

[Hillary Makes History](#)

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Byline: David A. Graham

Body

This story was updated on Wednesday, June 8 at 7:52 a.m.

A triumphant Hillary Clinton laid claim to the Democratic nomination Tuesday night, making a pitch for unity and celebrating her historic status as the first woman to be a major party's presidential candidate.

"We are all standing under a glass ceiling right now-but don't worry, we're not smashing this one," she said in Brooklyn. "Thanks to you we've reached a milestone Tonight's victory is not about one person. It belongs to generations of women and men who struggled and sacrificed and made this moment possible."

The glass ceiling quip was in part a callback to the speech she gave [exactly eight years ago Tuesday](#), where she conceded the Democratic nomination to Senator Barack Obama, saying, "Although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling, thanks to you it's got about 18 million cracks in it."

In her victory speech, Clinton reached out to Bernie Sanders's supporters. She courted them with policy-her own emphases on inequality, affordable college education, and fighting free-trade deals are effectively borrowed from him-and with self-deprecating humor. "I know it never feels good to put your heart into a cause or candidate you believe in and to come up short. I know that feeling well," she said with a wry smile. But most of all, she relied on praise for Sanders.

"He has spent his long career in public service fighting for progressive causes and principles, and he's excited millions of voters, especially young people," Clinton said. "Let there be no mistake. Senator Sanders, his campaign, and the vigorous debate we've had about how to raise incomes, reduce inequality, and increase upward mobility, have been very good for the Democratic Party and for America."

She had no such kind words for Donald Trump. She called the presumptive Republican nominee a "bully" who is "temperamentally unfit to be president and commander in chief," and in a powerful new line aimed at the women and minorities Trump has alienated, she said, "When he says, 'Let's make America great again,' that is code for 'Let's take American backwards.'"

While looking forward to the general election, Clinton looked back to her own history and to the nation's. "It really does take a village to raise a child," she said, a reference to her 1996 book. A highlight reel-cum-campaign **ad** ahead of her speech celebrated women's progress in American politics, and she cited the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention and noted the remarkable fact that her own mother was born on June 4, 1919, the day the 19th Amendment to the Constitution passed Congress. But most of all she, made a plea to bring together her own party, independents who backed Sanders, and Republicans disgusted with Trump. "This election is different," she said. "It really is about who we are as a nation. It's about millions of American coming together to say we are better than this. We won't let this happen in America." The speech was at times more workmanlike than lyrical, but it got her message across.

In a statement around midnight, President Obama cautiously weighed in: "The President congratulated Secretary Clinton for securing the delegates necessary to clinch the Democratic Nomination for President. Her historic campaign inspired millions and is an extension of her lifelong fight for middle-class families and children." Obama did not endorse Clinton, but he is expected to do so-and to hit the trail on her behalf-soon. He will also meet with

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Sanders at the White House on Thursday, apparently at Sanders's request, in what could represent movement toward party reconciliation.

Clinton was able to declare victory when the results came in from New Jersey. But as the evening wore on, it became clear she'd had a good night, winning in California, New Mexico, and South Dakota. Sanders won in North Dakota and Montana. Trump, now unopposed, swept the slate of Republican contests.

The historic moment in Brooklyn capped one of the strangest days in the 2016 presidential campaign thus far—perhaps one of the strangest in modern political history. Late Monday night, the Associated Press calculated that Clinton had accrued the support, between pledged delegates and superdelegates, to clinch the Democratic nomination, a threshold she hadn't been expected to pass until Tuesday evening. The declaration, soon replicated by other outlets, [infuriated Sanders and his supporters](#), who contended that the call was premature. Some suggested a nefarious conspiracy, or pointed to highly unlikely paths to victory for Sanders. The Clinton campaign, meanwhile, afraid that the AP call might depress her supporters' turnout in California and hand that state to Sanders, hedged on declaring victory.

If the Democratic action was strange, things were even weirder on the **GOP** side. Republican condemnations of Trump's claim that Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who is overseeing litigation over so-called Trump University, was biased because of his Mexican heritage formed a steady drumbeat. House Speaker Paul Ryan, who endorsed Trump just last week, called his comments "racist" but declined to withdraw his support. Illinois Senator Mark Kirk actually rescinded his endorsement. Meanwhile, Trump surrogates were on television calling his critics—including Ryan—the real racists. A candidate who was supposed to be uniting his party had just spent a week sowing discord within it.

Trump finally issued a non-apology in the afternoon, and he delivered a restrained speech Tuesday night at one of his golf clubs in Westchester County, New York. He alternated between stiltedly reading remarks from a teleprompter and his customary ad libs. Trump seemed to have finally taken to heart pleas to lay off Curiel and attempt to address issues. "I understand the responsibility of carrying the mantle" of the Republican Party, he said. "I will never, ever let you down. I will make you proud of your party and our movement

Speaking in a voice that didn't seem quite his, Trump delivered a few standard politician platitudes ("This election isn't about Republican or Democrat. It's about who runs this country: the special interests or the people"); some unusual humility ("This is not a testament to me, but a testament to all the people who believe real change—not Obama change, but real change—is possible"); and a laundry list of signature policies, including opposing illegal immigration and free trade and a more restrained foreign policy. He centered all of these ideas on the theme of "America First," [a phrase with a fraught history](#). Mirroring Clinton, he called for Sanders supporters to join his campaign.

Notably, Trump finally replied to Hillary Clinton's scorching attack on him last week, which had been left un rebutted as Trump wallowed in the Trump U. fiasco. He promised to deliver a longer speech, perhaps on Monday, assailing Hillary and Bill Clinton. But Trump took no questions, and made no comments on the remarks about Curiel. It's clearly progress for the Republican nominee to get through a high-profile moment without making a racist remark, but it's not the kind of progress Republicans ever expected they would welcome so eagerly.

How many times has a Tuesday night seen declarations that the Democratic race was "effectively" over, only to see Sanders keep fighting and Clinton fail to seal the deal? In what should be the final such moment, Sanders had a disappointing night, adding insult to the injury of Clinton's clinch. He was on course to fall well short of Clinton in California, a state where he'd been aggressively campaigning for two weeks and spent millions of dollars.

Sanders spoke after 1:45 a.m. Eastern time, delivering a defiant speech in Santa Monica in which he continued to fight on through the June 14 primary in the District of Columbia and then go on to the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. Delivering something close to his standard stump speech, he addressed a crowd in Santa Monica that appeared to have lost no enthusiasm, despite the disappointing results in the Golden State and a speech that began nearly an hour after its scheduled start.

"If this campaign has proven anything it has proven that millions of Americans who love this country are prepared to stand up and fight to make this country a much better place," he said. Sanders also said, "We will not allow Donald Trump to become president of the United States."

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After the rally, Sanders was scheduled to take a long flight back to Burlington to assess the campaign. The enthusiastic crowd in Santa Monica, and Sanders's bold words, aside, his campaign is preparing to lay off a large number of staffers, [according to The New York Times](#). Senator Jeff Merkley, a major Sanders backer, [said Tuesday](#) that unity would begin "as soon as the polls close." Some observers noted (perhaps hopefully) that Clinton didn't drop out until four days after losing her final primary in 2008. The question for Sanders is not if his campaign will end, but when he decides to end it. On that day, the Vermont senator will not have the Democratic nomination, but will have a major claim on the direction of the Democratic Party in the 2016 election.

With the field now set, the two presumptive nominees have their paths laid out to November. Clinton has consolidated her party's core, and her task now is to win over reluctant Sanders backers and convince independents that Trump is dangerous. Trump, who was supposed to already be unifying his party, will first have to reassure Republican officials and voters horrified by the events of the last week. The next six months will be a popularity contest between two unusually unpopular candidates. -David A. Graham

12:36 AM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

Kamala Harris is the winner of the California Senate primary race, according to the [Associated Press](#). Tonight's results aren't entirely surprising: Harris was the leading candidate ahead of the state's primary. During her campaign, she received the endorsement of California Governor Jerry Brown, who usually only weighs in on a select few contests, among other Democrats. Harris also appeared "to match the moment - a year of populist anger against Washington insiders and a 'rigged system,' spearheaded by presidential candidates Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders," [as The Washington Post put it](#) last month.

