



# ENQUIRY

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Free thought and discourse

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## What Would a Brokered GOP Convention Mean?

By **THOMAS DUDA**  
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

In many ways, this presidential election has been nothing short of historic. A candidate running openly as a socialist. A candidate who wasn't born in the United States.

But the most enigmatic occurrence this year has been Donald Trump. Despite having no political experience, Mr. Trump leads the delegate race by a fairly wide margin—but is it enough of a margin?

Another way this election cycle could end up being historic is in the case of a brokered convention, which will happen if no single candidate gets the majority of delegates. A brokered Republican convention is becoming increasingly likely, and as Ben Ginsberg, a veteran Republican campaign lawyer, states, is “more possible than at any time in the modern era.”

How likely is it that a brokered convention will take place? Experts agree that whatever Trump's final delegate count will be before the convention, it will be very close to the 1,237 he needs to get the nomination.

Although there are many possibilities when it comes to dividing the remainder of the delegates among the candidates, I'll proceed with a brief description of a consensus of experts as published originally by FiveThirtyEight.com. Basically, June 7 is the key date.

Averaging expert opinions gives Trump 1,028 delegates by June 7, with five states left to go at that point. The most important of these is California, a winner-take-all state with 172 delegates total.

All other states with primaries or caucuses that day either won't be voting for Trump (by a consensus of experts) or simply don't have that many delegates. If Trump were to win California, he would have 1,200 delegates.

Although this is under the necessary amount of delegates, it's important to keep in mind that there are 112 unbound delegates from places with no primaries or caucuses such as Colorado or American Samoa. We have no way of knowing how they will vote before their names are called on the convention floor. If even a fraction of them voted for Trump, they—along with any other delegates he gets from New Mexico—would push Trump over the 1,237 line, giving him the nomination.

Going one level deeper, how likely is it that Trump will win California? It depends on what you think are important factors in predicting elections. Current polling data provided by Real Clear Politics shows Trump with a consistent lead over rival Ted Cruz of about 8 points.

However, FiveThirtyEight weighted those polls with endorsements that Trump and Cruz have received. Basically, based on the principle that as we get closer to an election, voters listen more to party elites (as outlined by Georgetown Professor Hans Noel's revolutionary 2008 book, *The Party Decides*), FiveThirtyEight has predicted what polls will look like closer to the election.

With those predictive polls in mind, FiveThirtyEight gives Cruz a 61 percent chance of winning California—thereby denying Trump the delegates he would need to clinch the party nomination, thus leading to a brokered convention.

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## Where the Alt-Right Came From

By **MIKE ADAMO**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A coalition of white nationalists, anti-Semites, 4chan users, academics of ill repute, and extremely bored young men has congealed into a movement called the alt-right.

The group, which bills itself as an alternative right-of-center movement, is a subset of the anti-establishment crowd with a bizarre genealogy. A large part of it comes out of the 4chan message board community, a collection of young, mostly college-educated men who delight in offense. Their ethos is ironic, irreverent, and often anti-social. One is seldom sure when they're only joking.

They do entertain a serious dislike of political correctness, to go as far in the opposite direction as possible. This is the attitude they brought to the alt-right.

They've come into contact with a handful of websites and writers who have long been on the fringe of the conservative movement, and who run the gamut from merely tasteless to outright white supremacist. This is a significantly older group of men who lean far to the traditionalist side, seemingly incompatible with 4chan readers' more libertarian bent but united to them by a vehement

## This Week's News in 140 Characters

### EDITORIAL REPORT

**Karol Markowicz** @karol · Apr 6  
I never feel worse about American society as when people say "Trump says what everyone is thinking." I am not thinking anything he says.

**Bernie Thoughts** @berniethoughts · Apr 6  
SCIENCE IS BASICALLY—YOU KNOW OF THIS WEIRD SENSATION YOU GET STARING IN A MIRROR FOR TOO LONG—PLUS A LITTLE MATH

**David Dayen** @ddayen · Apr 5  
That thing where journalists making derisive "sportsball!" jokes talk all day about how presidential candidates are winning or losing

**Joe Simonson** @SaysSimonson · Apr 7  
man, after today, imagine how much more hated Bill Clinton would be if he was a Republican

### STAY CONNECTED

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*WHERE THE ALT-RIGHT CAME FROM cont.*

dislike of progressive politics and a possibly more vehement dislike of the establishment right.

Unlike the 4chan users, this older group has a more extensive pedigree within the conservative movement. They remember their intra-movement battles going back to the 1960s, and frequently rehash them on websites like *VDARE* and *Takimag*, writing for a small but loyal audience of cantankerous paleoconservatives and young contrarians.

