

Hillary Clinton Scores with Republican Donors

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An [analysis of Federal Election Commission records, by TIME](#), shows that the 2012 donors to Mitt Romney's campaign have been donating more to Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign than they have been donating to the campaign of — listed here in declining order below Clinton — Lindsey Graham, Rand Paul, Carly Fiorina, Chris Christie, Rick Perry, Mike Huckabee, Donald Trump, Bobby Jindal, Rick Santorum, George Pataki, Martin O'Malley, Jim Web, Jim Gilmore, or Lawrence Lessig.

Clinton is the only Democratic candidate who is even moderately attractive to big Republican donors.

In ascending order *above* Clinton, Romney's donors have been donating to: John Kasich, Scott Walker, Ben Carson, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and Jeb Bush. The top trio — of Bush, Cruz, and Rubio — have, together, received about 60% of all the money donated this time around, by the people who had funded Mitt Romney's 2012 drive for the White House.

So: the Democrat Hillary Clinton scores above 14 candidates, and below 6 candidates. She is below 6 Republican candidates, and she's above 11 Republican candidates.

This means that, in the entire 17-candidate *Republican* field, she drew more Republican money than did any one of 11 of the Republican candidates, but less Republican money than did any one of 6 of them. So, if she were a Republican (in what would then be an 18-candidate Republican-candidate field for 2016), she would be the 7th-from-the-top recipient of Romney-donor money.

Hillary Clinton, therefore, to Republican donors, is a more attractive prospect for the U.S. Presidency than is 64% of the *current* 17-member Republican field of candidates.

Another way to view this is that, to Republican donors, a President Clinton would be approximately as attractive a Presidential prospect as would be a President Graham, or a President Kasich.

To judge from Clinton's actual record of policy-decisions, and excluding any consideration of her current campaign-*rhetoric* (which is directed only at Democratic voters), all three of those candidates — Graham, Clinton, and Kasich — would, indeed, be quite similar, from the perceived self-interest standpoint of major Republican donors.

As to whether any of those three candidates as President would be substantially worse for Republican donors than would any one of the Republican big-three — Bush, Cruz, and Rubio — one can only speculate.

However, the main difference between Clinton and the Republican candidates is certainly the rhetoric, not the reality. That's because Ms. Clinton is competing right now *only* for

Democratic votes, while each one of the Republican candidates is competing right now *only* for Republican votes.

In a general-election contest, Clinton would move more toward the ideological center, and so also would any one of the Republican candidates, who would be running then in the general election, against her; but, right now, the rhetorical contest is starkly different on the Democratic side, than it is on the Republican side, simply because the candidates are trying to appeal to their own Party's electorate during the primary phase of the campaign, not to the entire electorate as during the general-election campaign.

Only in the general-election contest do all of the major candidates' rhetoric tend more toward the center. The strategic challenge in the general election is to retain enough appeal to the given nominee's Party-base so as to draw them to the polls on Election Day, while, at the same time, being close enough to the political center so as to attract independent voters and crossover voters from the other side.

A good example of the fudging that occurs during the general-election phase would be the 2012 contest itself. Both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney drew closer to the rhetorical center during the general-election matchup; but they were actually much more similar to each other than their rhetoric *ever* was. (After all, Obamacare is patterned upon Romneycare.) During the general-election Romney-Obama contest, Romney famously said that Russia ["is without question our number one geopolitical foe, they fight for every cause for the world's worst actors."](#)

Then, Obama criticized that statement, by saying, ["you don't call Russia our No. 1 enemy — not Al-Qaida, Russia — unless you're still stuck in a Cold War mind warp."](#) But, now, as President, Obama's own [National Security Strategy 2015](#) refers to Russia on 17 of the 18 occasions where it employs the term "aggression," and he doesn't refer even once to Saudi Arabia that way, though the Saudi royal family (who control that country) have been [the major funders of Al Qaeda](#), and though 15 of the 19 perpetrators on 9/11 were Saudis — none of them was Russian — and though the Saudis are [using American weapons and training to bomb and starve-to-death Yemenis](#). Instead of calling the Saudi regime "aggressors," we supply arms to them, and cooperate with them against their major oil-competitor, Russia. (For example, we arm the Saudi-funded jihadists that Russia is bombing in Syria — a key [potential](#) pipeline [route](#).)

Also, on 27 March 2009, President Obama in secret [told the assembled chieftains of Wall Street, "My administration is the only thing between you and the pitchforks. ... I'm protecting you."](#) Romney could have said the same, if he had been elected. And President Obama's record has now [made clear that he indeed has fulfilled on that promise he made secretly to them](#).

The reality turned out to be far more like Romney, than like Obama's campaign rhetoric had ever been. Similarly, on Obama's trade-deals (TPP, TTIP, and TISA), he has been very much what would have been expected from Romney, though Obama had [campaigning against Hillary Clinton for her having supported and helped to pass NAFTA](#). Obama's trade-deals go even beyond NAFTA, to [benefit international mega-corporations at the general public's expense](#).

What Hillary's fairly strong appeal to Romney's financial backers shows is that the wealthy,

because of their access to leaders in government, know and recognize the difference between what a candidate says in public, versus what the winning public official has said (to them) in private and actually *does* while serving in office.

Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [*They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010*](#), and of [*CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity*](#).

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