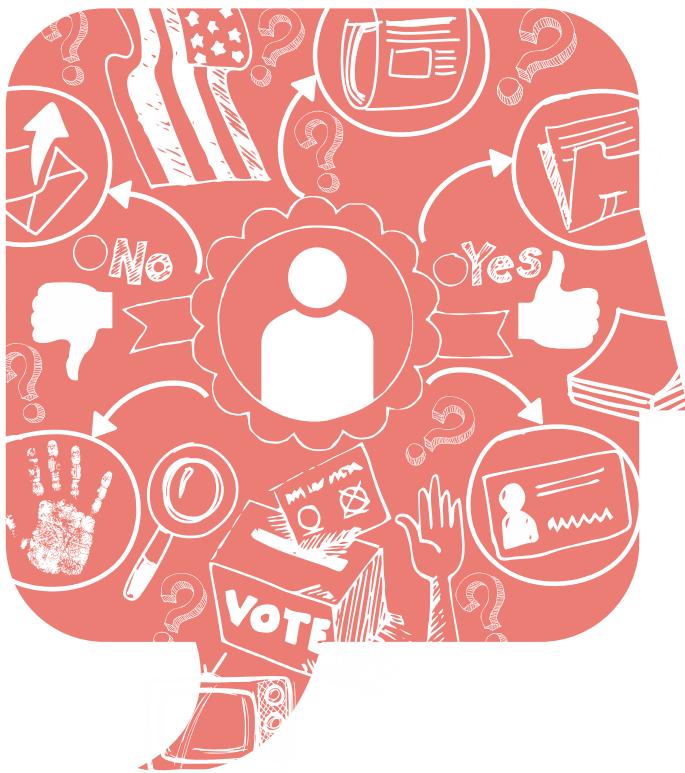


This week's issue: **POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?**



Sam Ellis was a strong supporter of one **candidate** for President. He agreed with all of her positions. He planned to vote for her in the election. Then, one morning, Sam read in the newspaper that his candidate had once been caught with marijuana. This had happened back when the candidate was in high school, over 25 years earlier. Sam was disappointed. He wondered if she still deserved his vote.

During **campaigns**, we learn a lot about political candidates. Some have abused alcohol or drugs. Some have cheated on their spouses or stolen money. Do we have a right to know personal details about political candidates? Some people say yes. They point out that a candidate is asking for the public's trust. They ask how we, the public, can understand a candidate's **ethics** if we don't know about his or her personal life.

Others think that if we exclude everyone who ever made a mistake, we might leave out people who would make good leaders. Some people think we should only focus on how candidates will handle crucial **issues** like terrorism, education, and global warming, not how they handle their marriage or their private mistakes. Should some parts of a candidate's personal life be off-limits?

Imagine this: One of your friends posted a photograph of you being a clown and doing something very embarrassing at a party (use your imagination). If one day you decided to run for public office, you could be sure that this photo would be **displayed** in newspapers, on television, and all over the internet. One funny moment from years earlier would follow you into your future. Would you feel like your privacy had been invaded? Or would you believe that the public has the right to know about your teenage behavior?

POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?



candidate | campaign | ethics | issue | display

USE THE FOCUS WORDS *and alternate parts of speech

candidate (*noun*) a person being considered for a position

→ **Sample Sentence:** Sam Ellis was a strong supporter of one **candidate** for president.

→ **Turn and Talk:** What do you think makes for a strong presidential **candidate**?

campaign (*noun*) a political contest; a series of activities to achieve a goal

→ **Sample Sentence:** During **campaigns**, we learn a lot about political candidates.

→ **Turn and Talk:** What are some things that candidates do during a presidential **campaign**?

***campaign** (*verb*) to work towards a goal (such as winning an election)

→ **Sample Sentence:** Some countries do not allow politicians to **campaign** on television because they do not want wealthier candidates to have an unfair advantage.

→ **Turn and Talk:** Do you think politicians should be allowed to **campaign** on television? Why or why not?

ethics (*noun*) beliefs about what is morally right

→ **Sample Sentence:** Some people ask how we, the public, can understand a candidate's **ethics** if we don't know about his or her personal life.

→ **Turn and Talk:** What are some examples of **ethics** in school?

issue (*noun*) a matter of public concern; an important topic of debate

→ **Sample Sentence:** Some people think we should focus on how candidates will handle crucial **issues** like terrorism, education, and global warming, not how they handle their marriage or their private mistakes.

→ **Turn and Talk:** Which **issue** needs to be addressed more urgently in your community: teen smoking or teen pregnancy? Explain.

***issue** (*verb*) to give out or supply

→ **Sample Sentence:** The mayor **issued** 100 extra building permits to allow for more construction in the city.

