2016/16: Should Donald Trump have been confirmed as President of the United States?

What they said...
'Donald Trump's ideas aren't just different - they are dangerously incoherent- just a series of bizarre rants, personal feuds, and outright lies'
Democrat presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton

'I'm a really nice guy, believe me, I pride myself on being a nice guy but I'm also passionate and determined to make our country great again'
Donald Trump's self-description in his most recent book 'Crippled America'

The issue at a glance
On November 8, 2016, Republican Donald Trump was potentially elected 45th president of the United States after gaining 306 probable Electoral College votes to Democrat candidate Hillary Clinton's 232.
Voters cast ballots for candidates, but it is electors from each state who actually elect the President. The total number of electors is 538, with each state being assigned electors based on population. To become president of the United States a candidate has to secure a minimum of 270 Electoral College votes. These Electoral College votes are not cast until 41 days after the popular ballot. Thus Donald Trump was not officially elected President until December 19, 2016. He will be officially inaugurated as President on January 20, 2017.
Both during the campaign and in the period between November 8 and December 19, Donald Trump's suitability to be President was hotly disputed. Critics maintained that his lack of experience, supposed character flaws and the inflammatory nature of the campaign he conducted all disqualified him from being President. Electoral College electors were called on not to elect him to the position.
Now that Donald Trump has been formally elected, critics are considering the circumstances under which it might be necessary to impeach him. Given that the Republicans have a majority in both houses of Congress such a development seems unlikely. However, debate about Donald Trump's suitability for office continues.

Background
(The Donald Trump biography which follows is an abbreviated version of that supplied by Wikipedia under the entry titled 'Donald Trump'. The full text can be accessed at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump)

Donald John Trump is an American businessman, politician, and television personality. He became President-elect of the United States on November 8, 2016 and is scheduled to take office as the 45th President on January 20, 2017.
Trump was born and raised in the New York City borough of Queens and received a bachelor's degree in economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1968. In 1971, he took charge of his family's real estate and construction firm, Elizabeth Trump & Son, which was later renamed The Trump Organization. During his business career, Trump has built, renovated, or managed numerous office towers, hotels, casinos, and golf courses. He owned the Miss USA and Miss Universe pageants from 1996 to 2015, and has lent the use of his name to brand various products. From 2004 to 2015, he hosted The Apprentice, a reality television show on NBC. As of 2016, Forbes listed Trump as the 324th wealthiest person in the world (113th in the United States), with a net worth of $4.5 billion.
Trump sought the Reform Party's presidential nomination in 2000, but withdrew before voting began. He considered running as a Republican for the 2012 election, but ultimately decided against it. In June 2015, he announced his candidacy for the 2016 election, and quickly emerged as the front-runner among 17 contenders in the Republican primaries. His final opponents suspended their campaigns in May 2016, and in July he was formally nominated at the Republican Convention along with Mike Pence as his running mate. Trump's campaign received unprecedented media coverage and international attention. Many of his statements in interviews, on social media, and at campaign rallies were controversial or false. Numerous anti-Trump protests occurred during his campaign and after the election.
Trump won the general election on November 8, 2016 by gaining a majority of Electoral College votes. He received a smaller share of the popular vote nationwide than Democratic rival Hillary Clinton. At age 70, Trump will become the oldest and wealthiest person to assume the presidency, and the first without prior military or governmental service.
Trump's platform emphasises renegotiating U.S.-China relations and free trade agreements such as NAFTA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, strongly enforcing immigration laws, and building a new wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. His other positions include pursuing energy independence while opposing climate change regulations such as the Clean Power Plan and the Paris Agreement, reforming veterans' affairs, replacing the Affordable Care Act, abolishing Common Core education standards, investing in infrastructure, simplifying the Internal Revenue Code (tax code) while reducing taxes across the board, and imposing tariffs on imports by companies offshoring jobs. Trump advocates a largely non-interventionist approach to foreign policy while increasing military spending, "extreme vetting" of Muslim immigrants to pre-empt domestic Islamic terrorism, and aggressive military action against ISIS. Trump's positions have been described by scholars and commentators as populist, protectionist, and nationalist.

Internet information

On December 28, 2016, The New York Times published Donald Trump's nominations for his Cabinet up to that date. The list can be accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/us/politics/donald-trump-administration.html

On December 12, 2016, Slate published a comment titled 'Alexander Hamilton explains the Electoral College: A way of opposing "cabal, intrigue, and corruption"'
The article is a reprint of Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Papers: No.68 which justifies the use of the Electoral College to elect the President.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.salon.com/2016/12/11/alexander-hamilton-explains-the-electoral-college-a-way-of-opposing-cabal-intrigue-and-corruption/

On December 10, 2016, The Guardian published a comment by Carmen Fishwick which is a collection of reasons given by voters explaining why they supported Donald Trump.
The piece is titled 'Why did people vote for Donald Trump? Voters explain'
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/09/why-did-people-vote-for-donald-trump-us-voters-explain

