

# OUR LIBERTIES WE PRIZE

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Our Liberties We Prize is a documentary photo essay on the campaigns in Iowa leading up to the first-in-the-nation 2016 Iowa caucus, compiled from over 120 campaign events over the course of three and a half months.

The caucuses and the campaigns leading up to them are a tone-setting political process of selecting delegates, but more than that a cultural event for the people of Iowa. In October 2015, I traveled to Iowa to cover these campaigns with the expectation of finding images similar to the ones from past campaigns. The iconic images in the last two campaign cycles showed candidates behind the scenes, from Callie Shell's coverage of quiet moments with Barack Obama in 2008 to Brian Snyder's coverage of Mitt Romney's failed presidential bid in 2012, most lasting images were made away from the stage. Throughout my time in Iowa those situations were illusive if not impossible to find.

As a journalist with an academic background studying Political Science, I had a strong nostalgia for the history of the campaign process and the opportunity to get to know the candidates on some personal level. I was drawn to the story for a chance to cover one of the most important stories of every four years while pursuing my own personal connection to the candidates through my work.

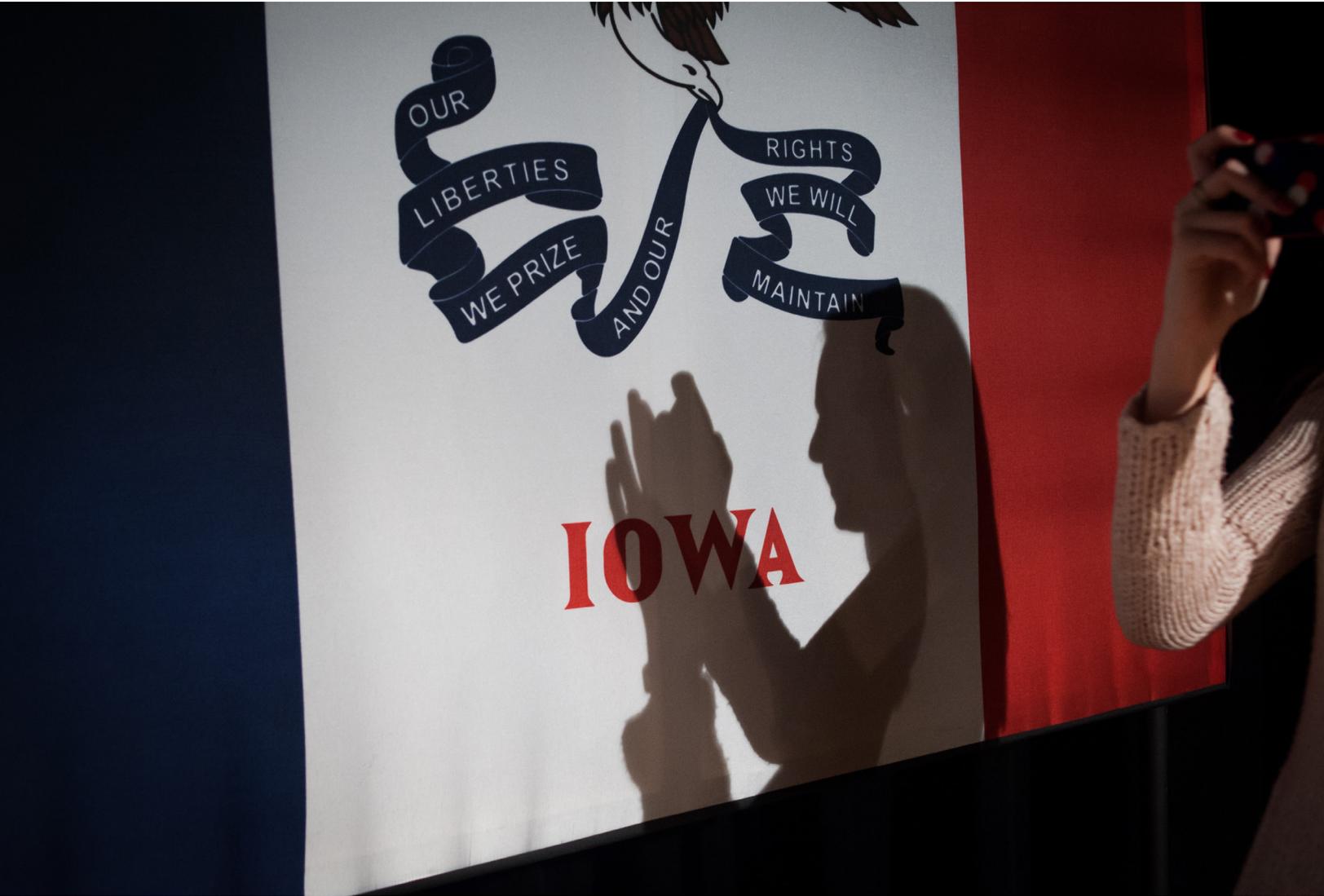
But, I found myself wondering what I could say about the candidates or the process without an opportunity to show the candidates on a personal level. As a photojournalist, our lives revolve around embedding into our subjects lives, something that was nearly completely impossible on the campaign train. This process became a constant struggle to try dig deeper and try to resist the pull toward the obvious images on and around the stage, being rebuffed at nearly every turn. In the end, I came to the realization that the stage, the trappings, the pomp and circumstance, and the manifestation of the fandom that surrounds each candidate itself was the vehicle that drove this story and the election forward. This stagecraft is the "new iconic". It may seem colder or more detached but it is one of the strongest threads throughout the election.

