

COMMENTARY By DR. DHANPAUL NARINE

# Sex, Lies and the Tapes

Nobody's perfect, but when you hold public office you become public property.

Remember Gary Hart? In a big political campaign the little moments count. Privacy is obliterated as the media's perpetual hunger for news unmask the tiniest details of impropriety. In the case of Gary Hart they didn't have to look far. He gave the media the juicy details of his private life on a platter. It was Hart who told reporters 'to follow me around. I don't care. If anybody wants to put a tail on me, go ahead. They'd be very bored.'

But the media had the last laugh. A report from the 'Miami Herald' stated that Hart was having a dalliance with a woman that was not his wife. He was messing around in real time with Donna Rice, in a boat appropriately called 'Monkey Business.' The animal, it turned out, could not be tamed!

The revelation ruined the chances of Hart winning the Democratic nomination in the 1988 presidential election. The two-term Senator from Colorado sailed into the sunset with plenty of time to contemplate on what might have been.

Remember John Edwards? He was brilliant, flashy and was tapped by many to be a future president. He spoke about the 'Two Americas' long before Occupy Wall Street. Edwards was a Senator from North Carolina that ran for President in 2004. He was eloquent and looked as someone who might go far. He ran again in 2008 and then the walls came tumbling down.

Edwards was having an affair with his videographer Reille Hunter. He kept denying it. He lied to his wife. It turned out that Edwards was the father of Hunter's child and that he even used campaign money to support his mistress. These examples beg the question: Why does a politician risk it all for money, sex and privilege when

these revelations could put an end to their ambitions and leave them in ignominy? Why do politicians lie?

Some academics say that there is a difference between a little and a big lie. It is felt that the big-

insisted that President Obama was born outside of the US and spun stories to that effect. Each example showed the power of the lie and the embarrassment that occurred when the actors were caught.

The 2016 election campaign has had its fair share of lies, half-truths and half-baked math. Donald Trump said that

is no Soviet domination in Eastern Europe.' There are various theories as to why politicians lie and why the public does not seem to care. The first is apathy. The United States has seen the rise of the entrenched politician that says anything that the public wants to hear. These do-little politicians are more concerned about their own

the second presidential debate CNN had Hillary Clinton winning while Fox News kept repeating that Donald Trump didn't only win but that he 'obliterated Hillary.' This news was aired from Fox's Spin Room!

This brings us to Donald Trump. He has shown scant respect for women long before he decided to run for polit-



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scene at Chappaquiddick. He spent years trying to prove his innocence to the world but it didn't wash with the public. Kennedy ran for president but was forced to suspend his campaign when he could not get the public to support him. The public did not like someone that was evasive with the truth.

In Donald Trump we have a candidate that has consistently twisted the truth, with his taxes, or the women he has insulted.

The tapes that were recorded in 2005 showed that Trump believed that he could get his way with women. When he discussed groping and other forms of detailed vulgarity he boasted that, 'when you're a star, they let you do it.'

This sounds familiar with Bill Clinton telling us that he 'could.' We have reached this ridiculous situation in which the voters are asked to choose between a Trump 'who said it but didn't do it' and Mrs. Clinton whose husband did it! In the meantime there are more revelations from Wikileaks that show Hillary Clinton twisting the truth in her public and private utterances. Her email scandals won't go away.

Trump has become unhinged and unshackled. There will be more bar-room brawls, locker-room banter and name-calling. The Republicans are imploding. Trump has given it away and voters are asked to choose between two of the most unpopular candidates in history.

The prospects for the next four years cannot be viewed with optimism.



Donald Trump: unhinged, unshackled and uninspiring.

ger or most outrageous the lie the greater the chances it would be believed.

The conclusion will usually be: why would someone make up a story like that? These days there are various terms to describe the lie. We are told that a politician is being economical, or evasive or even stretching the truth rather than admitting to telling an outright lie.

Richard Nixon said he was not a crook. Bill Clinton said he 'did not have sexual relations with that woman.' Anthony Weiner said he did not send lewd pictures of himself to women on the internet. Donald Trump

thousands of Muslims in New Jersey celebrated the fall of the World Trade Center but this could not be proven.

Ben Carson wanted us to believe that the pyramids were built as storehouses for grains. Bernie Sanders said that the United States has more inequality than any other place on earth. Michelle Bachmann said that the HPV vaccine caused mental retardation, a claim that was unsubstantiated. Did she lie or was she wrong?

There are celebrated lies such as Richard Nixon telling the nation that he had nothing to do with Watergate or Gerald Ford asserting that 'there

re-election than in taking up the cause of the people. It is hardly surprising that only one in four Americans has any confidence in Congress.

Then there is the media. In the old days there was the feeling that 'once it's in the papers it has to be true.' This does not apply anymore. A Gallup poll has found that in 1999 there were 55 percent of American voters that trusted the media. This fell to just 40 per cent in 2015.

It is also argued that the rise of online news has created so much information that it is virtually impossible for readers to know what is true from what is false. In

ical office. Women were his playthings; he used a number of references from a limited vocabulary to denigrate them knowing that they were in no power to defend themselves.

Why does Trump feel empowered to ridicule women? Bill Clinton's explanation a decade earlier is perhaps the best guide. When asked why he abused Monica Lewinsky he said with a smile, 'because I could.'

One of the most obvious occurrences in the run up to the elections is the impact of damage control. Ted Kennedy did not have a spin team to explain his leaving the

The views expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of the THE WEST INDIAN.