Harris will proceed to the November runoff and likely face Loretta Sanchez, who's currently in second. The two Democrats are permitted to compete in the general election as a result of California's primary system. "It's been an exciting campaign, and we're getting ready for Round 2," Sanchez [said](#) as returns came in on Tuesday.

12:19 AM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

CNN, NBC, and AP have called South Dakota for Clinton. So far, she's won half the states that voted today, and Sanders has won one, North Dakota. Montana and California haven't been called yet.

12:08 AM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

President Obama called Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders Tuesday night, as results continued to trickle. His statement, however, is not an endorsement. It reads:

Tonight, President Obama called both Secretary Clinton and Senator Sanders. The President congratulated both candidates for running inspiring campaigns that have energized Democrats, brought a new generation of Americans into the political process, and shined a spotlight on important policy ideas aimed at making sure our economy and our politics work for everybody, not just those with wealth and power.

The statement goes on to congratulate Clinton for securing the Democratic nomination and thanking Sanders "for energizing millions of Americans with his commitment to issues like fighting economic inequality and special interests' influence on our politics." Perhaps most notable though is a request by Sanders to meet with the president. Sanders's campaign announced a rally in Washington, D.C. on Thursday. It appears that a meeting at the White House might also be on the agenda.

Obama has refrained from endorsing either candidate throughout the primary process, but, as Nora noted, an endorsement appears to be on the horizon.

11:59 PM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

Kamala Harris is leading in the California Senate primary race so far, as [polls had previously indicated](#). Harris, the state's attorney general, is seeking to replace retiring U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer's Senate seat. A win in November would mark a milestone in the Senate: Harris would be the first black woman to be elected to the chamber since Carol Moseley Braun. Harris is coming against fellow Democrat Loretta Sanchez, who's served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 10 terms. Sanchez would also make history if elected, as the first Latina in the Senate.

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California's unique primary system allows both Sanchez and Harris to proceed to the general election. Since 2012, the state permits the top two finishers in the primary to continue to the November runoff, regardless of party affiliation. Even so, [reporting](#) thus far shows that Harris could win by a far larger margin than expected.

11:52 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Reince Priebus has a tough gig. The Republican National Committee chairman is tasked with bolstering his party's nominee. In recent weeks, he's had to broker talks between Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan; repeatedly insist Trump can and will change his tone; and grin-and-bear his way through interviews with reporters.

On Tuesday night, though, Priebus betrayed none of those challenges, offering praise for the **GOP** standard-bearer:

Great victory speech by [@realDonaldTrump](#) tonight. Exactly the right approach and perfectly delivered.

- Reince Priebus (@Reince) [June 8, 2016](#)

Priebus shared that tweet for an implicit reason: Prominent Republicans came out today against Trump's comments on a Mexican American judge, and Priebus probably wants to show them and others that Trump can play nice-and listen to reason. Priebus has to back up Trump even if the nominee could wreck "everything [he] built" since becoming chairman, [as Bloomberg put it](#) in a recent, revealing profile. It's worth a read. As one Republican official suggested, the stakes are personally high for Priebus: "If the Republicans win in November, Reince will go down as one of the greatest chairmen we have ever had. If we lose, he'll have succeeded by every metric but that one. ... Of course, that's like saying, 'Except for that, Mrs. Lincoln, how was the play?' "

11:35 PM [Yoni Appelbaum](#) [Link](#)

It's Hillary Clinton's night, but it's been Bernie Sanders's race.

Just over a year ago, the Vermont senator walked outside of the Capitol, and told a small scrum of reporters that he intended to run for president. The location seemed to have been selected less for its symbolic import, than to drum up coverage from a skeptical congressional press corps by speaking on its doorstep. Sanders spoke for five minutes, took another five minutes of questions, and the event was over. One adviser was left [trying to persuade](#) reporters that Sanders wouldn't be a "fringe candidate."

A month later, he gave the campaign [a second kick-off in Burlington](#)-complete with Ben & Jerry's ice cream and Mango Jam, a band playing Zydeco, Cajun, and Caribbean music.

Tonight won't mark the end of the Sanders campaign. It's tightening its belt, [laying off](#) half its staff. But it's headed on to Washington, D.C., where it plans a rally in advance of next week's primary. But Tuesday's races ratify what was already a foregone conclusion. There's no longer any doubt that Hillary Clinton commands the support of enough delegates-pledged and unpledged-to secure the nomination.

In between that low-key kickoff and the campaign's [bitter end](#), though, Sanders re-wrote the political agenda. The oldest candidate in the race connected with young voters, in particular, to a remarkable extent. He shifted the focus away from national security, and toward economic issues. He brought a series of ideas-free college, single-payer healthcare, breaking up the banks, a \$15 minimum wage-from the edges of the conversation directly to its center. And he offered a devastating indictment of a sclerotic political system, condemning its corruption and dysfunction.

By every measure that counts, Sanders lost, and lost decisively. But judged by where he began, there's no question that he won far more than he possibly could have expected last April.

11:32 PM [Chris Haugh](#) [Link](#)

Kevin Faulconer, the Republican mayor of San Diego, is not impressed with his party's presumptive nominee for president, Donald Trump. But Faulconer is expected to cruise to victory Tuesday night in California.

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Last month, Faulconer [told](#) The San Diego Union-Tribune that he would not endorse Trump, adding, "I reject the rhetoric that we've seen on women. I reject the rhetoric that I've seen on the Latino community. That's not who we are as San Diegans. That's the wrong approach."

Since he stepped into office in 2013, Faulconer has remained the only Republican to occupy a City Hall in one of the country's 10 largest cities. He's often pointed to as a possible model for the future of the **GOP**. Earlier this year, for example, The Atlantic's Liam Dillon [called](#) him "the great urban hope of the Republican Party."

The anti-Trump mutiny within the **GOP** ebbs and flows. One moment, an insurgency seems imminent. The next, party leaders are lining up behind Trump in a show of unity-sincere or otherwise. For Faulconer, an anti-Trump position makes sense: Democrats far outnumber their Republican counterparts in San Diego.

11:20 PM [Sacha Zimmerman](#) [Link](#)

The contrast is stark and makes clear that both descriptions of America cannot be accurate at the same time. Someone has to be wrong. The mean-spirited, buffoonish billionaire lurked in the taupe banquet hall of his suburban golf club, reading a short speech and hoping everyone forgets he is a racist. The respected former senator and secretary of state addressed a crowd that looks like America, celebrating the near certainty that she will be the first woman to stand as a major-party general-election candidate for president.

The America that allows the latter scenario to occur is not an America that needs to be great again as the first scenario suggests. It is not an America in crisis. It is not an America in decline. It is an America ascendant, a beacon. It is an intensely imperfect place, but it is still a place with more equality of opportunity than most others, a place that people from around the world take great risks to join, where millions every year become part of a nation more diverse than ever. Trump is right: America is not the same as it once was-much to the dismay of his supporters. Because in the new America, most people know that the good old days weren't so good for everybody.

11:11 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Not-so-encouraging news out of the Bernie Sanders camp: "Two people close to the campaign" told The New York Times half the candidate's staff will be let go Wednesday:

Many of those being laid off are advance staff members who often help with campaign logistics, as well as field staff members who have been working to garner votes for the senator, according to a campaign official and a former campaign staff member, both of whom spoke on condition of anonymity. Some campaign workers may move into jobs at Mr. Sanders's Senate office, but others will be terminated, they said.

This is just one report, citing anonymous sources. That doesn't mean it's wrong or right-only time will tell. But these sorts of stories, even if they don't bear out, can be damaging to a campaign. They can show signs of internal weakness and strife, or spook supporters into switching their allegiances.

11:06 PM [Emma Green](#) [Link](#)

Clinton's speech just ended in Brooklyn. Many people have shared their reactions to "the woman thing" on Twitter and elsewhere. E.g.,

The woman thing really matters. <https://t.co/EvMipTAplS>

- Matthew Yglesias (@mattyglesias) [June 8, 2016](#)

The woman thing. It's an odd turn of phrase-"thing" is a casual afterthought word to represent the entire history of patriarchy and gender and identity. It's not an origin-less phrase, though. Audre Lorde wrote a poem called "The Woman Thing" in 1976. She writes about hunters who come after young girls. "Meanwhile, the woman thing my mother taught me bakes off its covering of snow like a rising blackening sun," the narrator says.

