

# FEMINIST, LAWYER, MOTHER



Having called women 'fat pigs', 'dogs', 'bimbos' and 'disgusting animals', Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump has hardly endeared himself to the sisterhood. Yet there are plenty of women ready to vote for him. Charlotte Ward reports from Chicago



## WHEN DONALD

**TRUMP** announced his candidacy last year, I found it amusing. An egotistical joke from a reality TV star playing

the villain, baiting serious hopefuls with his runaway mouth. Having lived in the US for three years, I still find it novel how unashamedly dirty politics can get here. Local elections often have candidates 'going negative' on opponents with damning smear campaigns. If this was local politics, what would happen in the ultimate battle for the White House?

But then the Clinton and Trump

campaigns swung into full gear, and I stopped finding The Donald funny. Here was a man who could not let a difficult question from a female journalist lie, barraging Megyn Kelly with 117 tweets, while also publicly intimating she was menstruating when she challenged him. A guy who suggested no one would vote for candidate and CEO of Hewlett-Packard, Carly Fiorina, because of 'her face'; who informed supermodel Heidi Klum she was no longer 'a 10' and who consistently refers to his Democrat rival as 'Crooked Hillary'. Yet for every outrageous comment and scandal, Trump is riding a wave of anti-establishment feeling. Gaffes aside – and he's insulted pretty much every possible voting block – it seems his plain-speaking man-of-action appeal is not to be underestimated. Now, just weeks from the election, the latest polls put them neck and neck on 45%. So who are the women backing him, and why? ▶







**'I want zero tolerance on terrorism'**

**Leslie Henry (above), 34, is a nurse anaesthetist and mother of two from Arkansas**

I found the news of the July terror attack in Nice horrifying. Families being ploughed down in the street as they celebrated Bastille Day was unthinkable – but also a stark reminder that we are living in one of the most dangerous times in recent history. I feel less safe now than I did after the 9/11 attacks – which is why I am voting for Donald Trump.

Whether you like him or loathe him, Trump is the only person who is addressing the threat of terrorism. Radical Islam is a significant problem for every country. I'm ready for someone to step up and do something about it. I'm glad Trump calls it what it is. Of course, not all Muslims are out to destroy America, but Jurassic times call for Jurassic measures.

As a feminist, while I may have been momentarily shocked by a derogatory comment about women, I don't believe Trump is a misogynist. You can't deny he is an equal opportunities employer, with lots of women working for him, and a champion of his daughters. I can overlook a couple of dumb remarks if he's going to step up to take care of the USA and our kids.

I want to live in a country that has a zero tolerance policy for terrorism and hope that others are afraid of the consequences that policy may bring. I feel if he leads by example, other countries will follow suit. They will be heavier with military action and there will be more air strikes on ISIS.

Safety and the future are my utmost priorities. I am looking for a safer world where we can all prosper.

**'I'm angry with Hillary Clinton'**

**Kaylie Hewitt, 20, from Illinois, is a paralegal specialist in the Army National Guard**



In this election, we have to choose between the lesser of two evils. While I'd love to see a female President, Clinton doesn't deserve this privilege. Of course, Trump has said knucklehead things. There is no excuse for calling women 'disgusting animals'. But I also think he cares about our veterans and the security of our country, and that's why I plan to vote for him.

Like most Americans, when our ambassador and three members of staff died at the US Embassy in Libya in 2012, I wasn't aware of the full circumstances. It was only recently that I began to read about the enquiries into the tragedy. The more I read, the more it disturbs me. There were warnings of the risk in Benghazi – why weren't they heeded? I am angry with Hillary Clinton, who was then Secretary of State, about it.

Then the scandal broke that Clinton had used a personal email account while in office, making the government vulnerable to hacking and putting all our troops at risk. It makes me sick to my stomach. When Trump refers to her as 'Crooked Hillary' I don't disagree. Her disregard for national security and her subsequent attitude bothers me. I think it shows lack of character. Trump may say mean things but Clinton has blood on her hands.'



**'I'm sick of politicians who are out for themselves'**

**Brandy Knight, 38, is a receptionist and mother of three from Alabama**

As a single mother, it has always been down to me to provide for my kids. I take every job I can find but the bills are always mounting. When I lie in bed, sometimes panic consumes me. Since the financial crisis, I've seen the cost of living skyrocket. I make the groceries go a long way and buy clothes from thrift stores, but it's a struggle. I've had one holiday in 15 years.

Politicians are meant to represent the people, but all I've seen are career politicians working for themselves, increasing taxes and failing to take responsibility for bad trade deals and jobs moved overseas. Until Trump. My main reason for voting Trump is that he hasn't made his money from pushing taxes on the people. He wants to bring jobs back to the US, rewrite our trade deals and reduce taxes. He has a proven record of developing buildings and providing jobs and that brings me hope.

There is nothing Trump says that offends me or should offend anyone else. I watched the fall-out over Megyn Kelly and I think she went after him deliberately. When I look at Trump, I see a man with a big heart and a loving family. He worked to get where he is and I know he will work just as hard for our country.

**AND WHAT I THINK...**

I don't have US citizenship so I can't vote in November, but I'll be watching from the sidelines. While I'll never be a fan of Trump, speaking to women who plan to vote for him has helped me to understand some of the reasons for their decision. Week after week, Americans are inundated with the latest sound bites and snide comments from the campaign trail, when what is needed is substance and real, achievable solutions. Both candidates need to learn to be humble and to listen to the people. If Hillary can learn anything from Brexit, it should be that dismissing the concerns of half the electorate is foolish. Every time she belittles Trump voters with labels such as 'deplorables', she is helping him to take a step closer to the Oval Office. ■

**What do you think? Let us know at [feedback@graziamagazine.co.uk](mailto:feedback@graziamagazine.co.uk)**