Their candidate of choice is, unsurprisingly, Donald Trump, a candidate who has united old white men with young white men in a festival of ethnic grievance.

If Google searches are any indication—which in the case of a movement that dwells largely online, they certainly are—interest in the alt-right exploded towards the end of March.

Milo Yiannopoulos, an editor at *Breitbart* and a kind of poster boy for the alt-right's younger wing, published a defense of the alt-right on March 29 that provoked a series of responses from the right's more mainstream publications—*National Review*, the *Federalist*, and *Reason*.

Milo presents a good case study on the alt-right outlook. He became an icon of the 4chan wing because of his reporting on Gamergate, a scandal in the videogame world that boiled down to the coordinated harassment of women journalists because of

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## Chalk, Safe Spaces, and the Failure of Higher Education

By **WILL SWETT**  
STAFF WRITER

A couple weeks ago, students at Emory University were traumatized to wake up and find their pristine sidewalks chalked with messages of support for Donald Trump—apologies for not prefacing that name with a trigger warning. Rather than wait for rain to wash away the endorsements, student activists took it upon themselves to cleanse the school of the chalk on the grounds that it resembled “hate speech.”

The fact that a presidential frontrunner can so easily be identified with racism, sexism, and bigotry is, of course, a problem. A greater problem facing these students, however, is that they need to grow up. Across the country, our brightest young minds— aspiring doctors, lawyers, politicians, and business executives—are so fragile that they cannot bear exposure to expressions of support for a major presidential candidate without feeling personally attacked.

Protesters, triggered by the chalk, gathered at an administration building carrying signs with slogans such as “stop hate” and “stop Trump” written on them. As if the university, by not erasing and condemning the pro-Trump chalking, was actively endorsing Trump, the protesters began antiphonally chanting “You are not listening! Come speak to us, we

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A clear procedure has been laid out for the way in which the delegate voting at the Republican National Convention will take place if no candidate reaches a majority. Rule 40e of the Rules of the Republican Party states that “If no candidate shall have received [a] majority, the chairman of the convention shall direct the roll of the states be called again and shall repeat the calling of the roll until a candidate shall have received a majority of the votes entitled to be cast in the convention.”

The difference is that with each new round of voting, more delegates that were previously bound will become unbound. The exact number is extraordinarily hard to calculate, as it is a combination of state and party rules, but the *New York Times* estimates the number of unbound delegates to be about 5 percent in the first round of voting, 51 percent in the second round, and 80 percent in the third round.

At this point, all hell will break loose. Party bosses will quickly try to whip votes for the candidate favored by the establishment, who in this case is probably John Kasich, the only Republican left in the race who hasn't run on an anti-establishment platform. Even write-ins are allowed, and there is a small possibility that someone who didn't even run will be nominated.

All of this being said, a brokered convention is incredibly hard to predict with any certainty. But as many Republicans and many, many more Democrats seek any way to prevent Trump from getting the nomination, this looks more and more likely to be our best shot.

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WHERE THE ALT-RIGHT CAME FROM cont.

the perception that they politicized videogaming. Needless to say, there were no winners in that battle, aside from Milo's career.

He imparts a sensation of invulnerability to his followers because of the extravagant gay lifestyle he leads and publicizes on social media. They regard him as a kind of amulet against accusations of prejudice. He's embarked on a speaking tour at U.S. colleges titled, “The Dangerous Faggot,” which gives you some idea of how the alt-right approaches sexuality and political correctness.

On April 4, the *Federalist* published an article titled “Yes, the Alt-Right Are Just a Bunch of Racists” by Robert Tracinski. He identified the driving force behind the alt-right: white identity politics.

“Hey, lefties,” Tracinski writes, “we finally found your racists for you.” Funnily enough, their politics look a lot like the sectarian identity politics that the left has been peddling for years now.

Milo's apologia admits outright that the alt-right are cultural segregationists in the same vein

as those on the academic left who whine about cultural appropriation. “The alt-right's intellectuals would also argue that culture is inseparable from race,” Milo writes. “The alt-right believe that some degree of separation between peoples is necessary for a culture to be preserved.”

In other words, the alt-right followed progressive academia down the rabbit hole of identity politics and arrived at the same illiberal, intolerant, and sectarian arguments. As Tracinski wrote in the *Federalist*, two wrongs don't make a right.