On November 18, 2016, Fortune published a comment by Laura Morgan Roberts and Robin J. Ely titled 'Why Did So Many White Women Vote for Donald Trump?'
The comment argues that these women were part of that group of largely white, working-class voters who believed their employment opportunities to be diminishing.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://fortune.com/2016/11/17/donald-trump-women-voters-election/

On November 17, 2016, The Statesman published a comment by Don Loucks titled 'The Electoral College protects states' rights'
The opinion piece explains the justifications for continuing with the Electoral College.
The full text of the article can be accessed at http://www.statesman.com/news/local/opinion-the-electoral-college-protects-states-rights/pXS21hEBBXNnxyhzaII8xM/

On November 16, 2016, The Nation published a comment by John Nicols titled 'Hillary Clinton's Popular-Vote Victory Is Unprecedented-and Still Growing'.
Nicols argues that Hillary Clinton's winning margin in the popular vote indicates that there are fundamental flaws in the United States voting procedures.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.thenation.com/article/hillary-clintons-popular-vote-victory-is-unprecedented-and-still-growing/

On November 11, 2016, Vox published a comment and analysis by Zachary Crockett titled 'Donald Trump will be the only US president ever with no political or military experience'.
The piece contrasts Trump's pre-presidential experience with that of other US presidents and suggests why this makes him unsuitable.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/11/11/13587532/donald-trump-no-experience

On November 11, 2016, BuzzFeed News published an analysis and comment by Dan Vergano titled 'Trump And Nuclear Weapons: Here's What's At Stake'
The analysis considers that power of the United States nuclear strike capacity and the mixed messages being sent by Donald Trump's foreign positions.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.buzzfeed.com/danvergano/trump-on-nukes?utm_term=.ckwZ61vk5#.thzLwnPWj

On November 11, 2016, The New York Times published a comment by Max Fisher titled 'What Is Donald Trump's Foreign Policy?'
The article analyses Donald Trump's probable foreign policy positions and suggests some of the risks associated with them.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/12/world/what-is-donald-trumps-foreign-policy.html

On November 10, 2016, The Conversation published an opinion piece by Ian Shields, associate lecturer in International Relations, Anglia Ruskin University, titled 'Don't worry: the world can do business with Donald Trump'.
Shields argues that Donald Trump as president will be compelled to recognise current political and economic realities.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://theconversation.com/dont-worry-the-world-can-do-business-with-donald-trump-68535

On November 10, 2016, The New Scientist published an opinion piece by Chris Simms titled 'The psychology that explains how Trump's divisive rhetoric won'. The comment seeks to explain why divisive messages such as those

promoted by Donald Trump during his campaign were accepted by much of the electorate.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.newscientist.com/article/2112272-the-psychology-that-explains-how-trumps-divisive-rhetoric-won/

On November 9, 2016, The Mirror published a comment by Steve Robson titled 'When does Donald Trump get the nuclear codes - and how easy is it for him to use them?'
The comment demonstrates the US president's relative ease of access to the nuclear codes.
The full can be accessed at http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/donald-trump-nuclear-codes-how-9223920

In October 2016, St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict published a paper by Aubrey Immelman of the University's Department of Psychology titled 'The Political Personality of 2016 Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump'
The paper examines both the political strengths and weaknesses of Donald Trump's personality traits. The full text can be accessed at http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1105&context=psychology_pubs

On September 25, 2016, The New York Times published an editorial titled, 'Why Donald Trump Should Not Be President'
The comment gives a series of reasons as to why Donald Trump would not make a good United States President.
The full text of this comment can be accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/26/opinion/why-donald-trump-should-not-be-president.html?_r=0

The June 2016 issue of The Atlantic published a comment by Dan P McAdams, professor of psychology and the director of the Foley Center for the Study of Lives at Northwestern University.
The comment is titled 'The Mind of Donald Trump' and is an analysis of a range of personality descriptors that might account for Donald Trump's current behaviours and predict his performance as president. The conclusions McAdams draws are negative.
The full text of this comment can be accessed at http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/the-mind-of-donald-trump/480771/

In June 2016 The Australian Institute of International Affairs published a comment by Marek Wasinski titled 'Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Stances: Unpredictability and Neo-isolationism'.
Wasinski argues that many of Donald Trump's foreign policy positions pose a threat to world peace.
The full text of this article can be found at http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/global-wire/donald-trumps-foreign-policy-stances-unpredictability-and-neo-isolationism/

On April 13, 2016, the Southern Poverty Law Center published a comment and analysis piece by Maureen B Costello titled 'The Trump Effect: The Impact of the Presidential Campaign on Our Nation's Schools'
The article suggests that the type of divisive, racist rhetoric employed by Donald Trump during his campaign is having a negative effect on American children.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.splcenter.org/20160413/trump-effect-impact-presidential-campaign-our-nations-schools

