The Polarization in U.S. Politics

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Steve Scalise Shooting and Questions of Civil Society and the Future of America

Edwin Buggage
Editor

Polarized America
Recently, we watched with horror as a lone gunman James Hodgkinson decided he would take his problems with the political divide in America into his own hands. Shooting several people on a baseball field as members of the Republican Congressional Baseball Team were practicing for their annual baseball game with proceeds benefitting charity; and as they prepared for this day of bipartisan unity shots rang out striking five people including Louisiana Congressman and House Majority Whip Steve Scalise. This tragedy led many to reconsider this age of unbridled contentious rhetoric gone too far. And has the political polarization that we see played out in the traditional and new media daily manifested itself into something that threatens civil society and the future of our republic.

A Call for Unity
After the shooting, many elected leaders put aside the partisan bickering that has begun to characterize our recent political environment. With President Trump in the spirit of unity saying in his prepared remarks, “We are stronger when we are together, we are better when we work for a common good.” Also, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, who has been on the national stage as of late because of him leading the way in the removal of four Confederate Monuments stated in a speech surrounding the shooting, “Unfortunately we have been here before in our country,” Landrieu said, “But this is no less shocking. We all have to be clear as we stand in unity together that an attack on any public official, any staff member, any first responder, is an attack on our very democracy and on all Americans.”

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Cover Story, Continued on page 3.
The Changing Role of Media in our Democracy

As we look into our brave new world where the traditional media is now only paying attention to information democracy. It is one where the citizenry is able to talk through differences as it relates to issues and those that lead our public elected officials to create sound public policies?

Shedrick Roy is an Activist in New Orleans, who uses social media to spread many of his views on the issues of the day. He thinks it is a useful tool and empowers people to have discussions around important issues. "I feel social media is a good thing."

But as this rings a bell of truth, there is a downside to this information democracy. It is one where many can get an unhealthy diet of information that reinforces personal and political bias. Hal Clark, a playwright and host of local public affairs radio program on WYLD FM/88 Sunday Journal, states of this phenomenon and calls for the traditional media to act more responsibly. "I think it is the traditional media's job to report the facts, unfortunately, that just doesn't happen."

Now many of these media companies are starting to place a target on us whether it is liberal or conservative. However, today I don't know if people are paying the same amount of attention to the general media as they have in the past because of the different channels it relates to getting information via the internet, social media etc. And while this is a good thing they have choices, the downside of it is that many times people are now only paying attention to only the news they agree with.

Trumpism: Political Discourse in the Age of the Divider-in-Chief

The question for us as a society is how we deal with an information democracy where disagreements of opinions do not turn into caricatures or demonizing opposing viewpoints. With the byproduct of this being acts of extremism, such as the shooting of Steve Scalise and several other innocent people.

Something that is being fueled by what some are calling the divider-in-chief that is President Trump. Since his emergence on the political stage it can be reasonably argued that some of his rhetoric is irresponsible and beneath what is appropriate for someone occupying the highest office in the land. And while in the aftermath of the shooting he made a call for unity; it is his divisive words that help widen the political divide in America. One who points out this fact is Louisiana Congressman and Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Cedric Richmond. In a speech following the shooting he stated of the shaping of political discourse, "I think it all starts at the top, to tell you the truth Elections have consequences, but..."

Everything has consequences. And the political climate, as far as my lifetime, and I'm not ever been since he's been an elected official, "When we see somebody by their rhetoric acting like they want to turn back the hands of all the progress we have fought for this is a problem. When we hear things such as Make America Great Again, I have to ask when were we not great or what's stopping us from being great right now? And Trump is saying this on the heels of the first Black president and he is saying things that should not be said in the outhouse much less as the White House. This type of mean spiritedness and partisanship and atmosphere where some are acting on their impulses does not lend itself to good public policy that help those most in need. And that is what I've tried to do is respectfully disagree with my colleagues and sometimes compromise to get things done because that's what people elected us to do."