These photos, while at some times incongruous, explore the culture and theatricality of the Iowa campaigns and the cult of personality that ebbs and flows around each candidate. In the majority of the images, the candidate is shown but their face is obfuscated, their gesture and the stagecraft around them a mirror for, but distant from, their audience.

The project is the manifestation of a search for traditional and authentic Iowa campaign experiences against a growing backdrop of extremely polished campaign events.



Le Mars, Iowa – October 2015



Winterset, Iowa – October 2015



Spencer, Iowa – December 2015



Guthrie Center, Iowa – January 2016



Marshalltown, Iowa – January 2016



Spencer, Iowa – January 2016



Pella, Iowa – December 2015



Spencer, Iowa – January 2016



Charles City, Iowa – January 2016



Tipton, Iowa – November 2016



Marshalltown, Iowa – January 2016



Burlington, Iowa – November 2015



Spirit Lake, Iowa – January 2016



Pella, Iowa – December 2015



Tipton, Iowa – November 2015



Guthrie Center, Iowa – January 2016



Waukee, Iowa – December 2015



Guthrie Center, Iowa – January 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – December 2015



Des Moines, Iowa – November 2015



Clinton, Iowa – November 2015



Winterset, Iowa – January 2016



Akron, Iowa – October 2015



Iowa Falls, Iowa – January 2016



Newton, Iowa – November 2015



Des Moines, Iowa – January 2016



Cedar Falls, Iowa – January 2016



Cedar Falls, Iowa – January 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – February 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – January 2016



Iowa City, Iowa – January 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – November 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – January 2016



Sioux Center, Iowa – January 2016



Des Moines, Iowa – January 2016

# CAPTIONS



1 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Rick Santorum prays with members of his campaign staff during lunch between stops in Le Mars, Iowa on October 30, 2015. Santorum, who won the state on a recount in 2012, emphasized his Christian roots to court evangelical voters who make up a large part of the Republican voting block in the Midwest.



2 - A young woman takes a photo of the stage design after Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz's event with Dr. James Dobson, an evangelical Christian in Winterset, Iowa on January 4, 2016. Cruz positioned himself as the most viable Christian conservative choice toward the end of the Iowa caucus campaigns, garnering support from those like Dobson and the influential social conservative political organization "The Family Leader."



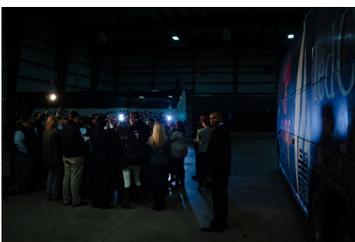
3 - A supporter of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump reaches out for a handshake after a rally in Spencer, Iowa on December 5, 2015. Just weeks prior Trump had applied for and was granted U.S. Secret Service protection, supplanting the billionaire's own personal private security which in turn patrolled the crowds undercover



4 - Michael Goodart sells campaign memorabilia ahead of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz' campaign stop at Prime Time Restaurant in Guthrie Center, Iowa on January 4, 2016. Vendors like Goodart travel from event to event selling memorabilia but aren't associated directly with campaigns. Often Goodart and others will sleep in their cars between events.