→ **Turn and Talk:** Would students learn more if they were **issued** digital tablets to use in the classroom? Explain your answer.

display (*verb*) to show something; to put something where people can see it

→ **Sample Sentence:** If one day you decided to run for public office, you could be sure that photos from your past would be **displayed** in newspapers, on television, and all over the internet.

→ **Turn and Talk:** Where in your school are awards **displayed**?

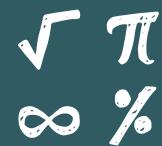
***display** (*noun*) a performance or exhibit

→ **Sample Sentence:** The soldier was honored with a medal for his **display** of courage on the battlefield.

→ **Turn and Talk:** Should athletes be disciplined for making emotional **displays** when they don't agree with a referee's call?

POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?

UNIT 1.22



candidate | campaign | ethics | issue | display

DO THE MATH

In 2008, New York Governor David Paterson called a press conference to admit to an ethical mistake. Years earlier, he confessed, he had several affairs while he was married to his wife. Some people said that his honesty was a **display** of good **ethics**. Others wondered why he chose to put his mistakes on **display**. When it comes to politicians and political **candidates**, which **issues** should be private, and which should be public?

In March and April 2008, New Yorkers were asked the following question: Do you think the press should report if a married politician has an affair? Below are the most common responses.

- 33% said: Yes, always.
- 34% said: Only if the politician used public money to pay for the affair.
- 15% said: Only if the politician ran a **campaign** based on family values.

Option 1: How many New Yorkers thought that the press should always report if a married politician has an affair?

- about one in two
- about one in three
- about one in four
- about one in five

Option 2: In the same poll mentioned above, 40% of respondents said that the press should report illegal drug use by a politician under any circumstances, even if the drug use occurred when the person was much younger. Based on this information, were New Yorkers more tolerant of politicians who use drugs, or of politicians who have extramarital affairs? Explain.



Discussion Question: When someone decides to become a **candidate** for political office, are they deciding to put their marriage or relationship on **display**? Or should cheating on your spouse only become an **issue** if it involves some other unethical behavior directly related to the **candidate's** public role, like stealing money or running a hypocritical **campaign**?

POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?

UNIT 1.22



candidate | campaign | ethics | issue | display

THINK SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy has been discussing an upcoming election with his students. He is still undecided about which **candidate** he will support even though the **campaign** is nearing its end. He is unhappy about some ugly comments one of the **candidates** wrote on a social media site. Even though the comments were made 10 years ago, the **candidate's** opponent is **displaying** the information and is claiming that it is an important **issue** of **ethics** for voters to consider.

Mr. Seemy doesn't like the comments, but he also questions whether it's ethical to dig through a **candidate's** old posts. He wonders what his students think about the **issue**, so he creates the following survey.

Take the survey yourself, and then compare your responses with those of your classmates and discuss the differences in your answers.

Ethics Survey

On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = totally unethical and 5 = highly ethical), please evaluate the following behaviors:

	Totally Unethical		Highly Ethical		
Lying about your age on Facebook.	1	2	3	4	5
Reading a text message on your friend's phone without their permission.	1	2	3	4	5
Finding a \$20 bill on the hallway floor and keeping it.	1	2	3	4	5
Posting that a restaurant has bad food.	1	2	3	4	5
Sharing a photo of someone without their permission.	1	2	3	4	5
Not challenging a rumor even though you know it's untrue.	1	2	3	4	5
Searching through old posts online to try to find something embarrassing about a political candidate .	1	2	3	4	5

Think of two more behaviors and ask a classmate to evaluate them:

 When you use social media, do you ever decide not to **display** something because it might come back to haunt you later on? Explain.

POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?

UNIT 1.22



DEBATE THE ISSUE

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A

- The public should know about a candidate's **ethics**. **Candidates** should be prepared to have their personal lives on **display**.

OR

-  Only information about a **candidate's** illegal activities should be revealed during a **campaign**.

OR

- ## **Candidates'** personal lives should stay private.

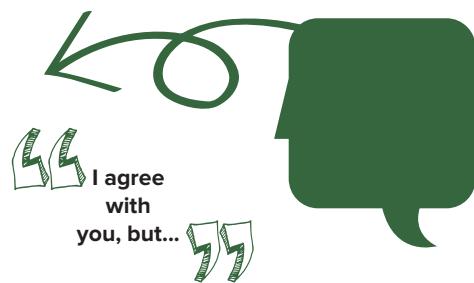
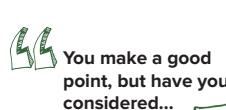
OR

- _____

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:



POLITICS AND PRIVACY: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A CANDIDATE?

UNIT 1.22



candidate | campaign | ethics | issue | display

TAKE A STAND



Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples. Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.

[candidate](#) | [campaign](#) | [ethics](#) | [issue](#) | [display](#)