

Blue Jean Nation "Dismal is as dismal does"

Written by Mike McCabe, Blue Jean Nation
Saturday, 01 April 2017 14:50 -



People are starving for elections that are more empowering, but today's politicians and the journalists who report on them do not live up.

ALTOONA, WI - Read any [run-of-the-mill news story](#) about an upcoming election and you get a good idea why so many people find media coverage of politics unbearably exasperating. You also can see why fewer and fewer people see any reason to read what the reporters write and yet another reason why the companies employing them are slowly but surely going out of business.

The story treats the election like a horse race. It handicaps the race. It tells readers who is *likely to win* the election, but gives readers no useful information that would help them decide for themselves who *should win* the election.

The story quotes an “expert” or two — some campaign operative or other political industry insider — repeating for the umpteenth time the conventional wisdom that elections are all about money. They go on to say which candidates will have the most of it and are therefore worth paying attention to. Neither the reporters nor their sources seem to have learned a single thing from what [just happened](#) in the 2016 election. Their stock in trade is conventional wisdom, and they are sticking to it.

Rolling Stone writer Matt Taibbi followed the pack for the duration of the 2016 presidential race, watching how the candidates campaigned and how the media covered the circus. He [came away amazed](#) by how the whole process “was dysfunctional and that people were turned off by it. The people who did campaigning for a living, both politicians and the press, were wrapped up in their own little world.”

Blue Jean Nation "Dismal is as dismal does"

Written by Mike McCabe, Blue Jean Nation
Saturday, 01 April 2017 14:50 -

Maybe those wrapped up in that little world are right about money being the only thing that matters in elections. Maybe they're wrong. I happen to believe they are wrong. But here's one thing I know for sure: If they're right and elections are all about money, then the people can't win. Some politician with the most money will win, but you won't. Your own elected representatives will have no choice but to ignore your wishes because they will be busy catering to the wishes of their biggest donors.

Elections should be about what kind of society we want to live in and how we could create such a place together. Instead, we're told by manipulative politicians that somebody living somewhere else is to blame for all our problems. We're told somebody somewhere is getting something we're not. We're put at each other's throats. And we're told by cynical journalists that those politicians are all we've got to choose from because the odds are hopelessly stacked against any alternative no matter how inspiring that alternative might be.

To hell with that. People are starving for elections that are more empowering and for election coverage that is more nourishing. Satisfying these cravings will require a new politics. And a new journalism.

Find out more about the author and Blue Jean Nation at www.bluejeannation.com