Tonight is an important moment in American history, especially for women and feminists of all genders. And when people use the phrase "the woman thing," they're probably not trying to make a deep cut on mid-20th-century poetry. But the phrase carries a sadness that seems relevant, despite the jubilant mood in Brooklyn. Hillary may have just become the first (presumptive) woman nominee for president. But the burdens of being a female public figure-the sexist insults, the accusations that she's using "the woman card" to get to the White House, not to

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mention the shaming that's put on women who have philandering husbands-aren't wiped out in this moment; they're amplified.

Mothers teach their daughters "the woman thing." Clinton's mother taught her. That knowledge comes with as many notes of sadness and resignation as it does Girl Power.

11:00 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

Hillary Clinton has declared victory. Speaking to supporters in Brooklyn, New York, Clinton emphasized the historic nature of her status as the presumptive nominee for the Democratic Party. "Thanks to you, we've reached a milestone: The first time in our nation's history that a woman will be a major party's nominee," Clinton said to deafening applause. Her speech arrived a day after the Associated Press announced that she had secured the delegates needed to win her party's nomination.

Clinton did not call for her rival Bernie Sanders to drop out. Instead, she issued a call for unity, saying that the debate between the candidates has "been very good for the Democratic Party and for America." But make no mistake, she effectively declared the Democratic race over, even going so far as to "congratulate Senator Sanders for the extraordinary campaign he has run." As in, past tense. Her message was aimed not only at winning over Sanders supporters, but Republicans as well. Clinton made that point explicitly: "Whether you supported me, or Senator Sanders, or one of the Republicans, we all need to keep working toward a better, fairer, stronger America." She took on Donald Trump, painting him as unqualified to set foot in the White House. "Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be president," Clinton said in no uncertain terms. "He's trying to wall off Americans from each other," she warned, adding: "When he says let's make America great again that is code for let's take America backwards." Clinton painted Trump's recent attacks against Judge Gonzalo Curiel as part of a pattern of statements Trump has made that run counter to American values.

Clinton took pains to emphasize that while her achievement is historic, the campaign is about far more than just her. "There are still ceilings to break for women and men, for all of us," she intoned, "but don't let anyone tell you that great things can't happen in America. Barriers can come down. Justice and inequality can win. Our history has moved in that direction, slowly at times but unmistakably." She ended on an optimistic note: "This campaign is about making sure there are no ceilings, no limits on any of us ... this is our moment to come together."

10:57 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

Earlier tonight, one of Donald Trump's surrogates on CNN suggested that Clinton has never found a two-or three-word phrase to immediately capture the American people's attention, as Trump's "Make America Great Again" has (and, more darkly, "America First.") The implicit suggestion was that the former secretary of state is too bogged down in policy and abstraction to capture hearts. It's almost as if Clinton heard her, deploying "Stronger Together" to great effect in her speech tonight.

10:43 PM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

In her victory speech, Hillary Clinton cited her mother as the "biggest influence in my life." Adding: "She taught me never to back down from a bully, which it turns out was pretty good advice..." The reference reminded me of a New York Times profile on Hillary's relationship with her mother. You can read it [here](#).

10:39 PM [Emma Green](#) [Link](#)

More on metaphors: Hillary's speechwriters have a lot of spatial vibes going tonight. "Bridges are better than walls," she said in her victory speech, a fairly obvious reference to The Donald's promise to erect a barrier along the border of Mexico. Not clear yet where Hillary's bridges are going, but as long as it's not nowhere, she's better off than the last woman who ran on a presidential ticket.

10:30 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

And there it is. "Thanks to you, we've reached a milestone," Clinton told the crowd in Brooklyn. "The first time in our nation's history that a woman will be a major party's nominee for president of the United States."

She noted the glass ceiling above the audience at the Duggal Greenhouse. "Don't worry, we're not smashing this one."

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10:29 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Really enjoyed hearing this quote in the Clinton campaign's introductory video, in part because I'm a big Top Hat fan: "Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels." The line was delivered in the video by former Texas Governor Ann Richards, the second woman elected to the post in the state's history. Richards's daughter, Cecile, is the current president of Planned Parenthood-and a major Clinton supporter.

10:11 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Former Speaker John Boehner now has a successor in place for his Ohio House seat. Conservative Warren Davidson, who beat 14 other **GOP** candidates in a March primary, has "easily" won a special election held today to fill the post, the AP [reports](#). Turnout was low, but that didn't necessarily affect the results much. Davidson had been the favorite in the race, thanks to the conservative makeup of the district.

The businessman and Army veteran will be sworn in by the end of this week to run out Boehner's term, and he will run again in November for a full term of his own. The Hill [reports](#) he could join the House Freedom Caucus, the chamber's most conservative wing, once he hits Washington. Davidson was endorsed by its chairman Jim Jordan. That could put him at odds with **GOP** leadership, but for now, House Speaker Paul Ryan's arms are open. "I speak on behalf of all my colleagues in saying: Welcome Warren, we look forward to working with you to get our country back-on-track," he [said in a statement](#).

10:01 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

So Sanders has won North Dakota, CNN projects. Interesting. For several years, North Dakota has posted among the lowest unemployment rates in the nation, largely because of a years-long boom in shale gas extraction. But Sanders opposes fracking and hasn't been quiet about it.

It's odd that a candidate who opposes fossil fuels and calls for an economic revolution grabbed traction in a state made quite prosperous by drilling. But Sanders has the magic touch with caucuses, consistently beating Clinton in states that hold them. His win in North Dakota adds to that record.

09:55 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

CNN's Brianna Keilar is reporting that Jeff Weaver and Robby Mook, the respective campaign managers for the Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton campaigns have been talking and even spoke earlier today. Keilar reported that the "conversations have been about keeping the lines of communication open so that eventually they can unify the party" and emphasized that the campaigns appear to be on the same page and share a goal of dispatching Donald Trump.

It seems likely that the Sanders campaign is trying to publicly signal that it won't sabotage Clinton in the final days of the Democratic primary. If that message sticks Democrats might ease up on pressuring Sanders to drop out of the race. Sanders has long said that he thinks voters across the United States should be able to have their say so it stands to reason he'll want to fight on to next week's Washington, D.C. Democratic primary. If the campaigns are in close contact, they may also be discussing what's to come at the Democratic National Convention and the fate of the party platform.

09:47 PM [Sacha Zimmerman](#) [Link](#)

Now all of the talking heads are congratulating Trump for giving a B- Republican stump speech and using a teleprompter-instead of condemning him for not apologizing for making a racist statement or in any way holding him accountable for being a charlatan. In fact, it fell to Hugh Hewitt of all people to point out that Trump failed to acknowledge his racist statements.

09:43 PM [David A. Graham](#) [Link](#)

After a day in which his own endorsers blasted him for making "racist" comments, a somewhat chastened Donald Trump delivered a short victory speech in Westchester County, New York Tuesday.

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It was, as far as any Trump speech ever is, a policy speech, and it was back to basics: the evils of illegal immigration, the dangers of free trade, and the (dubious) claim, "We're broke, we're broke." The speech was organized around the phrase "America First," [a slogan with a fraught history](#).

Most of all, it was a strange speech. Trump read the address, which wasn't written in anything resembling his standard patois, and he's still not comfortable using a teleprompter. But it was punctuated by standard Trumpian interjections-lots of "tremendous," demands to "believe me." Whoever wrote the speech didn't seem to have captured his cadence and vocabulary. Trump was uncharacteristically humble, saying his victory was "not a testament to me, but a testament to all the people who believe real change-not Obama change, but real change-is possible."

Trump promised to deliver a major speech, possibly on Monday, attacking the Clintons, and he spent much of his remarks on Tuesday criticizing Clinton. That's a shift: Since Hillary Clinton's well-regarded speech laying into Trump last week, he's barely responded outside of Twitter, occupied instead with the controversy over Trump University. He accused her of pushing U.S. military interventions in Libya and Iraq, [overlooking his own support for both operations](#).

All in all, Trump seemed to have taken heed of Republicans telling him he needed to back off his attacks on Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who's adjudicating the Trump University case, and who Trump has suggested can't fairly preside because of his Mexican heritage. Trump did not take any questions, which prevented him from being dragged back into that morass. But he seemed to be working to assure his party that he had received the memo. In addition to the stilted speech and lack of questioning, he promised, "I understand the responsibility of carrying the mantle" of the Republican Party, adding, "I will never, ever let you down. I will make you proud of your party and our movement." But this being Trump, he couldn't resist a little bit of bluster. "Now I know some people say I'm too much of a fighter. My preference is always peace, however," he said. "But if I'm forced to fight for something I really care about, I will never ever back down and our country will never ever back down."