On March 14, 2016, the ABC published an analysis and commentary by John Keane, director of the Sydney Democracy Network and Professor of Politics at the University of Sydney. The piece is titled, 'Donald Trump is an existential threat to American democracy'.
Keane describes the divisive nature of Donald Trump's rhetoric and the violent behaviour of some of his supporters and suggests that United States democracy is being put at risk.
The full text of this article can be found at http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-03-14/keane-trump-is-an-existential-threat-to-american-democracy/7244240

On March 2, 2016, The Huffington Post published a comment by Gautam Mukunda, Assistant Professor, Harvard Business School titled 'Why Donald Trump Might Be the Most Dangerous Presidential Candidate in History'
The comment analyses Donald Trump's attitudes and lack of political experience and party endorsement to suggest the risk his candidacy poses.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gautam-mukunda/why-donald-trump-might-be_b_9368144.html

On December 13, 2015, The Star published a comment by Daniel Dale titled 'Why Americans support Donald Trump'
Dale argues that Trump has become the preferred candidate of those white Americans who see their needs as having been ignored by the conventional political system.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/12/13/why-americans-support-donald-trump.html

On February 2, 2013, The New York Times Sunday Review published an opinion piece by Sam Wang titled 'The Great Gerrymander of 2012'.

Wang examines the manner in which gerrymanders have given an electoral advantage to the Republicans.
The full text can be accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/03/opinion/sunday/the-great-gerrymander-of-2012.html?pagewanted=all

Cook's Political Report National Popular Vote Tracker supplies a current detailed account of the raw votes and percentage of the popular vote achieved by United States presidential candidates. The votes achieved by Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election can be accessed at http://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/133Eb4qQmOxNvtesw2hdVns073R68EZx4SfCnP4IGQf8/edit#gid=19

The March 1980 issue of VQR published a comment by Michael Nelson titled 'James David Barber and the Psychological Presidency'. The article is an attempt to explain Barber's theories regarding the impact of personality traits on the effectiveness of a president.
The full text of this article can be accessed at http://www.vqronline.org/essay/james-david-barber-and-psychological-presidency

Reasons why Donald Trump *should not* have been confirmed as President of the United States
1. Donald Trump did not secure the largest share of the popular vote
Those who dispute Donald Trump's mandate to become United States president have stressed that he did not win the largest share of the popular vote.
The Cook Report's most recent national vote tracker figures (accessed January 1, 2017) tallied Hillary Clinton's vote as 65,844,610 and Donald Trump's as 62,979,636. This gave the popular vote to Clinton by a margin of 2.8 million or 48.2% to 46.1%
Those who argue that this result is a perversion of democracy note that Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by a higher percentage than any presidential candidate who did not then go on to become president as a result of this voter support.
Critics of this result claim that their concerns spring from issues beyond party politics. They claim that a result such as this indicates that there are major weaknesses in the United States electoral system.
On November 16, 2016, The Nation published a comment by John Nicols titled 'Hillary Clinton's Popular-Vote Victory Is Unprecedented-and Still Growing'. Nicols argues that Hillary Clinton's winning margin in the popular vote indicates that there are fundamental flaws in the United States voting procedures. He states, 'This is about a higher principle than partisanship, and about something that matters more than personalities. This is about democracy itself. When the winner of an election does not take office, and when the loser does, we have evidence of a system that is structurally rigged.'
It has also been claimed that since 2010 the Republicans have been successful in establishing gerrymanders (that is, drawing the boundaries of electoral districts in a way that favours one party over another) that have ensured them control of the United States Congress.
In an opinion piece published in The New York Times Sunday Review on February 2, 2013, Sam Wang noted, 'Democrats received 1.4 million more votes for the House of Representatives, yet Republicans won control of the House by a 234 to 201 margin.' Wang explained the specific effect of Republican gerrymanders. He stated, 'In the seven states where Republicans redrew the districts, 16.7 million votes were cast for Republicans and 16.4 million votes were cast for Democrats. This elected 73 Republicans and 34 Democrats.'
Critics have noted that such manipulations have now ensured that there is not only a Republican president, but that the Republicans also control the Congress. They maintain that the manner in which this has been achieved is a perversion of democracy.

