



Touchbutton

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Pass the poison

The quickest way to shift the mood of conversation in the United States is to ask a conservative voter for their views on Hillary Clinton's announcement that she will run for office in 2016. If you think that the vitriol being served in the UK as we inch towards the election is bad, it seems tame in comparison with what is happening in America.

At one of the first high profile events since her announcement, New Hampshire Republicans attacked her about Russia, Libya, her email habits, and the Clinton Foundation's acceptance of contributions from countries with poor human rights records. One senator went so far as to say that her actions surrounding the death of Americans in Libya in 2012 were nothing less than 'dereliction of duty' and should 'preclude her forever from holding high office.'

As in the UK, income inequality is clearly going to be one of the key economic issues of the presidential campaign. Hillary Clinton has already spoken out about her positions on the issue. Clinton bills herself as the candidate for everyday Americans. She recently tweeted: 'Every American deserves a fair shot at success. Fast food & child care workers shouldn't have to march in the streets for living wages.' This will sound familiar to readers in the UK, but interestingly, recent opinion polls in the US actually all point to increasing scepticism about redistribution of wealth through higher taxes and generally 'soaking the rich'. It's a puzzle that is still being thought through by organisations such as the US National Bureau of Economic Research, and the conclusions being reached seem to be that it's a very much wider group that is now seen as being rich, with growing doubts about precisely who benefits from the soaking anyway.

Either way, there's a long way to go before America shifts into a higher gear for the election of its next president, but it promises to be full of back stabbing and below the belt comments. Hillary may also not even be able to turn her back on her husband's philandering: discussing a cable TV show in which questions were raised about whether women had the hormonal capacity to serve as president, it was sarcastically put 'not that we've ever seen a man's judgement being clouded by hormones, including in the Oval Office.'

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