09:27 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Trump just wrapped up his prepared remarks without taking questions from the press. Most, but not all, of his primary-night appearances have included a Q&A portion. Trump probably doesn't want to speak extemporaneously when he's taken so much heat recently for his off-the-cuff comments on the judge handling his Trump University case. Or at least his advisers don't want him to.

09:22 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

In line with Vann's point, Trump even seems to be stepping on Sanders's lines. Referring to the American political system: "We can't fix the rigged system by relying on the people who rigged it. And they rigged it. Do not ever think anything differently." Sanders typically refers to the "rigged economy" and the "rigged system" of primary delegates. Trump, a billionaire who has benefitted greatly from the GOP's delegate rules, appears to be talking about the government at large.

09:22 PM [Yoni Appelbaum](#) [Link](#)

If the measure of a speechwriter is her capacity to achieve a mind-meld with her boss, writing the words that he would have used if only he'd had the time to think of them himself-then Donald Trump's speech tonight suggests he could use some new speechwriters:

Trump is learning in real time how hard it is to BOTH (a) sound "interesting" and (b) stay on message. Never before was he ... boring

- James Fallows (@JamesFallows) [June 8, 2016](#)

After delivering a carefully scripted line on Iran's rise to dominant regional power, though, Trump briefly wandered off-script. "And they are dominant, and we have made them that way folks, we have made them that way." He paused to wag his finger. "Better hope I'm president!"

But it was the exception that proved the rule. During the campaign, the television cameras have loved Trump, and Trump has certainly loved the cameras. If tonight, he proved again that he can deliver a carefully scripted speech

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just like any other politician, he also showed that when he does so, he sounds more or less like every other politician.

09:18 PM [Yann R. Newkirk II](#) [Link](#)

It seems Team Trump believes it has a serious shot at Sanders voters, given the tone of his speech. Trump has so far made direct appeals to Sanders voters, claiming that he is the only candidate who can fix the trade deals that Sanders decries. He has also made indirect appeals, making noise about fixing a broken political system and removing entrenched political influence, and has branded his campaign a "movement."

09:11 PM [Ron Fournier](#) [Link](#)

The first sign that Donald Trump was reading somebody else's words came at the very top of the speech, when he said his nomination "is not a testament to me." Humility? Graciousness? It takes a village.

09:10 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

Hillary Clinton has won New Jersey, CNN projects. Perhaps not much of a surprise: She led Sanders there by more than 20 points in pre-election polls. That'll likely give her the lion's share of the Garden State's 142 delegates. (Still too early to call in North Dakota, South Dakota and New Mexico, where polls just closed.)

09:04 PM [Ron Fournier](#) [Link](#)

TV pundits say Donald Trump will "pivot" tonight. Such shallow, silly political-speak ignores the fact that you can't pivot away from your character-not with a speech, not with an ad, not with staff shakeup. Not nowadays.

This is how I [put it](#) Monday while explaining why **GOP** leaders can't "distance themselves"(another journalistic trop) from their presidential nominee:

Trump can't make "course corrections." This is not 1992: He can't "soften" his views or "shift" to the center. There is no pivot from depravity in the 21st century-not when voters are a few keystrokes removed from everything a politician has said or written or done.

09:01 PM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

Polls have closed in New Mexico and South Dakota, while voters gather to caucus in North Dakota. New Mexico and South Dakota primaries are too early to call, according to NBC.

08:58 PM [Yoni Appelbaum](#) [Link](#)

TRUMP.

You can find the name emblazoned on luxury skyscrapers, plastered on jets, affixed to Vodka-and, lately, on thousands of campaign signs. One place you won't find it? On his latest venture.

The Wall Street Journal is [reporting](#) that a new chain of hotels, aimed at younger, tech-savvy consumers, won't bear the mogul's brand:

The company hasn't yet unveiled what it will be called, but does say it will avoid using the Trump name to head off any possible confusion.

"We want to reserve the name Trump only for luxury and never want to confuse customers or owners of the difference in a four- and five-star property," Trump Hotels Chief Executive Eric Danziger said.

That's possible, of course. But as the Journal also notes, this is the rare branch of the Trump empire that isn't just a licensing deal- it's the family's own money on the line. Three of Trump's children hold the title of executive vice president in the business. And so it's fair to wonder if they were worried that the golden Trump name might be getting a little tarnished.

A recent [Quinnipiac poll](#) found that 70 percent of voters under 35-the young, tech savvy consumers who'd be booking these hotel rooms-held unfavorable views of Trump. It may be the case that there is, after all, such thing as bad publicity.

08:48 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Hillary Makes History

President Obama is expected to endorse Hillary Clinton for president. He's expected to do so soon. But how soon? At a White House press briefing Monday, Press Secretary Josh Earnest suggested that the president planned to "withhold judgment" before Democratic voters in New Jersey and California had cast their ballots. He declined to give specifics when asked if Obama would endorse Clinton if Bernie Sanders stayed in the race till the convention- or if he'd weigh in once a candidate secured a majority of delegates.

But that was before the AP called the nomination for Clinton Monday night. By Tuesday afternoon, the timeline for an Obama endorsement looked ever so slightly more clear. Earnest said it's possible the president could comment on Clinton before he leaves on a trip for New York.

If he waits, there are "several possible opportunities" in his schedule for "maximizing the impact" of his endorsement, the AP [reported](#):

On Wednesday, he's due in New York City to address donors at a Democratic National Committee fundraiser in Clinton's home state. He'll also tape an appearance on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," a favorite with the coveted young demographic, for the show set to air Thursday night.

The news will likely be followed by a first joint appearance before long.

Choosing the setting and timing is delicate diplomacy for the White House. Officials are trying to negotiate as gentle an ending as possible to what has become a contentious primary, hoping not to alienate Sanders' most passionate voters.

Obama will be gentle for now. But he's expected to offer aggressive advocacy for his former secretary of state. Obama has a decent amount of political capital these days, with [approval ratings in the low 50s](#). As one political scientist [told me](#) last month, his surrogacy for Clinton will have meaning "because he's not only the sitting president, but he's essentially the titular head of the party."

08:36 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

CNN projects that Donald Trump is the winner of the New Jersey Republican primary. That, of course, is no surprise. Hillary Clinton, meanwhile, has an early lead in the Democratic primary though at this point only 1 percent of the vote is in.

08:33 PM [Yoni Appelbaum](#) [Link](#)

"I jokingly say if you're running for president you shouldn't be allowed to use teleprompters," Donald Trump [said](#) in August. In January, Trump bragged, "I don't use teleprompters." His aversion to scripted remarks became such a feature of his candidacy that when, in March, he used a teleprompter in a speech before the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, he was graded on a curve-given rave reviews for managing to deliver a pre-written speech, a skill even candidates for municipal auditor are expected to have mastered.

Tonight, the teleprompters return:

TelePrompTers set up for [@realDonaldTrump](#) election night remarks tonight
pic.twitter.com/vlzPsKpqVg

- Noah Gray CNN (@NoahGrayCNN) [June 7, 2016](#)

The Republican backlash against Trump's attacks on Judge Gonzalo Curiel has left him on the defensive. He's been uncharacteristically quiet, and as I noted before, his public statement on the matter sounded as if others had a large hand in its composition.

This is the bind in which Trump now finds himself. He's succeeded in part by dominating the news cycles, kicking up controversy and then, instead of addressing it, kicking up some fresh controversy to eclipse it. But even in his own party, many felt his attacks on Curiel were plainly racist, and beyond the pale. And so he's doing things he usually avoids: keeping a low profile, issuing half-hearted [apologies](#), and sticking to scripted remarks. It may help him quell the controversy, but at the price of abandoning his favored tactics.

It's the trouble with a candidate whose signature strength is his willingness to speak his mind: What if the things it contains turn out to be abhorrent to a majority of voters, and too much even for the leaders of his own party to stomach?

