

Communications department
Phone: 0049 (0)621 181-1016
pressestelle@uni-mannheim.de
www.uni-mannheim.de

Mannheim, 11 November 2024

Press Release

Mannheim Scholars React to US Election

Five Mannheim professors from different disciplines take a stand on Donald Trump's election win.

Professor Dr. Philipp Gassert

Professor of Contemporary History

America is moving even further to the right. Lies, racism and sexism have won. That should be a lesson to us in Europe, because we are now looking at another four years of Trumpian day-to-day madness. He won the elections with a clarity that surprised supporters and enemies alike. It was not the expected "coin toss", the endless limbo of 2020. The Republicans will also have a majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Supreme Court is already in the hands of Trump. He will feel powerful and invincible, test the limits of the almost 250-year-old constitution, and shift the balance further towards the executive.

In a period of economic upheaval and crisis, Harris and the Democrats have failed to convince America that the 47th president will do the country more harm than good. Whether Trump will usher in a "golden age" for America remains to be seen. We do know he has plans to conquer outer space with Elon Musk. It will be a dark time for Europe. Trump clearly shows us what moves people and that they put the economy above cultural issues, non-violence and inclusion. Germans and Europeans do not have a proper plan on how to guarantee security and prosperity in a post-American age. The indications suggest a storm is imminent, but have we finally heard the thunder?

Professor Dr. Eckhard Janeba

Professor of Public Finance and Economic Policy

Donald Trump's re-election will have major economic and security implications for Germany and the world. During his election campaign, he announced that he would massively increase tariffs on international imports. This will lead to a rise in costs within the United States, as evidenced by the tariffs implemented by Trump during his initial term in 2018. This, in turn, will intensify challenges for German exports and slow down the country's growth. The failure to establish a free trade agreement (TTIP) between the EU and the United States several years ago is now taking its toll.

As American support for Ukraine is expected to wane, Germany will need to allocate more resources to its military, intensifying its financial challenges in the near future. Europe may also find itself entangled in the rivalry for global dominance between the United States and China. Trump's 2018 decision to exit the nuclear deal with Iran reveals that the U.S. has, in reality, excluded other countries from trading with Iran by enforcing extraterritorial sanctions. There is concern that Germany will face limited prospects for shaping its diplomatic relations with China.

Prof. Dr. Marc Ratkovic

Professor of Social Data Science

America has chosen to take a step away from liberal democracy, human rights, and basic notions of science and rationality. It now allies with Putin and Orban internationally and its most intolerant groups domestically. Unhindered executive action will follow. Immigrants will be rounded up, placed in camps, and deported; political opponents prosecuted; journalists attacked; Universities defunded. Ukraine will receive no more aid, and the US commitment to NATO is now merely one of convenience. This is known: these were campaign promises.

Please recognize and appreciate the radical nature of this change. America has shed its post-World War II identity, trading a politics that aspired to fairness and equality, however imperfectly, for one that embraces nothing but dominance. It is no longer a country to be admired, or followed, or even heeded. Accepted measures in political science are clear: the Republican Party must be considered as a nuclear-armed Fidesz or AFD, rather than the party of Reagan or Bush you may be used to.

I implore my adopted country: lead on human rights and democracy, do not follow. Do not humor those using inchoate "resentments" to justify destroying a humane, functioning system. Compliment immigrants, appreciate the Deutsche Bahn, cherish your work life balance. Be active in ways large and small. Fight to maintain this kind, decent country.

Professor Dr. Max Reinwald

Junior Professorship for Management

Kamala Harris's election loss highlights a prominent idea in organizational theory known as the "glass cliff." The idea behind the glass cliff is that women are frequently appointed to executive positions when an organization is experiencing a crisis. Thus, those women who successfully navigate these difficult starting conditions to achieve managerial positions are at a greater risk of facing failure.

In the summer, Harris was selected as the Democratic candidate for president. At the time, her party was significantly trailing Trump's Republicans in the polls. Trump has since become America's president elect. We can use her example to illustrate not only the phenomenon of the glass cliff, but also its consequences. On the one hand, Harris's election loss demonstrates how hard it is to achieve long-term success under the terms of the glass cliff phenomenon. Many are looking for answers, yet their reasoning is likely to follow familiar patterns: The crucial factors behind her unsuccessful efforts are linked to her character, particularly her appearance and strategic decisions, while the difficult circumstances of her

presidential bid no longer seem to play a role. The situation would seem less dire if it didn't continue to reflect the pre-existing bias that women are sub-par managers, a bias that is not supported by empirical findings.

[Prof. Dr. Stefanie Schäfer](#)

Professor of American Literary and Cultural Studies

The 2024 presidential election in the United States has resulted in an unexpected and decisive win for Donald Trump, concluding a dramatic and intense campaign period. There was a change of candidate, an assassination and an attempted assassination, there were dogs and cats, and numerous celebrities called on their fans to go to the polls.

In the recent campaigns, candidates Trump and Harris drew on contrasting visions of America's past and future, with Harris struggling to connect voters to her agenda while Trump garnered significant backing from Silicon Valley despite offering vague plans, raising questions about his ability to unite a divided society in the wake of a contentious election. The Democrats have promised a peaceful transition of power. It remains to be seen if Trump can deliver on his promise of a "golden age" after an election campaign marked by violence and sexism.