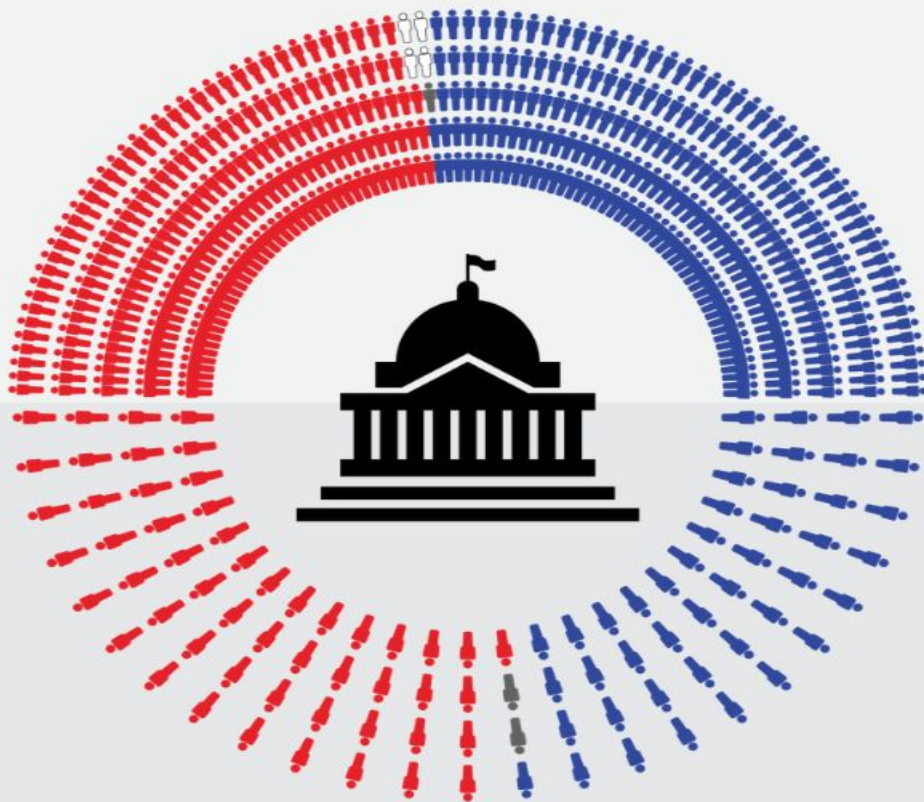
SENATE

100 MEMBERS

45 DEMOCRATS • 53 REPUBLICANS
2 INDEPENDENT

- 1 - Open seats currently held by a Democrat
- 3 - Open seats currently held by a Republican
- 2 - Seats with a Republican incumbent carried by Clinton
- 2 - Seats with a Democratic incumbent carried by Trump

116th United States Congress



Republican



Democrat



Independent



Vacancy

Answering Question (A few musts)

- Questions about general elections may require statistics on popularity.
 - Quantifiable data
 - Polling
- Be careful about comparisons, as with any election speech
- For senate/house speeches
 - Be sure to mention seats that need to be flipped to flip the institution
 - Focus on the area of the election, DON'T over generalize
- Give examples of races if the question generally asks how to campaign regarding flipping an institution in one party's favor.



Source Spotlight

What do states care about?



Kentucky

- Mitch McConnell
 - Historically unpopular
 - Trump's endorsement
 - Name recognition
- Amy McGrath - support and fundraising
 - Confusing campaign
 - Flipping policies
 - Angering base and republicans
 - Strategic balance (doesn't need to win to "win")

After Pelosi?