Democracy in the 21st Century

Today questions about how to be civically engaged in the 21st Century is one we must answer. And it can be argued that citizens have more opportunities to be informed than at any time in human history. But with expanded access to information it may perhaps be necessary to revisit what it means to be literate and informed in the 21st Century; and how in this Brave New World we think about this if we are to live in a civil society. She-drick Roy feels it is important to not only speak about issues online, but we must begin to talk to each other and not at each other if we are to survive as a nation. That we must not resort to extremism and succumb to the worst of our nature by demonstrating those whose views are different than our own, and in this landscape where in the highest office in the land we have someone who is fanning the flames of this division for political gain this is not only irresponsible but dangerous who is fanning the flames of this division for political gain this is not only irresponsible but dangerous who is fanning the flames of this...
Lower 9th Ward
Music Park Grand Opening

Harvey Brown
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Last September, Lower 9th Ward Entrepreneur Burnell Cotlon opened the first laundry facility in the Lower 9 since Hurricane Katrina. At the end of June, Cotlon will open a new edition to his Lower 9th Ward Complex.

On June 30, between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m., Cotlon invites the New Orleans Community to witness the grand opening of the Lower 9th Ward Music Park. The Friday event will have music performances, food vendors and activities for all of the family. The event is free and open to the public. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at 7 p.m. Cotlon’s complex is located at 2036 Caffin Ave.

“We are proud to add the Music Park to a growing number of businesses and services that serve the Lower 9th Ward Community,” Cotlon’s public relation officer wrote in an official release. “Burnell has opened a Grocery Store, Barber Shop/Hair Salon, a Snoball Stand, a Po-Boy/Hot Meal Stand, and recently, a Laundromat. We hope to grow stronger and faster through the continued support of our community and wide-ranging friends of the Lower 9th, and we have begun fundraising for the next big project: The Lower 9th Ward Employment Center,” they added.

The upcoming music park will feature an interactive art and sound station. Cotlon created the park in collaboration with The Urban Conga, a design firm that encourages social interaction through its station. “The Urban Conga created the installation using touch sensor technology that allows the installation to resonate sounds when touched. The interactive art area will illuminate at night to provide a safe, well-lit space in the community for kids and families to gather,” The Urban Conga wrote in its official release on the upcoming station.

Correction: The Organization Behind the Bayou Classic

Data News Staff

In 2018 and 2019, NOCCI will work with Lone Star Sports as the Management Team for the State Fair Football Showdown, featuring Southern University versus Texas Southern University at the Cotton Bowl Stadium in Dallas, Texas.
Big Chief of the Week-3 Big Chief Alfred Womble

Glen K. Jones
Data News Weekly Contributor

Tribe timeline:
From 1963-present/ Big Chief Alfred Womble
Cheyenne Hunters/Cheyenne Tribe
From 1940’s-1964/ Mr. Alfred Womble Sr.
Golden Blades Tribe/Cheyenne Hunters

The Cheyenne Gang is the only full bloodline tribe in New Orleans. Chief Al has been masking for 46 years and with his wife (Wanda Womble) as his Big Queen been masking with him for 30 yrs, they have been passing it on from their children to their grandchildren for 5 generations of Black Masking.

Q: Chief Al how did your tribe begin?
Answer: My father masked, I started right before Martin Luther King died (63-64). I just took to it. Kids were learning the craft of sewing and beading. I just took to it because it was a part of our community culture.

Q: Where did this culture start from?
Answer: My first three years of masking we were a poor family. I wanted to mask so bad, my first year too! I didn’t really know the craft, but I wanted to be a MGI. So, I got some card board, I was like 3rd or 2nd grade. I made a suite out of plain card board. I came around the bar room Hollering and Screaming and Jumping and everybody laughed at me. The kids back then were so mean. They threw rocks hitting me like, Boom! Boom! My momma begged me to take off that suit but I refused too. But eventually I evolved. From Rocks being thrown at me to winning the Crystal Feather Award for best Chief in the City. My wife won Big Queen twice! So, I tell kids DON’T GIVE UP! No matter how much money you do have or don’t have, keep doing your craft, your art and one day you will get your own Crystal Feather.