Hillary Makes History

08:26 PM [Russell Berman](#) [Link](#)

With the polls closing in New Jersey, a Clinton campaign official sent reporters an email previewing her remarks later in the night. After celebrating the history-making nature of her victory, Clinton "will contrast her vision of breaking down barriers and being stronger together with the divisive, destructive and dangerous vision of Donald Trump," the official said. Clinton also plans to "congratulate Senator Sanders and his supporters on the campaign that he has run." In other words, don't expect her to explicitly call for him to end his campaign; the implication will be obvious.

08:16 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

It's all over for Representative Renee Ellmers in North Carolina. After three terms in Congress, she's just been defeated by George Holding, her colleague in the House. With a little less than half the votes reported, Holding had secured 54 percent of the vote, and Ellmers had roughly 22 percent. A third candidate, Greg Brannon-who'd recently run for Senate and lost-was in between, with about 24 percent. When it called the race moments ago, Decision Desk HQ noted that she's the "first incumbent Republican congressperson to be primaried this year."

08:12 PM [Russell Berman](#) [Link](#)

A few thousand people packed into Clinton's primary-night rally in Brooklyn were ready to scream as soon as the polls closed in New Jersey. Holding aloft small American flags handed out by the campaign, they counted down the seconds as if they waiting for the ball to drop on New Years Eve. The "too early to call" projection from MSNBC, playing on a big screen with the sound on, made for a bit of a deflating moment as the crowd went quiet.

08:09 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

Bernie isn't backing down. In an interview on [NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt](#), Sanders insisted that even if Clinton wins a majority of pledged delegates and superdelegates, he'll keep trying to convince superdelegates to switch allegiances. Holt attempted to ask whether Sanders would be defying the will of the people. Sanders preferred to put it as "defying history."

Here's a transcript of the exchange:

LESTER HOLT: If in fact, Hillary Clinton wins the majority of pledged delegates on top of what she's done with super delegates, does that end your campaign?

BERNIE SANDERS: Well, what--as I tried to indicate--super delegates are different than pledged delegates. Super delegates have a very important decision to make.

LESTER HOLT: Are you going to try to turn them?

BERNIE SANDERS: Yeah, we are. We're on the phone right now.

LESTER HOLT: You'd be defying history? You'd be defying the will of--

BERNIE SANDERS: Hey--

LESTER HOLT: --the will of the voter, right? (LAUGH) Hillary Clinton--

BERNIE SANDERS: Well, defying history is what this campaign has been about.

There are other signs as well that Sanders is looking past tonight's primary contests to what's ahead. Earlier in the evening, the campaign sent out an email that appears to be aimed at Washington, D.C. area supporters asking them to commit to voting when the district holds its Democratic primary on June 14. "At every turn of this election, we have shocked the political establishment with our success," the email reads, "Let's shock them once again in D.C. next Tuesday."

08:06 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

The polls are closed in New Jersey. Before the AP named Hillary Clinton the presumptive nominee last night, New Jersey's results, the first likely to be reported tonight, were expected to push her over the edge. For now, however, the race is too early to call, according to CNN.

07:52 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

The polls just closed in North Carolina, where voters weighed in on House and state Supreme Court races. The election was rescheduled, as Andrew noted earlier, and turnout was expected to be low. One race to look out for is the one in the state's second congressional district, where two sitting members of Congress have faced off. It's

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unusual that two representatives-in this case, George Holding and Renee Ellmers-would be competing for the same seat, but it's a product of North Carolina's recent redistricting.

As I [reported](#) in a story published earlier today, Ellmers has taken heat from outside conservative groups, like Americans for Prosperity, for being, essentially, too liberal. These groups have actively campaigned against Ellmers, who was elected to Congress on a tea-party platform but shifted to the center on some issues. She was bolstered over the weekend by an endorsement from Donald Trump, the first and only congressional endorsement he's given this primary season. The conservative organizations dissing Ellmers also aren't big fans of Trump, but it's not yet clear how much of an effect either side will have on voters:

Tuesday's North Carolina primary could hypothetically offer the first glimpse of a "Trump bump." Ellmers is fighting off multiple opponents in her primary race, which is turning out to be a virtual proxy war between pro- and anti-Trump forces. ...

[H]aving Trump's support could potentially give her cred among voters with an independent streak, who would appreciate her occasional centrism. After all, anti-Trump groups repeatedly targeted his spotty conservatism in the primary, but those efforts did not hurt him with supporters, many of whom were new to primary voting.

Trump's iconoclasm may not have damaged him, but the question is: Will Ellmers's track record hurt her in the end?

07:46 PM

[Sacha Zimmerman](#)[Link](#)

Vis-a-vis Andrew's note about Ted Cruz and his still passionate supporters writing him in: Cruz has a good argument for taking the nomination next cycle. After Mitt Romney's defeat in 2012, the general Republican assessment was to expand the party-**Latinos**, Millennials, etc. Clearly that plan has gone spectacularly wrong. If Trump loses in November, Cruz will have a strong case for returning the party to its conservative roots in 2020. He would have the evangelicals locked up of course. But more: He would have serious name recognition. It worked for Romney, John McCain, and Bob Dole-three men who came in second place the cycle before they earned the nomination. Cruz gave Trump a run for his money-folks might think, maybe he should have been the nominee...And if Cruz holds out and refuses to endorse Trump, he will have an edge over, well, almost everyone else in the Republican Party as they all capitulate to the Trump juggernaut. Cruz can return to his moralizing, which for a Texan is a total sweet spot. Sure, people hate him, he's awkward, and he plays dirty-but who would have thought that Paul Ryan would stake his reputation on Trump while Ted Cruz stood on principle? (If he indeed does decide to stand on principle-even cynical principle.)

07:37 PM

[Priscilla Alvarez](#)[Link](#)

Donald Trump may be the presumptive Republican nominee, but not everyone is on board. A few weeks ago I spoke with Republican voters who were disappointed with Trump's surge. "I don't believe conservatives that say they're conservative and are jumping on the (Trump) bandwagon," said Mary Rasar, a 50-year-old Cruz supporter who lives in California. Rasar voted for John McCain and Mitt Romney even though they weren't her preferred picks. That won't be the case this year. "I'm not going to vote the lesser of two evils. The two evils we have our equal," she said, adding that she would still back Cruz and change her party affiliation when the election is over.

The businessman-turned-presidential candidate has enjoyed a large swath of support across the country, but he's also [complicated the relationship](#) between party identification and party allegiance in the process. As Andrew noted, some voters are still holding out hope for former presidential candidates. And that may not be totally surprising. According to a [Quinnipiac poll](#) released earlier this month, 59 percent of American voters view Trump as "somewhat unfavorable" or "strongly unfavorable." Trump is still expected to pick up votes in today's primaries, but perhaps not everyone that submits a ballot will be happy about it.

07:20 PM

[Andrew McGill](#)[Link](#)

With Trump the all-but-nominated nominee, it doesn't seem like Republican voters in California have much of a choice today. But four other Republicans are still on the ballot-Ben Carson, Ted Cruz, John Kasich, and Jim Gilmore. Cruz was in the news today, telling reporters he's still "assessing" whether he can support Trump. "I think

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voters are going to do that from now right until Election Day, and I'm giving it time and watching and assessing," he [said](#).

Some of his supporters have a different plan. Last week, former Cruz spokesman Ron Nehring [tweeted](#) a picture of his mail-in ballot, which he had filled out for Cruz. He was joined today by scores of others [tweeting](#) their support for the Texas senator with the hashtag #CruzCrew. Several explained they were seeking to give Cruz as much firepower as possible in case of a contested convention. Their work is unlikely to pay off: Betting markets put the chance of a contested convention at [just 10 percent](#), and the possibility of a Cruz victory at a low [2 percent](#).

07:00 PM [Emma Green](#) [Link](#)

In a little over an hour, polls will close in New Jersey. As The Press of Atlantic City [pointed out](#) on Tuesday, the ever-maligned Garden State kind of got robbed. "For the first time in more than 30 years, it appeared New Jersey's late-in-the-process primary today would get to play a key role in deciding a presidential candidate," the paper wrote. "But then history happened."

"History," of course, refers to [Monday night's report](#) that Hillary Clinton already has enough delegates to win the Democratic presidential nomination. The more interesting hard feelings, though, might be on the Republican side. Trump has history in the state, and not just because he [may have cast a spell](#) on its governor.