2. Donald Trump is without appropriate prior experience
Critics of Donald Trump's election note that he has does not have the experience base in government to lead the United States nor to be its military commander-in-chief.
In a comment published in Vox on November 11, 2016, Zachary Crockett stated, 'We just elected the most inexperienced president in American history.
In the office's storied 227-year existence - from George Washington to Barack Obama - there has never been a president-elect who has entirely lacked both political and military service. Donald Trump will change that...
The previous US presidents (1789 to 2016) came into the White House with an average of 13 years in public office and 5.6 years of military service.
Donald Trump's tally: zero - on both counts.'
In an opinion piece published in The Huffington Post on March 2, 2016, Gautam Mukunda, Assistant Professor, Harvard Business School, stated, 'It is not hyperbole to describe him [Trump] as one of the most dangerous figures in American history. Given the stakes, blocking him from the Oval Office ought to be the overriding responsibility of everyone in politics, regardless of party. The only way someone like Trump should ever be allowed in the White House is on a tour.'
One of the main bases for Mukunda's concern is the president's inexperience combined with his power to launch a nuclear attack. Bruce G. Blair, a research scholar at Princeton, has explained, 'The commander-in-chief's power is clear: He or she has sole authority to use nuclear weapons.'
Similarly, Kingston Reif, of the Arms Control Association, has stated, 'The president has supreme authority to decide whether to use America's nuclear weapons. Period. Full stop.' Trump's critics are afraid that his inexperience could lead him to precipitate a global nuclear catastrophe.
Nuclear analyst Miles Pomper of the James Martin Center for Non-proliferation Studies has stated, 'Basically the

president has a hell of a lot of control over nuclear weapons. And there are a lot of contradictions in what Trump said about them during the campaign that haven't been resolved yet.'

Donald Trump's critics also dispute the supposed value of his experience as a successful businessman. An editorial published in The New York Times on September 25, 2016, stated, 'Despite his towering properties, Mr. Trump has a record rife with bankruptcies and sketchy ventures like Trump University, which authorities are investigating after numerous complaints of fraud. His name has been chiselled off his failed casinos in Atlantic City.'

The same editorial also suggested that Mr Trump's refusal to make his tax returns public is grounds for being suspicious about the nature of his business dealings. The editorial claims, 'Mr. Trump's brazen refusal to disclose his tax returns...should sharpen voter wariness of his business and charitable operations. Disclosure would undoubtedly raise numerous red flags; the public record already indicates that in at least some years he made full use of available loopholes and paid no taxes.'

3. Donald Trump is a disruptive and divisive influence domestically

Many of those concerned about the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States are made uneasy by the nature of the appeals he made while campaigning. He is accused of having fostered enmity, violence and disharmony within the electorate - a 'them' against 'us' mentality which many fear will damage the already strained social fabric of the United States.

On March 14, 2016, the ABC published an analysis and commentary by John Keane in which he described the divisive behaviour observed at Donald Trump rallies.

Keane wrote, 'What the world is now witnessing is a front-running presidential candidate who practises the vocabulary of friend-versus-enemy violence. He calls on supporters to raise their right hands in solidarity, praises strong-armed police tactics, surrounds himself with his own bully boys and federal Secret Service agents. The feverish crowds chant 'USA! USA! USA!' Hungry for revenge, and for dignity, they feast upon his crude rhetoric and macho body language. Dissenters are shouted down, pepper sprayed, arm wrestled, sucker-punched, their lives threatened by decent ordinary folks enchanted by the big mouth spitting words of fire.'

Donald Trump has been condemned on the basis of the prejudiced and inflammatory language he has used. He has described Mexicans as 'rapists' and 'drug mules' and in an historical allusion referred to them as 'wetbacks'. He has described women who oppose him as 'bimbos'. His mantra of 'Make America great again' has been criticised for its implication that such a transformation requires the exclusion of many groups currently living within the United States, many of them citizens.

In an opinion piece published in The New Scientist on November 10, 2016, Chris Simms wrote, 'Many of Trump's core messages strike the same divisive chord: there is a crisis of identity and the only way to get through it is to club together to fend off outside influences. We are great, but outsiders aren't to be trusted...

Creating distrust in this way can result in enmity; if you're not with us, you're against us. Hardly the route to a united country or world.'

Some commentators have suggested that children are particularly vulnerable to the damaging effects of racially and socially divisive propaganda. On April 13, 2016, the Southern Poverty Law Center published a comment by Maureen B Costello titled 'The Trump Effect: The Impact of the Presidential Campaign on Our Nation's Schools'

Costello claims, 'The results of an online survey conducted by Teaching Tolerance suggest that the campaign is having a profoundly negative effect on children and classrooms.

It's producing an alarming level of fear and anxiety among children of color and inflaming racial and ethnic tensions in the classroom. Many students worry about being deported.'

Costello further asserts, 'Other students have been emboldened by the divisive, often juvenile rhetoric in the campaign. Teachers have noted an increase in bullying, harassment and intimidation of students whose races, religions or nationalities have been the verbal targets of candidates on the campaign trail.'

4. Donald Trump fails the 'character test'

The 'character question' is regularly brought up with regard to a potential leader. What is usually meant by this is whether the individual concerned has the character traits that would make for an effective leader. This judgement is also sometimes overlaid with explicitly moral considerations. Thus commentators sometimes consider whether the potential leader has a past history of ethical behaviour which would inspire confidence regarding how he or she might behave once appointed leader.

Within the United States this question became particularly vexed during Richard Nixon's presidency when he used illegal means to spy on his Democrat opponents when running for a second term in office. Nixon only avoided impeachment by resigning. The impeachment of Democrat president, Bill Clinton, for lying to Congress and the Special Investigator in order to hide the affair he had conducted with a White House intern emphasised the presidential character issue further.

