

- Mark your confusion.
- Purposefully annotate the article (1-2 mature, thoughtful responses per page to what the author is saying)
- Write a 250+ word response to the article.

Republican Party's disruption laid bare in Trump's Nevada victory by Michael Finnegan for *The LA Times*, 2/24/2016

The following was written last week, after Donald Trump won the Nevada primary:

It was a raw version of Donald Trump on display in Nevada this week, and it showed more clearly than ever how the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination is turning his party asunder.

The New York developer gloated at his Nevada victory Tuesday night when he walked on stage to thundering chants of his name at a Las Vegas casino across the street from the gold-glass hotel tower that he owns on the Strip.

“It’s going to be an amazing two months,” he told the crowd, boasting of his prospects in upcoming contests in Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, Arkansas, Florida and Ohio. “We might not even need the two months, folks, to be honest.”

Trump might be right.

After decisive wins in New Hampshire, South Carolina and now Nevada, it’s fair to ask how many more contests his top rivals Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio can lose before the **delegate** math makes it impossible for anyone but Trump to capture the nomination.

On Tuesday night, Trump mocked pundits who argue that all it will take to knock him out of the race is the consolidation of mainstream Republicans behind a lone rival – most likely Rubio or, should the Florida senator falter, Ohio Gov. John Kasich.

“They keep forgetting that when people drop out, we’re going to get a lot of votes,” Trump told a few hundred supporters at his celebration at the Treasure Island casino.

With a dash more bravado than usual, he reminded his national audience – it was another Trump speech televised live – of his signature pledge to bill Mexico for an \$8-billion border wall.

“They’ll pay for the wall, they’ll be very happy about it, believe me,” Trump said. “I’ll talk to them. They’ll be very, very thrilled.”

It was just the kind of **rhetoric** that strikes a nerve with Mike Schoch, a 62-year-old Las Vegas limo driver wearing a white “Hillary You’re Fired” cap.

“I’d like to see the wall go up,” he said while in line at the party’s bar. “The **Vatican’s** got one. Why can’t we?”

Looking ahead to the dozen Super Tuesday contests next week, Trump played up his cultural affinity with white blue-collar conservatives.

He thanked Donald Trump Jr. for campaigning in remote Elko, Nev. He and his other son Eric love “the rifle stuff,” Trump said.

“This is serious NRA – both of them,” he said. “We love the 2nd Amendment, folks. Nobody loves it more than us.”

Trump also made a point of thanking his star evangelical Christian supporter, Jerry Falwell Jr. – “an unbelievable guy.” Falwell played no visible role in the Nevada contest, but could help Trump defeat Cruz in Bible Belt primaries that the Texas senator must win next week to remain viable.

Calling attention to his refusal to accept campaign money from special interests, Trump gestured to his business partner, Philip Ruffin, who owns Treasure Island. When Ruffin offered to give the campaign \$10 million, Trump said he responded, “Phil, I don’t want your money.”

At the same time, Trump inadvertently called attention to questions about his attitude toward women by using an archaic method of introducing the spouses of Ruffin and another casino mogul in the audience, Steve Wynn: “Mr. and Mrs. Phil Ruffin” and “Mr. and Mrs. Steve Wynn.”

Trump, whose frequent vulgarity has turned off many upscale Republicans, avoided profanity during his two-day swing through Nevada.

But he still showed his rougher edges. He used his vow to torture terrorism suspects as an applause line at a Las Vegas rally Monday night (as did Rubio, if more **elliptically**, at a casino stop Tuesday morning). And when a protester was ejected from the rally, Trump said, “I’d like to punch him in the face.”

With Trump fast approaching striking distance of the White House nomination, Republican mega-donors like Marlene Ricketts are alarmed. Ricketts, whose family owns the Chicago Cubs, has given \$3 million to a super-PAC running attack ads against Trump. Her husband, billionaire Joe Ricketts, is the founder of finance giant TD Ameritrade.

On Twitter, Trump stopped just short of threatening **retaliation** on Monday.

“I hear the Ricketts family, who own the Chicago Cubs, are secretly spending \$'s against me,” he wrote. “They better be careful, they have a lot to hide!”

Possible response options:

- Where do you weigh in on the current contenders for the 2016 US Presidential election?
- Mr. Trump has alleged that he'll build a wall across the US-Mexican border and bill the Mexican government for construction costs. What do you think about this? How might this affect America's reputation abroad?
- Why do you think that Trump's popularity has maintained over such a long time during the lead up to the primary season and now into the beginning of the primary season? Explain.
- Choose any passage and respond to it.