The reporter Brent Johnson [had a good article](#) back in October about the era of Trump in Atlantic City. By 1990, the real-estate magnate had opened three casinos; the bankruptcy filings started within a year. The takeaway seems to be that Trump's legacy is mixed: He raised the city's profile, but he also caused job losses and other economic hardships.

Of a possible Trump return, the former Atlantic City mayor Jim Whelan said this: "A, it's not going to happen. And B, I don't know that any one person is going to come in the door and turn things around all by themselves." Depending on what happens in November, Trump could soon be charged with turning around a lot more than a hard-on-its-luck gambling town.

06:28 PM [Russell Berman](#) [Link](#)

Hillary Clinton plans to party tonight, regardless of whether she wins California, and regardless of whether Bernie Sanders bows out of the race. Clinton is holding her event at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the site of the final Democratic debate earlier this spring, about a mile from her campaign headquarters. Her campaign is billing the final primary-night rally as a celebration of Clinton becoming the first woman to win the presidential nomination of either major party, and she is unlikely to wait until the votes are counted in California to kick off the event.

She will be introduced to the stage with [this new video](#) heralding her achievement and the progress of women's rights in the century since they won the right to vote. The video features the voices of other prominent female politicians, including Ann Richards, the former Texas governor, and Shirley Chisholm, who in 1972 became the first woman to seek the Democratic presidential nomination.

For Clinton, the moment will carry an additional piece of historical symmetry, as it comes eight years to the day after she conceded the 2008 nomination fight to Barack Obama.

05:56 PM [Elaine Godfrey](#) [Link](#)

For days, Trump has [faced criticism](#) for questioning the impartiality of federal judge Gonzalo Curiel because of his Mexican heritage. Some Republicans have tried to criticize the candidate's comments while maintaining that he is not, in his heart of hearts, an actual racist. But an Iowa Republican has decided he's had it with the Grand Old Party.

State senator David Johnson said he's suspended his party membership, citing Trump's "racist remarks and judicial jihad" as the last straw. The Guardian

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[reported](#) that Johnson is the first elected official to leave the party over Donald Trump, although it's possible others have done the same more quietly. The 65-year old senator changed his voter registration from Republican to "No Party," [telling The Des Moines Register](#), "I will not stand silent if the party of Lincoln and the end of slavery buckles under the racial bias of a bigot."

Johnson also said he hoped the remarks would force prominent Republicans like Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell to rescind their endorsements of Trump. Maybe they still will: This afternoon, Illinois Senator Mark Kirk, one of the more vulnerable Senators up for reelection this year, [announced](#) he would no longer support Trump. It's possible we'll see more of these un-endorsements leading up to the convention.

05:24 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

One state you won't see on television election maps tonight is North Carolina. But the state is indeed [holding an election today](#), a do-over for congressional contests after a federal court ordered the North Carolina legislature to redraw several painfully gerrymandered districts. The timing of the court's decision in February, a month before the primary, forced officials to split the state's Election Day in two. The presidential vote was held in March, as planned, and the congressional vote was postponed until today.

Presidential politics have still come up. [As Nora notes](#), Donald Trump has endorsed U.S. Representative Renee Ellmers, whose race has become a "virtual proxy war between pro- and anti-Trump forces."

05:02 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Candidates go to great lengths to get out the vote. They hold big rallies to pump up their supporters, or go door-to-door in small towns for a more personal touch. Sometimes, they just go to Dunkin' Donuts.

Santa Barbara Mayor Helene Schneider, a Democrat who's running for Congress in California's 24th district, cut the ribbon at a new franchise location that opened up in her city this morning, the Los Angeles Times [reports](#). Grasping giant pink scissors, Schneider called for a "sweet, sweet story" for the new spot.

Referencing the opening, the Times called today's primary election the "second-biggest thing happening in Santa Barbara." And for good reason: Dunkin' Donuts can be found in [no less than 32 countries](#), but this new location is Santa Barbara County's first.

The ribbon-cutting is probably one of many city spots at which Schneider will appear today as she encourages her constituents to head to the polls. Given her response to the long line outside Dunkin' this morning, it sounds like she has more work to do. "If only voter turnout was that great," she said.

04:31 PM [Yoni Appelbaum](#) [Link](#)

Breaking a day of silence-no press conferences, no television interviews, not even so much as a blustery tweet-Donald Trump this afternoon issued a [statement](#). It began:

It is unfortunate that my comments have been misconstrued as a categorical attack against people of Mexican heritage. I am friends with and employ thousands of people of Mexican and Hispanic descent. The American justice system relies on fair and impartial judges. All judges should be held to that standard. I do not feel that one's heritage makes them incapable of being impartial, but, based on the rulings that I have received in the Trump University civil case, I feel justified in questioning whether I am receiving a fair trial.

Fear not, gentle reader. Trump hasn't been abducted; he's been under the protection of the Secret Service since November. But it seems safe to assume that these words, issued in his name, are not of his own composition. A Monday report from Bloomberg, which quoted Trump-"The people asking the questions-those are the racists," Trump said. "I would go at 'em."-had a certain subtle Trumpian je ne sais quoi that this latest missive somehow lacks.

When Trump lets others do his speaking for him, it's usually a sign that things have gone horribly wrong. In this case, his overtly racist comments were [denounced](#) by Speaker Paul Ryan ("a textbook definition of a racist

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comment") and led Illinois Senator Mark Kirk to [rescind](#) his endorsement ("Donald Trump has not demonstrated the temperament necessary to assume the greatest office in the world").

Perhaps a chastened Trump will now decide to defer to seasoned political handlers, as he works to shore up crumbling support. But given that even this statement managed to blame the media for his self-inflicted wounds-"it is unfortunate that my comments have been misconstrued"-it's far more likely that he'll soon resume tweeting, and find some way to drown out the present concern beneath some fresh controversy.

04:27 PM [Chris Haugh](#) [Link](#)

California voters aren't just choosing between Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton today. As is ritual in the Golden State, they'll also consider a statewide ballot initiative.

Currently, state law prohibits the California State Legislature from denying its suspended members a paycheck. [Proposition 50](#), an anodyne initiative that appears on the statewide ballot today, would amend the state's constitution and allow lawmakers to revoke a suspended colleague's salary with a two-thirds vote.

In some ways, Prop. 50 marks the start of a new era. California is in the middle of a century-long experiment with direct democracy. The state has had citizen-sponsored initiatives appear on its ballots since the early 20th century. However, the process has recently gone through changes. Lawmakers [raised the filing fee](#) for a proposed initiative from \$200 to \$2,000 last year. And in 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed [legislation](#) allowing an initiative to be struck from the ballot if a compromise could be reached on the issue ahead of the election.

Sacramento's work to limit the process appears to have come to little avail, however. November's ballot may well feature the [most initiatives of any election since 2000](#), due in part to lower than normal voter turnout in 2014. (The number of signatures required to get an initiative on the ballot is tethered to turnout in the latest gubernatorial cycle.) November initiatives will likely ask voters to consider issues like prison reform, the death penalty, and condoms in adult films. As of Monday, four measures have qualified. Fourteen or more could follow. For now, California voters only have to decide whether or not to pay lawmakers accused of wrongdoing.

03:55 PM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

As anticipated, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie cast his ballot for Donald Trump earlier this afternoon. Local channel News12 [reports](#) that both Christie and his oldest son, Andrew-who just graduated from Princeton University-are Trump delegates.

Trump and Christie have a complicated relationship. Before the governor dropped out of the presidential race, he'd criticized the presumptive Republican nominee [quite a lot](#)-hitting him on his border-wall plan, calling him a "carnival barker," and knocking his level of experience. But after he left the race, Christie quickly changed course. He [endorsed Trump](#), appeared at his side at events, and was named the head of Trump's White House transition team. All along, Christie's support for Trump has seemed at once surprising, given his past criticism, and totally natural. The two East Coasters share similar rhetorical qualities, so it's perhaps no surprise they can get along. Christie was the tell-it-like-it-is candidate before Trump stole his thunder.

But unlike Trump, Christie seemed to have limits-except, apparently, today. As he talked to reporters at his [polling station](#), Christie defended Trump's recent comments on the federal judge handling the Trump University lawsuit. Trump has said repeatedly that the judge cannot fairly preside over the case because of his Mexican heritage.