In 1972, following the Richard Nixon scandal, James David Barber, then chairman of the political science department at Duke University, surveyed previous United States presidents and attempted to categorise them according to the character traits which resulted in an effective presidency. The four personality types he determined were 'active-positive,' 'active-negative,' 'passive-positive,' and 'passive-negative' with the first classification being judged the most desirable.

A number of commentators have classified Donald Trump as an active-negative. Aubrey Immelman of St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict has described Donald Trump's positive characteristics as 'a confident, outgoing tendency that will enable him to connect with critical constituencies, mobilize popular support, and retain a following and his self-confidence in the face of adversity.' Immelman described Trump's negative characteristics as 'a

predisposition to be easily bored by routine (with the attendant risk of failing to keep himself adequately informed), an inclination to act impulsively without fully appreciating the implications of his decisions or the long-term consequences of his policy initiatives, and a predilection to favor personal connections, friendship, and loyalty over competence in his staffing decisions and appointments-all of which could render a Trump administration relatively vulnerable to errors of judgment.'

Psychologist Dan P McAdams has come to similar conclusions. He has suggested that Donald Trump's extroversion is likely to result in high risk-taking. 'Like Bush, a President Trump might try to swing for the fences in an effort to deliver big payoffs-to make America great again, as his campaign slogan says.' McAdams has also commented, 'The real psychological wild card, however, is Trump's agreeableness-or lack thereof. There has probably never been a U.S. president as consistently and overtly disagreeable on the public stage as Donald Trump is...

Research shows that people low in agreeableness are typically viewed as untrustworthy. Dishonesty and deceit brought down Nixon and damaged the institution of the presidency. It is generally believed today that all politicians lie, or at least dissemble, but Trump appears extreme in this regard.'

McAdams' overall conclusion re a Trump presidency is 'In sum, Donald Trump's basic personality traits suggest a presidency that could be highly combustible...

He could be a daring and ruthlessly aggressive decision maker who desperately desires to create the strongest, tallest, shiniest, and most awesome result-and who never thinks twice about the collateral damage he will leave behind. Tough. Bellicose. Threatening. Explosive.'

5. Donald Trump is a threat to world peace and order
Critics have claimed that Donald Trump's lack of experience in international affairs and his ill-informed attitudes are likely to destabilise international relations.

In June 2016 The Australian Institute of International Affairs published a comment by Marek Wasinski titled 'Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Stances: Unpredictability and Neo-isolationism'.

The analysis points to Trump's support for isolationism, that is, having the United States withdraw from its alliances and current obligations to other nations and suggests that this could undermine stability in international relations and threaten the security of many American allies.

Wasinski notes, 'Trump has not hesitated to undermine the current administration's policy of close cooperation with U.S. allies. He questions the principle of providing security to other countries, which he says should not take place at the expense of the United States. He also states that he would be ready to accept the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea and Japan... If Trump wins, he may change the attitude of the U.S. to NATO.'

In an article published in The New York Times on November 11, 2016, Max Fisher noted that trump's isolationism extended beyond political alliances and included a rejection of free-trade policies and scepticism about international co-operation to combat global warming. Fisher wrote, 'He has threatened to pull out of the World Trade Organization and called the North American Free Trade Agreement "the single worst trade deal ever signed in this country." And he said he would "cancel" the international agreement on combating climate change, reached last year in Paris.'

Critics are concerned that such positions could trigger world-wide recession and vastly reduce the effectiveness of attempts to reduce global warming.

Critics are also concerned by Trump's apparent willingness to ease relations with Russia and by his declared admiration for Vladimir Putin, the current president of the Russian Federation. Wasinski further notes, 'Trump openly suggests the possibility of a return to "reset" with Russia. He plans to talk with Putin about a new arrangement of bilateral relations, despite the fact that the current U.S. attitude to Russia is that Moscow is in breach of international law with its ongoing occupation of Crimea and eastern Ukraine.'

This analysis argues that Trump's apparent policy would pose a threat to world peace and order. Wasinski suggests, '[Trump's] nationalist and populist statements indicate a tendency to cynicism and unwillingness to cooperate, even with other allies. If such tendencies were to dominate U.S. foreign policy under a Trump administration, it could pose a serious risk to peace in Europe by provoking Russia to escalate its revisionist policy.'

Concern has also been expressed about Donald Trump's uncertain and potentially escalationist position on nuclear weapons and their deployment. Trump has suggested that more countries should acquire nuclear weapons, to protect themselves without Washington's help. When asked about his readiness to use nuclear weapons, Trump replied, 'Somebody hits us within ISIS, you wouldn't fight back with a nuke?'

Reasons why Donald Trump *should* have been confirmed as President of the United States
1. Donald Trump won a comfortable majority of Electoral College votes
The President of the United States has never been elected by a simple popular vote.