Q: Chief in the next 300 years what would you like society to say was your legacy, your impact?
Answer: If I can make an impact I would just like to let the kids know, to keep passing it down from generations, like I was taught. We pass it down from my daddy to me, to my children to my grandchildren to keep it alive. To keep the spirit of who we are! Not just Mardi Gras Indians, but a Black American Indians of African descent.

See you hear the Drums, when you hear the beats of the drum its spiritual, it brings something out in your spirit. The drums speak. I want the generations to know let the music DIE and this gone DIE. So, keep the music coming, keep the drums alive and if they do that!? We will be alright!
Deacon John Celebrates 60 Years of Music

Kichea S. Burt
Photographer

Celebrating 60 years in the music business, while supporting himself only with his music and never taking a ‘day job’, Deacon John Moore performed for two sets at Tipitina’s, running about an hour and a half each this past Saturday night. In a radio interview on WWOZ John said the secret to his longevity and success in the business was by being versatile and learning many different genres of music. He demonstrated this Saturday night by playing everything from The Beatles to Frank Sinatra tunes, along with an eclectic mix of funk, jazz and R&B.

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events
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New Orleans is Steadily Improving, According to Year-End Report

Data News Staff Edited Report

Days before Mayor Mitch Landrieu holds the Annual State of the City Address, the Office of the Mayor released the ResultsNOLA 2016 Year-End Performance Report. The report shows how the City has improved—and in some cases retrogressed—in the last year. Topics include public safety, sustainable and resilient communities, economic development, healthy children and families, and open and effective government.

“Since taking office in 2010, we have been committed to setting goals, tracking performance and getting results,” said Mayor Mitch Landrieu in an official release. “We have made significant progress as a City and this report highlights the work we’ve done to improve the quality of life for all New Orleanians.”

Highlights of the 2016 year-end report include:

Public Safety
- Since 2010, the percentage of residents that report being satisfied with the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) has increased from 50 to 64, the highest level reported for this measure. Over the same period, the City has strengthened the NOPD Public Integrity Bureau by appointing a civilian leader and adding emphasis on procedural justice with new training that highlights the importance of fair, impartial and unbiased police conduct.

Children and Families
- In 2011, Mayor Landrieu challenged New Orleans to unite in an effort to combat the obesity rate of youth within the parish—which culminated in the Fit NOLA Initiative.

New Orleans has seen improvements in several areas over the last year, including increased public safety, added recreational resources, and better storm preparedness.

How to Prepare for Hurricane Season

Data News Staff Edited Report

How to Prepare for Hurricane Season

From June 1 to November 30, New Orleans like many Gulf Coast Cities are in hurricane season. While most of the weather phenomenon created in the gulf is likely to dissipate, there is still the chance of a tropical storm—or hurricane—developing.

In an effort to prepare New Orleans for the upcoming tropical storm that is meandering the gulf, or for future storms and hurricane, The Red Cross created a to-do list to prepare for any case scenario.

“Our Red Cross disaster specialists and leadership are monitoring the storms closely and are ready to assist,” said Joshua Joachim, Chief Executive of the Red Cross in Louisiana. “We urge our neighbors to take care now to prepare their families and connect with their neighbors: Build a kit, make a plan, stay informed.”

PROTECT YOUR HOME
- Protect windows with permanent storm shutters or invest in one-half inch marine plywood that is pre-cut to fit your doors and windows.
- Identify a place to store lawn furniture, toys, gardening tools and trash cans (away from stairs and exits) to prevent them from being moved by high winds and possibly hurting someone.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts to prevent flooding and unnecessary pressure on the awnings.
- Given the risks of weathering a storm in place, mobile home residents should evacuate early in response to severe weather. Never ride out a tropical storm, hurricane or tornado in a mobile home—even if it’s in a non-evacuation zone.
- Remember that standard homeowners’ insurance doesn’t cover flooding but flood insurance does. Get information at www.FloodSmart.gov.