Calling the controversy over Trump's claims a media-driven "kerfuffle," Christie said he would not respond to questions regarding whether Trump was being racist. He framed Trump's claims as not atypical: "There are always going to be conflicts regarding civil lawsuits. People are always going to express their opinions," he said. "Those are Donald's opinions and he has the right to express them-the same way anybody else has a right to express any of their views regarding how they are treated in the civil or criminal courts in this country. That's part of what free speech is all about."

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Christie's argument may be a subtle nod to his tenure as a federal prosecutor-he seems to be saying he's heard similar accusations before. But even if that's true, Christie probably hasn't heard them from a nominee of a major political party.

03:36 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

The revolution isn't over yet. Bernie Sanders just gave two additional congressional candidates his blessing. In a fundraising email, Sanders is asking supporters to open their wallets for Eric Kingson and Paul Clements. Kingson is a New York Democratic candidate for the U.S. House, while Clements is a Michigan contender for a U.S. House seat. The email reminds supporters to donate money to an array of other congressional contenders Sanders has already endorsed. And it makes a lofty promise: "If you stand with them-like we have stood together throughout this campaign-we're going to transform the Democratic Party, and we are going to transform this country."

03:06 PM [Vann R. Newkirk II](#) [Link](#)

While much of the rest of the country is attempting to make voting as difficult as possible, California's primaries provide a look at just what might happen when a state does the reverse. Over the past few years, the Golden State has expanded automatic registration efforts at DMVs, heavily promoted mail-in ballots, developed mobile apps for registering to vote, and increased polling locations. In many ways, California is the model state for liberal voting reforms.

How might those reforms actually impact turnout? California actually experienced [record low turnout](#) in the 2014 midterm election, and some attribute a downward trend to changing demographics. Older, whiter voters vote more often, and California is becoming less white and younger.

However, a surge in registration and huge early and mail-in turnout in today's primaries provide hope of a turnaround for the state. About half of all the people who voted in the previous presidential primaries submitted ballots before election day, and over 600,000 voters [registered](#) in the past two months.

Turnout and voter motivation are tricky things to measure. Could an increase in voting simply mean reforms are finally taking hold and engaging more people of color in the process? Could there be some special motivating effect for or against any of the candidates? Is this the Trump effect? It is likely impossible to disentangle any of these effects from each other when discussing turnout, especially with the noisiness of primary races, but perhaps the main lesson is that large numbers of people are availing themselves of the expanding options in how to vote and how to register to vote.

02:33 PM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

Last night at around 11 p.m., the Associated Press [declared](#) Hillary Clinton the winner of the Democratic nomination. Or rather, in very careful language, it said a majority of superdelegates had indicated privately they would support her at the convention. To Bernie Sanders's supporters, it amounted to the same thing, and they are not pleased.

That the AP made the projection at all would have ticked off the #BernieOrBust crowd no matter what, who maintain, correctly, that the superdelegates' endorsements are not final until the national convention in July. But the news organization published on the eve of the California primary, which even the Vermont senator himself likely considers his last real shot at this thing-and that was unforgivable.

This morning, Glenn Greenwald of The Intercept [published](#) a short column that's since been upvoted nearly 2,000 times on the "SandersForPresident" Reddit page, and shared countless times on Twitter:

This is the perfect symbolic ending to the Democratic Party primary: The nomination is consecrated by a media organization, on a day when nobody voted, based on secret discussions with anonymous establishment insiders and donors whose identities the media organization - incredibly - conceals. The decisive edifice of superdelegates is itself anti-democratic and inherently corrupt: designed to prevent actual voters from making choices that the party establishment dislikes. But for a party run by insiders and funded by corporate interests, it's only fitting that its nomination process ends with such an ignominious, awkward, and undemocratic sputter.

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Greenwald certainly does not support Clinton, whom he's called "Wall Street-enriched," "multiple-war-advocating" and "despot-embracing." But as a journalist, he's avoided giving direct support to Sanders. Regardless, his piece is now the symbol of the Sanders camp's rage.

02:15 PM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

Hillary Clinton has increasingly turned her attention to the general election. Her campaign announced on Tuesday that she will visit Ohio and Pennsylvania-general election battleground states-at the start of next week. In a press release, the campaign said Clinton will "lay out what is at stake in November" during the trip and "discuss her vision for an America that is stronger when it is united."

Last week, Clinton made the case that Donald Trump is unfit to be president, [delivering a sweeping foreign policy address](#) that was heavy on criticism of the **GOP** presumptive nominee and comparatively light on policy specifics. That seems to be the overarching message she will carry through until November.

Clinton can't afford to ignore the Democratic primary, of course. Politico [reports](#) that she is preparing to deliver a victory speech on Tuesday night that will make a plea for party unity. The question now is, what will Bernie Sanders, and Trump for that matter, do in response?

01:49 PM [Emma Green](#) [Link](#)

What could be worse than having your primary on a Tuesday at the end of the season after candidates in both parties have already locked up their delegate counts and secured the nomination? Being South Dakota on that Tuesday, voting alongside California.

On the Democratic side, South Dakota has 20 bound delegates and five superdelegates. Republicans have 29 bound and zero unbound. As the Argus Leader, the newspaper of Sioux Falls, [points out](#), California "has 20 times more delegates than the Mount Rushmore State."

All of this means South Dakota is pretty much doomed to be ignored on election day. "Will South Dakota get any national attention?" a primer article from the Argus Leader asks. "It's highly unlikely. Associated Press estimates show Clinton needs 26 delegates to clinch the Democratic nomination and New Jersey Democrats will likely push her over that threshold Tuesday night. Due to their eastern location and time zone, that result will likely come before South Dakota's."

The political reporter Dana Ferguson offers similar thoughts on Twitter:

. [@politico](#) doesn't list SD as one of 8 places to watch today, but I'll have your news from today's primary <https://t.co/9KrbKV6Bju>

- Dana Ferguson (@bydanaferguson) [June 7, 2016](#)

On one hand, this election cycle has already been long, and it's not even in the home stretch. Previous primaries have made or broken nominees, especially on the Republican side-one by one, they were picked off by voters in places like Indiana and New Hampshire. It's hard for Tuesday's races not to seem a bit anti-climactic.

But also Voting matters! And South Dakota matters. The United States government was specifically designed to protect low-population states like South Dakota-the 45th most populous state in the union. Congress doesn't just have a House of Representatives that gives proportional representation; it also has a Senate, in which each state gets the same amount of say.

If one thing can cheer the state's voters, perhaps it's this: They don't live in North Dakota, which is also voting today, but has even fewer residents.

12:52 PM [Emma Green](#) [Link](#)

As more Democratic leaders pile on to endorse Hillary, it's interesting to look at what messages the Sanders campaign has been pushing in the lead-up to Tuesday's primaries. A lot of his **ads** echo messages that have been present through the campaign: income inequality, the criminal-justice system, education, etc.

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But he's also started speaking in overtly religious terms, a bit of a departure from past interviews in which he's squirmed away from questions about God and faith. This [ad](#) calls on Americans to consider their moral lives-and a moral way of going about politics. He also condemns attacks on religious liberty:

Maybe he's gotten the Francis bug after [his Roman holiday](#). Maybe he's trying anything and everything in these last waning days of his campaign. After all of this is over-when he's conceded, or after the conventions, or even after the general-it will be interesting to see what comes of his legacy, and what Bernie felt was most important to say in his last days standing as a Democratic presidential candidate.

12:12 PM [Priscilla Alvarez](#) [Link](#)

California has the [largest share of Latino eligible voters](#) in the country. And ahead of the state's primary, Latino voter registration spiked. NBC [reports](#) that "according to [Political Data Inc.](#), a California data company that tracks voter registrations, the Latino surge in registrations is huge and higher than the increase in voter registration seen in the 2012 (or) 2008 primaries." The article cites a number of reasons for the increase, including Donald Trump's controversial rhetoric and a significant portion of Millennial voters in the state.

In fact, a [Pew Research Center analysis](#) released in April found that 26 percent of Hispanics in the United States are between the ages of 18 and 33. Pew's findings align with a long-running trend in the country, as the Hispanic population has always been one of the youngest. In 2016, the divide in age within the population may yield different results for each age group. Young voters, for example, are [more likely to flock to Bernie Sanders](#). In California, Latino voters are split evenly between Clinton and Sanders, according to a [May survey](#).