The President is not directly elected by the people, rather he or she is elected by a set of state representatives organised into Electoral Colleges. Each state in the United States has a certain number of Electoral College votes. For example, Wyoming, with a population of 584,153, has three electoral votes, while California, with a population of 38,800,000, has 55 electoral votes. It requires a minimum of 270 Electoral College votes to win the presidency.

There are two major reasons for the institution of the Electoral College system. The first is a distrust of the potential excesses of a mere popular vote. The framers of the United States Constitution were concerned that the average voter might have his or her judgement swayed by trivial or misleading considerations. Having the President selected by the Electoral College imposed another layer of deliberation before the President was selected.

In Federalist Papers: No.68, Alexander Hamilton explained why a small set of electors should select the President.

Hamilton believed, as did the other designers of the United States Constitution, that a smaller group of qualified individuals would be better placed to elect a President.

Hamilton wrote, 'The immediate election should be made by men most capable of analyzing the qualities adapted to the station, and acting under circumstances favorable to deliberation, and to a judicious combination of all the reasons and inducements which were proper to govern their choice.

The writers of the United States Constitution were also concerned that popular votes could be bought or acquired by other fraudulent means. As Hamilton explained, 'Nothing was more to be desired than that every practicable obstacle should be opposed to cabal, intrigue, and corruption.' Given that the members of the Electoral College were presumed to be men of substance and independent means, it was believed that they would be more likely to exercise their vote independently and so select the most suitable person as President.

It is not by mistake that the Electoral College vote does not necessarily reflect the popular vote. The Electoral College was first instituted under the Constitution to act as a safeguard against mistakes that might occur as a result of a popular vote. Therefore, those who defend Donald Trump's election do not see his failure to win the largest percentage of the popular vote as a reason why he should not be conferred as President.

Don Loucks, writing in a piece published in The Statesman on November 17, 2016, stated, 'Our founders knew how "the crowd" could be swayed; how popular opinion could be manipulated, so they guarded against temporary, poorly thought-out fads by slowing-down the process.'

A further justification of the Electoral College is that it serves to reduce the influence of the most populous states. The United States is a federation, a union of formerly independent states. At the time the United States was formed the smaller states were concerned that in any mere popular vote their interests would be subsumed by those of the larger states. The Electoral College serves to reduce the influence of the largest states as the smaller states are given a larger number of electors relative to their size.

Don Loucks further stated, 'Here is the main purpose of the Electoral College: to protect sparsely-populated states from being ignored in presidential elections and then walked all over by the federal government.'

2. Donald Trump is a successful businessman with a wide range of prior experience

Donald Trump's supporters have argued that his business experience is relevant to performing effectively as a national leader. It has also been suggested that a lack of political experience may be an advantage in a leader.

In an opinion piece published in The Conversation on November 10, 2016, Ian Shields, associate lecturer in International Relations, Anglia Ruskin University, stated, 'While lacking in political experience, Trump is hardly lacking in business experience, acumen or success.'

Shields argues that Trump's business success suggests he is a pragmatist who once he is in office will bow to current economic and international political realities.

Shields claims, 'There may be more uncertainty that comes with the Trump administration, but we need to maintain balance - the realities of today's global economies are such that... Donald Trump must accede to them.'

On November 14, 2016, In Daily published a comment by Stephen Pallaras, former South Australian Director of Public Prosecutions. Pallaras argues that Trump's business acumen and the personal qualities he displayed in achieving commercial success are what the electorate responded to when voting for him for President.

Pallaras stated, 'Clearly [Trump's] lack of traditional qualifications for the job did not faze [the electorate] in the slightest. What is also clear is that the qualities they saw to be necessary or at least desirable to be President included decisiveness, irreverence when it comes to the political establishment, a 'can-do' approach to the most intractable problems and an overpowering self-belief.'

Pallaras argues that Trump's lack of immediate political experience may be an advantage in a political leader. He asks, 'So what can we learn from Trump's success? Could it be that in looking for "experienced" candidates or those seemingly more "qualified" for office, that we are looking for the wrong thing?...

Should we look outside the ranks of the professional politician for our inspiration and ideas? Should the experience that we look for be in the specific areas of responsibility rather than in the more generic "public life"?

Pallaras suggests that we should make a place among our political leaders for those with real world experience relevant to the political leadership roles they will fulfil. He asks, 'Is there perhaps room in our system, or if not should we make room, to bring in and appoint more "civilians" with expertise in discreet areas to be members of our government: economists to decide on economic issues, businessmen and women to decide on issues affecting small and medium-sized business, lawyers who actually have substantial work experience as lawyers to guide the legal system, doctors and nurses to direct the health sector, farmers to develop appropriate rural and agricultural policies?'

3. Donald Trump's platform appealed to many Americans who consider they have been ignored by conventional politicians

Political analysts have suggested that many who voted for Donald Trump did so because his status as someone outside the conventional political establishment appealed to them. This is a section of the United States electorate that considers its interests have not been served by conventional politicians.