We've searched hard for the causes of radical politics this year. Economic conditions may in part explain support for Donald Trump, but it doesn't explain the alt-right. They style themselves as intellectuals, and admittedly they are very different from the non-college-educated, working class supporters of Trump.

They're responding not to economic conditions, but to the stifling intellectual conditions of America as a whole, and of the universities in particular. That their grievances are legitimate doesn't excuse their prescribed solutions.

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THE FAILURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION cont.

are in pain!”

Needless to say, nobody was in any real pain, but some feelings were apparently hurt, and these students held the university accountable for letting it happen.

The claim that seeing “Trump 2016” written all over campus made students feel “afraid” and unsafe is cause for concern, not for any minor emotional distress they have perceived, but because of the inability of many college students to cope with reality. Whether somebody supports him or not, Donald Trump is a reality of our current political landscape and his supporters maintain a large percentage of the American electorate. If university students cannot come to terms with the fact that some of their fellow students count themselves among Trump's supporters, then they are in for a rude awakening when they enter the real world and can no longer cling to the college safety blanket.

One can only imagine the horror soon-to-be grads will feel when their bosses ignore their demand for leave due to the emotional distress felt when seeing a political poster on the way to work. Of course, most students don't act this way, and won't have a problem adapting to an office environment after graduation. Other students, such as those at the University of Michigan who called the police because Trump's name had been written in chalk, will have a hard time coping when they learn that the purpose of government is not to protect the feelings of its citizens.

While in college, however, these fragile students receive validation from college administrators who want to create “safe spaces” for their

students where they can be protected from uncomfortable ideas, and apparently names.

Although Emory's President, James Wagner, chalked “Emory stands for free expression” after the incident, his promise to review security footage to try to identify the perpetrators of “free expression” and make “immediate refinements to certain policy and procedural deficiencies” leaves some concern that his “stand” may only last until the next rainfall washes the colored dust away.

Wagner's wink-and-nod response towards free speech, while indulging the grief claimed by protesters, is all that proponents of free expression could have hoped to receive from a university president, particularly during the 2015-16 academic year, which has been a supreme embarrassment for many of the country's top colleges and universities, including Hamilton.

The dismissal of free speech values in protests and in the cut-and-pasted demands that made the rounds of dozens of colleges this year highlights how higher education is failing its students. The impulse of Emory protesters to punish the anonymous chalker for rattling their fragile psyches is creating a dangerous collegiate culture, in which individuals with minority opinions are vindictively compelled to silence for fear that they will be charged with being insensitive, oppressive, or aggressive in contradiction to the intellectual orthodoxy.

In October, the students of Wesleyan University felt their safe space had been violated when the school newspaper, the *Argus*, published a column mildly critical of the Black Lives Matter movement, because the article questioned the methods of protest employed by some of the activists. Although the writer presented a thoughtful and nuanced opinion, the article and the *Argus* as a whole were swiftly condemned. Shortly following the op-ed's publication, 172 students,

staff, and alumni signed a petition “boycotting [the paper] for supporting institutional racism.”

Instead of using the publication as a platform to espouse their beliefs, the social justice warriors demanded that the student government defund the *Argus* until the paper issued an apology and all staff members underwent “social justice/diversity training.” In a mighty blow to intellectual diversity and the liberal arts tradition of free expression, Wesleyan's student government unanimously voted to cut \$17,000 from the *Argus*'s funding and the paper is now struggling to remain in print.

The shallow safe spaces receiving endorsements from college professors and administrators have reduced the intellectual discourse on college campuses to a one-sided argument. University administrators have nurtured this environment by indulging their students' pleas for emotional and intellectual safety. When college officials arrive at work one morning to find a sit-in taking place to protest the latest fashionable grievance, they hastily, and understandably, try to resolve the potentially brand-damaging event before it appears in the *New York Times*.

Regardless of what the protests advocate, the school praises its students for causing an incident and makes whatever capitulations necessary to avoid creating further controversy. Unfortunately, by applauding activism for the sake of activism and leaving the ideas implicit in the protests unaddressed, college administrators have spurred the stifling of the intellectual diversity that was once a hallmark of America's higher education.

This has already been a banner year for student protests across the country, but it is not over yet. Who knows what spring has in store for us as student activists, whose vision of higher education has still gone unrealized, prepare for graduation.

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<p>Mike Adamo <i>Editor in Chief</i></p> <p>Michael Levy <i>Creative / Digital Director</i></p>		
<b>STAFF WRITERS</b>		
Alex Klosner		Amy Elinski
Will Swett		Will Utzschneider
Ryan Glenn		Sam Benevelli
Elizabeth Barry		
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