

# Trump's first month: Method in the madness?

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**Oxford Analytica Conference Call**

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## Trump's first month: Method in the madness?

"Though this be madness," Polonius says in an aside to the audience in Shakespeare's Hamlet, "yet there is method in't".

Donald Trump's presidency has burst forth in a maelstrom of tweets, executive orders and controversy, not least over the chaotic implementation of his proposed ban on immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim countries and the quick-fire resignation of Michael Flynn as National Security Adviser.

Does the administration's whirlwind first month reveal an incoherent and ill-prepared team of outsiders struggling to get to grips with unfamiliar levers of power?

Or are we seeing the deliberate formation of a new and unorthodox political order driven by self-avowed agents of change determined to sweep away what they regard as an out-of-touch political elite in Washington and using unpredictability and rhetorical gesture to that end?

Is the aim of the Trump presidency to impose a radically conservative agenda that will dismantle the social programmes from education to welfare that have prevailed since FDR's New Deal and to rewrite the international liberal order that has predominated since the end of the Second World War?

Or does it just want to free Americans and US businesses from the dead hand of overregulation, high taxes and the free-riding of allies?

Can the president deliver on his campaign promises that the economic nationalism of 'America First' will restore US manufacturing primacy and the middle-class jobs that once went with it?

Or are broader trends of technology, automation and global supply chains insurmountable? And what happens if the hopes of his base are crushed?

Will the permanent national security apparatus have the president's ear when Trump is tested on foreign policy, whether in Ukraine, the Gulf, the South China Sea or on the Korean peninsula?

Or will he turn to his personal circle of loyal but inexperienced campaign-trail confidants?

What are the constitutional, congressional and community constraints on a determined president?

Or can decisiveness of decision-making tip into autocratic rule regardless of the separation of powers?

Join us on Tuesday, February 21 for answers to these questions and to put your own to three of Oxford Analytica's expert advisors.

## Chair

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### **Paul Maidment, Director of Analysis and Managing Editor, Oxford Analytica**

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Paul Maidment joined Oxford Analytica in December 2014 as the Director of Analysis and Managing Editor of the Oxford Analytica Daily Brief.

He is an award-winning journalist who founded the New York-based digital editorial consultancy Bystander Media in 2010. A pioneer in combining digital and print journalism, he was previously Editor of [Forbes.com](http://Forbes.com) and Executive Editor of Forbes, transforming a magazine website into the leading online destination for business, finance and up-scale lifestyle. Before joining Forbes in 2001, Paul was the founding Editor of the Financial Times' award-winning web site [FT.com](http://FT.com) and Assistant Editor of the newspaper. His early career as an editor and foreign correspondent encompassed The Economist, the Asian Wall Street Journal and the BBC in the U.K. the U.S. and Asia — a depth of journalistic experience and breadth of media that gives him a unique perspective on the changes transforming publishing and the world economy. Paul was inducted into the Digital Hall of Fame in New York in 2010.

## Panellists

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### **Des King, Andrew W Mellon Professor of American Government, University of Oxford**

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Andrew Mellon Professor of American Government at the University of Oxford and a Professorial Fellow of Nuffield College. He is one of the world's leading experts on US government and politics. He is the author of eighteen authored/co-authored and coedited books including Obama at the Crossroads (2012), The Unsustainable American State (2010) and The Liberty of Strangers (2005). His most recent book is about the Federal Reserve's response to the 2008 crisis – Fed Power: How Finance Wins (2016). He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Member of the Royal Irish Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

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### **Mark Rozell, Ruth D. & John T. Hazel Chair in Public Policy, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University**

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Dr. Rozell is a political scientist and author of nine books and editor of twenty books on various topics in U.S. government and politics including the presidency, religion and politics, media and politics, and interest groups in elections. He has testified before Congress several times regarding separation of powers issues and has lectured extensively in the U.S. and abroad on similar topics. He writes columns for major news dailies and is consulted frequently by media for his expertise in U.S. national and state politics.

Dean Rozell received his Ph.D. in Politics from the University of Virginia. He has served as the Dean of the Schar School since 2013 and previously as director of the Master of Public Policy program. He came to Mason in 2004 from The Catholic University of America, where he was Ordinary Professor and Chair of the Department of Politics.

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**Erik Brattberg, Director for Special Projects & Senior Fellow at The McCain Institute for International Leadership, Washington DC**

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Erik Brattberg serves as Director for Special Projects and Senior Fellow at The McCain Institute for International Leadership in Washington. He is 2014 the recipient of the Ronald D. Asmus Policy Entrepreneur Fellowship at the German Marshall Fund and previously served as Senior Fellow at the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council, Visiting Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University, and as an associated researcher at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs in Stockholm. Erik has published widely on US and European foreign and security policy and transatlantic relations.