Trump's focus on job creation, on trade barriers to promote United States industry, on preventing immigrants from competing for jobs within the United States is believed to have spoken to the concerns of these voters.

On November 10, 2016, The Guardian interviewed voters who had cast their vote for Donald Trump and sought their reasons for doing so. The following are excerpts from the reasons these voters gave.

'Obama created jobs, but minimum wage jobs. You can't support a family on a minimum wage. Our manufacturing plants

are gone, the coal industry is gone from my area and Hillary would just shut it down the rest of the way.'

'Donald Trump might not have political experience but I truly believe he has the American people's interest at heart. We need to bring jobs back to our country, make the economy stronger and hopefully unite all people...Trump won't take nonsense from anyone and he doesn't have any special interest he has to make happy. He's for the people!'

'I want to change America to serve the people instead of a political system that wants to serve itself. My life won't change much, except I will have more hope that my government is trying to make our country strong instead of pandering to its own liberal interests. My main hope is that he will help balance our budget, and secondly that he will help our economy to remain strong.'

In an opinion piece published in The Star on December 13, 2015, more than a year before the election, Daniel Dale attempted to account for Donald Trump's growing support base. Dale stated, 'The voters who have propelled the race-baiting billionaire to the top of the Republican presidential primary aren't arch-conservative party loyalists. They're right-leaning people, mostly lower-income whites, who believe they have been betrayed by both sides of a political system rigged for the benefit of rich campaign contributors.'

Dale quotes a 52-year-old Marine veteran who works at a Tennessee supermarket who tells him, 'I think they're all crooked. I'm not that much of a religious man, but every day I hope that Trump gets elected. If nothing else, just to tear up the system.'

Dale concluded, 'It's impossible to ignore the role of bigotry in Trump's rise. It's foolish to dismiss the importance of political dysfunction and economic upheaval. Trump, seemingly too wealthy to be bought, is promising to "make America great again" for a white working class that feels it is being treated as an irrelevant underclass.'

Post election analyses have indicated that Donald Trump received particular support from white, working-class women. He received the strongest support from white women without college degrees, 62 percent of whom voted for him. Although his supporters reported median household incomes of $70,000, the Trump campaign tapped into fears and frustrations among white working-class women about diminished possibilities for their husbands and sons to provide for their families.

Trump's supporters maintain they are a legitimate constituency, with legitimate concerns and that they are entitled to vote for the candidate whom they believe is most likely to act to address their needs. They are also entitled to have their vote respected and their successful candidate installed as President.

4. Politicians' private lives and personal views are generally not relevant to the performance of their public function

Some of those who defend Donald Trump's personal conduct, in particular his crude and sexually abusive treatment of some women, argue that a politician's private life and personal conduct have little bearing on the performance of his or her public duties.

According to this line of argument, a man may, for example, be unfaithful to his wife, without that disqualifying him from performing well should he assume high office. The implication is that no individual needs to be above reproach in all aspects of his or her life in order to be effective as a political leader.

This argument was put by Bill Clinton after it was discovered that he had conducted an affair with a White House intern. President Clinton stated, 'Even presidents have private lives. It is time to stop the pursuit of personal destruction and the prying into private lives and get on with our national life.'

Bill Clinton went on to argue, 'Our country has been distracted by this matter for too long, and I take my responsibility for my part in all of this. That is all I can do. Now it is time, in fact, it is past time to move on. We have important work to do -- real opportunities to seize, real problems to solve, real security matters to face.'

Democrats seeking to condemn Donald Trump on the basis of his recorded comments about using his celebrity status as an opportunity to grope women have been condemned for their hypocrisy as many were prepared to excuse Democrat President Bill Clinton for similar behaviour.

In an opinion piece published in Frontpage Mag on October 12, 2016, Daniel Greenfield accused the Clintons of this type of hypocrisy. Greenfield stated, 'Despite their ugly past, the Clintons have decided to run for a third term on their record as moral paragons...[urging] voters to protect their children from the bad influence of a President Trump.'

Among the former US Presidents whose sexual conduct has been called into significant question are Presidents John F. Kennedy, James Buchanan, Grover Cleveland, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lyndon B. Johnson, Warren Harding and Thomas Jefferson.

As this list includes a number of presidents commonly regarded to have been among the best leaders the United States has produced, it lends support to those commentators who claim that an individual's private conduct does not affect the manner in which he or she performs public duties.

An article published in The Washington Post on September 14, 1998, indicated that this distinction between public and private conduct has been a long-standing feature of American political life. Michael Grunwald wrote, 'The sexual peccadilloes of presidents such as John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Franklin D. Roosevelt were generally considered out of bounds for public discussion. Grover Cleveland faced chants of "Ma, Ma, where's my Pa?" after fathering a child out of wedlock, but voters still chose him to lead the country, prompting the famous rejoinder: "Gone to the White House, ha, ha, ha!"'