11:39 AM [Clare Foran](#) [Link](#)

Nancy Pelosi said something else noteworthy in her Good Morning America interview endorsing Hillary Clinton. The House minority leader called the possibility of a woman vice presidential pick "fabulous." When asked by George Stephanopoulos what she thought of Elizabeth Warren joining Clinton as a running mate, Pelosi [replied](#): "We've had two men over and over again for hundreds of years. I think that two women-whomever they may be-that would be fabulous as well, but Hillary Clinton will choose the person that she feels most comfortable with."

The nod from Pelosi arrives on the heels of reports that Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid is [quietly advocating](#) for Warren as a VP pick. It also follows a [report from The Boston Globe](#) that "Senate Democrats may have found an avenue to block or at least narrow **GOP** Governor Charlie Baker's ability to name a temporary replacement and prevent the Senate from flipping to a Democratic majority if Warren were to leave the chamber." It's not hard to see why Warren might be tempted to join the Democratic ticket if Clinton asks, as the role might give her even more authority to pursue a progressive agenda. But Warren would inevitably put her influence and reputation on the line if she accepted an invitation to run as VP.

11:19 AM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

For East Coasters glued to the television for election returns, California's three-hour delay will be torturous enough. The state's polls close at 8 p.m. Pacific, meaning projections won't begin in earnest until at or after 11 p.m. Eastern. But tallying the votes could take even longer. California residents voting by mail must drop their ballots in the mailbox today, but they're given a [three-day grace period](#) for their paperwork to arrive at the county election office. The New York Times [notes](#) that only 70 percent of California's votes are typically counted by noon the day after the election, and in a contest potentially as close as this year's Democratic presidential primary, the question of which candidate won could remain open for some time.

10:50 AM [David A. Graham](#) [Link](#)

Donald Trump and his backers are fighting a two-front war: On the left is Hillary Clinton, the newly named presumptive Democratic nominee. And on the right are members of the Republican Party, including those who have endorsed Donald Trump.

Hillary Makes History

During a press conference about poverty Tuesday morning, House Speaker Paul Ryan, who [quietly endorsed Trump](#) last week, was asked about Trump's claim that federal Judge Gonzalo Curiel could not fairly judge the Trump University case because of his Mexican heritage. An increasing number of Republicans have criticized Trump's comments, but few quite so bluntly as Ryan, who called them "indefensible."

"Claiming a person can't do their job because of their race is sort of like a textbook definition of a racist comment," he [said](#). (Senator Ben Sasse of Nebraska [tweeted](#) almost exactly the same thing Monday.) Moments later, Jeffrey Lord-a former Ronald Reagan aide who has become Trump's go-to voice on CNN-fired back.

"Let me make no bones about it: Speaker Ryan is wrong and Speaker Ryan has apparently switched positions and is now supporting identity politics-which is racist. I mean, I'm astonished," Lord said. Incredulous host Carol Costello asked him if he was really calling Ryan a racist. "I am accusing anybody, anybody who believes in identity politics, which he apparently now does, of playing the race card. The Republican establishment is playing this. Senator McConnell is playing this. These people have run and hid and borrowed the Democratic agenda of playing the race card. It is wrong," he said.

Lord's comment is confusing-to what end would Republicans play "the race card" against a candidate who they have endorsed? But Lord's line of attack does follow closely on a report released Monday. According to [Bloomberg](#), Trump spoke with surrogates on a conference call, shredding a memo from his own campaign asking surrogates to steer clear of the Curiel issue. Instead, the candidate told them they should accuse anyone who brought it up of being the real racists. The upshot: one of the Trump campaign's top surrogates calling the Republican speaker of the House, a Trump endorser, a racist on national TV.

10:10 AM [Andrew McGill](#) [Link](#)

Most folks outside of California will focus on how Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders fare in the state today. But Golden State voters will also [pick two candidates](#) to advance to the general election to replace retiring U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer-and the way things are looking, both contenders might be Democrats. Thanks to a [2010 California constitutional amendment](#) that effectively threw away factional distinctions in primaries, the two primary candidates with the most votes will press forward to the general election, even if they're from the same party. That means state Attorney General Kamala Harris and U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez, both Democrats and leading the primary field, [might be running against each other](#) again in November. That puts party unity in short supply in California, which has already endured a bruising contest between the two Democratic presidential candidates. (And before you ask: No, this new law doesn't apply to the race for president.)

09:42 AM [Nora Kelly](#) [Link](#)

Speaking of remaining neutral: The Associated Press [reported](#) Monday night that Al Gore, the former vice president, is the last superdelegate from Tennessee to remain uncommitted. He, of course, knows presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton well; Gore served in her husband Bill's administration before running for president in 2000. His spokeswoman did not give the AP a reason for why he's holding out. But a [report from Politico](#) late last year offers some clues:

Gore's reticence, his friends and allies say, is in part to maximize his own leverage on fighting climate change. But his repeated demurrals also reflect a complicated relationship with his former boss's wife that dates back more than two decades. While Gore and Hillary Clinton may not be enemies, they're not exactly close friends, either. The article details, via anonymous former White House aides, a rivalry between the two "baby boomer policy wonks" that was further challenged by Clinton's Senate bid, which allegedly distracted from his presidential race.

In a [May interview](#) with NBC marking the 10th anniversary of his climate-change documentary An Inconvenient Truth, Gore demurred when asked if an endorsement was forthcoming. Though he did hint that he had been courted. "I've gotten signals that you can interpret that way," Gore said.

Hillary Makes History

09:07 AM [Russell Berman](#) [Link](#)

Well, that was quick. Mere hours after the Associated Press anointed Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee, the former secretary of state received the endorsement of Nancy Pelosi, the House minority leader, first woman speaker, and California superdelegate. "I'm a voter in California, and I have voted for Hillary Clinton for president of the United States and proud to endorse her for that position," Pelosi said Tuesday on Good Morning America. The Democratic leader had remained neutral during the primaries, but like that of President Obama, her endorsement of Clinton was seen as a matter of when, not if.

The fight for the Democratic presidential nomination is effectively over. As [the AP reported Monday](#), Hillary Clinton has secured enough delegates to win. Tuesday's primaries will only confirm her victory-whether Bernie Sanders likes it or not.

As voters head to the polls in California, New Jersey, and four other states, Clinton is poised to pad her now-insurmountable lead with dozens of additional delegates. The question is whether Sanders will accept his loss. Both he and his campaign have sent out conflicting signals about whether the Vermont senator intends to acknowledge Clinton's victory or continue his campaign into the Democratic convention in Philadelphia next month. His only hope is that an indictment or other scandal would swing the support of superdelegates who are now behind Clinton.

The trouble for Sanders is that Clinton has already effectively been crowned the winner. Ahead of the final primaries, the AP said its count of pledged delegates and superdelegates who are "unequivocally" behind Clinton had given her the nomination. The race in California is a close one, yet even a narrow Sanders victory would amount to little more than a bee sting for Clinton, embarrassing as it might be. Polls also show her with a comfortable lead in New Jersey. All signs suggest the former secretary of state plans to claim the title of presumptive nominee during a primary-night speech in Brooklyn. And in a leak that seemed aimed squarely at Sanders, The New York Times [reported](#) Monday afternoon that President Obama could make his long-awaited endorsement of Clinton some time this week and was eager to begin campaigning on her behalf. (In a separate but possibly related announcement, NBC said Obama would be making his first appearance with Jimmy Fallon on The Tonight Show this Thursday.)

Sanders [said on Sunday](#) that he would push for a contested convention in Philly, but on Monday he appeared to back off that position, telling reporters that the campaign would "assess where we are" after Tuesday. And in a statement late Monday night, the Sanders campaign criticized news organizations for "a rush to judgment" and said it would work to persuade superdelegates in the coming weeks. Donald Trump doesn't have anything have at stake in these primaries, but true to form, he'll try to steal the spotlight with his own election-night press event at Trump National Golf Club in Westchester, New York.

In all the drama with Sanders and Trump, it's easy to lose sight of the historical significance of Clinton's achievement. Eight years after her surprising loss to Obama, the former first lady, senator, and secretary of state will be one step away from the presidency and the first woman to lead the ticket of either major party.

-Russell Berman

Read [Hillary Makes History](#) on theatlantic.com

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