RIGHT BEFORE
- Listen to local area radio, NOAA radio or TV stations for the latest information and updates.
- Be prepared to evacuate quickly and know your routes and destinations. Find a local emergency evacuation zone.
- Check your emergency kit and replenish any items missing or in short supply, especially medications or other medical supplies. Keep it nearby.

If You Still Have Time, Do This
- Fill plastic bottles with clean water for drinking.
- Fill bathtubs and sinks with water for flushing the toilet or washing the floor or clothing.
- Fill your car’s gas tank, in case an evacuation notice is issued.
- Turn off propane tanks and unplug small appliances.
- Bring in anything that can be picked up by the wind, such as bicycles and patio furniture.

If You Have Pets or Livestock
- Consider a precautionary evacuation of your animals, especially any large or numerous animals. Waiting until the last minute could be fatal for them and dangerous for you.
- Where possible, move livestock to higher ground. If using a horse or other trailer to evacuate your animals, move sooner rather than later.
- Bring your companion animals indoors and maintain direct control of them. Be sure that your pet emergency kit is ready to go in case of evacuation.

For more information on hurricane preparedness, visit the official Red Cross website at http://www.redcross.org/louisiana, or the City of New Orleans’ hurricane preparedness website at www.nola.gov/ready/.
Judge Relents, Mistrial Declared in Cosby Sex Assault Case

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

NORRISTOWN—Saturday morning, Montgomery County Judge Steven T. O’Neill finally bent to the will of the jury and declared a mistrial in Bill Cosby’s sexual assault case.

“The legacy remains intact,” said Andrew Wyatt, the longtime spokesman for the legendary entertainer. “For Gloria Allred and all those other lawyers, tell them to go back to law school and take another class.”

Wyatt continued: “The legacy hasn’t gone anywhere, it’s intact, [Bill Cosby] feels vindicated.”

Jurors deliberated for more than 53 hours, several times asking to have testimony re-read, before declaring a second time that they were hopelessly deadlocked.

The judge, who seven times previously denied mistrial requests made by the defense, finally gave in and declared the mistrial.

Cosby, 79, had maintained his innocence even rejecting a friendly plea deal offered by prosecutors just before the trial in early June.

“I’m innocent. I’m not going to plea to something I did not do,” Cosby said, during an inclusive interview with the NNPA Newswire. As he walked out of the courtroom on Saturday, still a free man, he again thanked the Black Press for being fair. “Thank you for everything. Thank you for your fairness. I’m going home.”

Cosby’s wife, Camille, released a statement blasting the judge and prosecutors.


Camille Cosby described mainstream media as, “blatantly vicious entities that continually disseminated intentional omissions of truths for the primary purpose of greedily selling sensationalism at the expense of a human life.”

Camille, like her husband, went on to thank their lawyers, their staff and Wyatt.

The judge has asked that prosecutors file a new case within 120 days; District Attorney Kevin Steele said he would.

Camille Cosby also said in the statement that she was grateful for the jurors, “who tenaciously fought to review the evidence; which is the rightful way to make a sound decision.”

The statement continued: “Ultimately, that is a manifestation of justice, based on facts, not lies. As a very special friend once stated, ‘truth can be subdued, but not destroyed.’”

Neither Cosby nor his team would address the district attorney’s statement that he would seek a retrial.

Brian McMonagle, Cosby’s lead defense attorney who proved his reputation as one of the best in the business, thanked the jury and judge in court.

After a brief statement that was read by Wyatt, Cosby and his team hopped into a waiting SUV and drove away from the Montgomery County Courthouse, certainly hoping to never see it again.

“Mr. Cosby’s power is back,” said Wyatt. “He has been restored.”

State and Local, Continued from page 8.

total number of recreation centers, parks, and playgrounds to 35. Since 2010, the number of recreation centers has increased from four to twelve.

Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- From 2008 to 2016, the percentage of residents rating flood control "fair" or better has increased from 39 percent to 59 percent, reflecting Mayor Landrieu’s commitment to building back better than before. In 2016, the Landrieu Administration finalized a $2 billion settlement with FEMA to fund repairs to roads and subsurface infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Katrina, while also passing a $15 million drainage renewal millage. During 2016, the Landrieu Administration also secured more than $200 million for resilience projects that combine water management, storm water protection, workforce development and neighborhood revitalization. This amount includes the $141 million from HUD’s National Disaster Resilience Competition, as well as $60 million under FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
Three Ways to Capture the Perfect Photo

Delaney George
Fashion Columnist

Have you said to yourself, “I want pictures done,” or “I wish I could do a photoshoot in this,” before? Many people find themselves wanting professional shots taken in this day and age. Whether it be a headshot for a LinkedIn account, a shoot to boost your confidence, or just a high-quality shot to post on Instagram, photos have become one of the most important elements in the social world.

The Mechanics:
A camera is only as good as it’s photographer and choosing a great photographer for your shoot is vital for its success. Photographers tend to have vast variations of styles and you should always consider the shot you are trying to portray before choosing. Make-up artist, stylist and hair stylists should be given the same consideration.

The Look:
No matter the shoot’s purpose, putting your best foot forward is always key. In the business world look your sharpest, in the fashion world look your fiercest—while genuinely being yourself. The look can make or break the shoot because it also portrays a message and has the power to control a photo. Your shot will either draw people in for creativity or clash, so always choose your aesthetics wisely.

The Expression:
Prepare yourself for the shoot by practicing facial expressions in the mirror. Based on the occasion, your expression is the first thing people will notice. What’s the mood of the photo? Are you angry? Eager? Inviting? Your expression is the bulk of the story of the photo.

For more information on photo tips and modeling email Delaneykey@yahoo.com

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MCDONOGH 35
The National McDonogh 35 High School Alumni Association is reaching out to all graduates as it begins the celebration of the school’s Centennial Celebration (1917 to 2017).
If you are a graduate or if you know of someone who graduated from the school, contact the alumni association at mcdonogh35alumniassociation@yahoo.com, mcdonogh35alumniassociation.org, or write to McDonogh 35 Alumni Association, P.O. Box 50306, New Orleans, LA 70122, ATT: Alumni Association.
Submit New Orleans school items to Orleans@nola.com. Include contact information.
Why You Should Embrace the Frizz

I love wearing my hair out and curly but there is one thing that I absolutely cannot avoid. Frizz. My hair has natural frizz that keeps my curls from forming perfect spirals. I can usually get most of my hair to form its beautiful curls and spirals with the many oils, gels, and butters that I can plaster on it. However, I often notice that not all of my hair will obey me at once. To get most of my hair to be totally defined, I have to do a prolonged deep conditioning, be very precise in how I apply my hair product, and let it totally air dry without my hair touching any wind.

However, instead of forcing my hair to have a uniform curl throughout, I embrace my curls as they are which includes the frizz. I can wear a variety of styles with frizz included which includes fluffy afro puffs, thick buns, and a soft-to-the-touch wash and go. The natural frizz in my hair allows it to look more natural and effortless. I don’t want to look like I actually spent 2 to 3 hours trying to comb product through my hair, so I let my natural frizz come through.

Leaving your hair to be a bit frizzy adds movement, volume, and softness. A completely gelled down look may force your hair to look stiff and crunchy to the touch. Although your frizz may be minimal after applying gel, your curls and kinks won’t flow together on their own accord. Frizz creates volume which can be a plus for naturals with thinner hair.

So, embrace every imperfection in your natural hair because that is what makes your crown of glory unique. No two naturals are the same and the amount of frizz that you prefer in your hair is up to you. However, if frizz keeps creeping up on you during hair styling or daily wear, embrace all the beautiful things that your curls and kinks can do. Being natural requires the appreciation of imperfection.

Happy Growing!

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FELLOWS!

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#discovertheunexpected

DISCOVER MORE OF THEIR STORY AT NNPA.ORG/DTU