Trump's defence of his recorded comments regarding groping women stressed that this was just 'locker-room talk'. The implication again appears to be that there are some forms of conduct and/or conversation that are allowable in certain contexts where they would not be in others. Thus Trump appears to have been drawing on another version of the private versus public distinction often made with regard to a leader's moral conduct.

5. Donald Trump will have the benefit of expert advice and support as he performs his presidential duties

Many of those who believe Donald Trump will make an effective President believe that he will counter his own relative lack of political experience by surrounding himself with an appropriately skilled and experienced cabinet. A list of some of Donald Trump's major cabinet recommendations to date follows.

Secretary of State: Rex W. Tillerson - the president and chief executive of Exxon Mobil, the world's largest publicly traded international oil and gas company. Mr. Tillerson emerged as a contender on the strong recommendations of James A. Baker III, the secretary of state under President George Bush, and Robert M. Gates, the former defence secretary.

Energy Secretary (primarily responsible for managing the US nuclear arsenal): Rick Perry, former Texas Governor. Mr Trump has said of Mr Perry, 'As the Governor of Texas, Rick Perry created a business climate that produced millions of new jobs and lower energy prices in his state, and he will bring that same approach to our entire country as Secretary of Energy,'

Labor Secretary: Andrew F. Puzder is Mr. Trump's expected choice. He is the chief executive of CKE Restaurants. He is an outspoken critic of the worker protections enacted by the Obama administration.

Environment Protection Agency Administrator: Scott Pruitt is the Oklahoma attorney-general and a critic of federal environmental regulation. Mr Trump has said of this appointment, 'For too long, the Environmental Protection Agency has spent taxpayer dollars on an out-of-control anti-energy agenda that has destroyed millions of jobs, while also undermining our incredible farmers and many other businesses and industries at every turn.'

Homeland Security Secretary: Gen. John Kelly is Mr Trump's candidate for this position. has been endorsed by fellow retired Marine Gen. James Mattis. Gen. Kelly is a staunch critic of the United States current border security and has been especially critical of the security along the border with Mexico.

Further implications

The federal government of the United States is composed of three distinct branches: legislative, executive, and judicial, whose powers are vested by the U.S. Constitution in the Congress, the President, and the federal courts, respectively.

The United States Congress is the legislative branch of the federal government. It is bicameral, comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House currently consists of 435 voting members, each of whom represents a congressional district. The number of representatives each state has in the House is based on each state's population. In contrast, the Senate is made up of two senators from each state, regardless of population. There are currently 100 senators (two from each of the 50 states).

The executive branch consists of the President and those to whom the President's powers are delegated. The President is the head of state and government, as well as the military commander-in-chief and chief diplomat. The President, according to the Constitution, must 'take care that the laws be faithfully executed', and 'preserve, protect and defend the Constitution'. The President presides over the executive branch of the federal government, an organization numbering about 5 million people, including 1 million active-duty military personnel and 600,000 postal service employees.

The President may sign legislation passed by Congress into law or may veto it, preventing it from becoming law unless two-thirds of both houses of Congress vote to override the veto. The President may unilaterally sign treaties with foreign nations.

The President has the power to pardon, or release, criminals convicted of offenses against the federal government (except in cases of impeachment), enact executive orders, and (with the consent of the Senate) appoint Supreme Court justices and federal judges.

The interaction between the Congress, the judiciary and the President is intended to ensure a set of checks and balances between each branch of government designed to have the three operate within fair and reasonable bounds. Fewer such constraints are likely to be imposed on Donald Trump as President. Both Houses of Congress are currently controlled by Trump's party, the Republicans. Trump achieved his party's nomination as presidential candidate against the direct opposition of some of the Republican Party's most influential members. He has proudly declared himself a party outsider and someone who has risen to high office without being beholden to power brokers within his party.

The cabinet Trump is currently forming has been criticised as one shaped very much in his own image, with a preponderance of wealthy businessmen and women and others whose views replicate the President's. The incoming President does not appear to be looking for anyone who will challenge his worldview.

In this early transitional stage of his presidency, Trump has also been criticised for not taking advice from national security advisers. By the end of November, 2016, President-elect Donald Trump had received only two classified intelligence briefings. A team of intelligence analysts had been prepared to deliver daily briefings on global developments and security threats to Trump in the weeks since his election victory.

Should the Trump presidency prove seriously dysfunctional it appears there will be few constraints that could be imposed upon it. The ultimate recourse of Congress faced with a President unable to perform his functions adequately is impeachment. A President of the United States can be impeached only on the basis of 'treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors'. For this to occur a simple majority of the House of Representatives must accuse the President of an impeachable offence and a two-thirds majority of the Senate must convict him or her. Given the secure hold the Republican Party has on both houses of Congress it is difficult to imagine Donald Trump being removed from office in this manner.

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