5 - A television reporter records outside Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' bus before a campaign event in Marshalltown, Iowa on January 31, 2016. Due to the large interest in Sanders as the only strong democratic opponent to Hillary Clinton, a large number of media followed the candidate, though because of space restrictions most were not allowed in the smaller venues.



6 - A private security guard watches as Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz' holds a media availability before an event in Spencer, Iowa on January 6, 2016. By early December, Ted Cruz was polling higher than Ben Carson but unlike Carson he had not requested U.S. Secret Service protection, opting for private security.

# CAPTIONS



7 - Staff, volunteers, and attendees stack chairs and clean up after Republican U.S. presidential candidate Marco Rubio's town hall event in Pella, Iowa on December 30, 2015. Rubio's campaign, in an attempt to present a more presidential image, created town hall events where even in the smallest space the candidate would stand on a short stage.



8 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz's campaign bus pulls into Clay County Regional Event Center in Spencer, Iowa on January 6, 2016. Cruz was the first candidate to do a traditional bus tour through Iowa and New Hampshire, hitting 28 counties and events in six days in the first week in Iowa, complete with a bus full of media in tow.



9 - A member of Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' staff awaits his arrival as arrows point his path toward the microphone at an event in a garage in Charles City, Iowa on January 30, 2016. Sanders, in an effort to stop in many of the smaller towns his opponent had not visited, held a number of more intimate events in rural Iowa in the week leading up to the caucuses.



10 - U.S. Secret Service agents secure the area around the motorcade of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ben Carson after a campaign event at South Bethel Church in Tipton, Iowa on November 22, 2015. Carson's campaign, seeing him rise in the polls, requested and were granted Secret Service protection, only to have him decline steadily and rapidly in the polls after that time.



11 - A flag waves in the wind outside a house down the street from where Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders was scheduled to speak in Marshalltown, Iowa on January 31, 2016. Sanders spent nearly the entire last two weeks before the Iowa caucuses in Iowa on a bus tour that combined stops in small towns with large rallies featuring popular musicians.



12 - Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley listens to his introduction as he prepares to speak at the Des Moines County Democrats' fundraiser in Burlington, Iowa on November 7, 2015. O'Malley consistently polled in the low single digits, often rarely cracking more than 1% support, but stayed in the race until the night of the Iowa caucuses.

# CAPTIONS



13 - A man adjusts a flag ahead of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz' campaign stop at Godfather's Pizza in Spirit Lake, Iowa on January 6, 2016. The Pizza Ranch chain is ubiquitous in Iowa politics, a common stop for Republican presidential candidates because of cheap venue costs and the chain's Christian mission statement.



14 - Attendees, including the local sheriff, mingle before Republican U.S. presidential candidate Marco Rubio's town hall event in Pella, Iowa on December 30, 2015. The Iowa campaign season also has a social aspect, where local party elite and other supporters come out to socialize before and after events.



15 - Laurale Hunter rests her head on the chest of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ben Carson after he gave a speech about his faith life at South Bethel Church in Tipton, Iowa on November 22, 2015. Carson, like other Republicans, played up his faith and Christian upbringing to court Iowa evangelicals, but also spent much of his time doing book tour events instead of campaigning.



16 - Supporters listen as Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz does a live television interview ahead of his campaign stop at Prime Time Restaurant in Guthrie Center, Iowa on January 4, 2016. Cruz, despite being a U.S. Senator, was largely considered an outsider from the Republican rank and file, which was part of his large draw in Iowa at events like this stop.



17 - A member of the New Jersey State Police Executive Protection Unit watches over the crowd as Republican presidential candidate New Jersey Governor Chris Christie greets supporters after a town hall event at Mickey's Irish Pub in Waukee, Iowa on December 30, 2015. Christie's failed run was also extremely costly to New Jersey taxpayers who footed the bill for his large traveling protection detail, to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars.



18 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz does a live television interview with Sean Hannity before a campaign stop at Prime Time Restaurant in Guthrie Center, Iowa on January 4, 2016. In the month leading up to the caucuses, national media invested more resources on the ground, including more frequent live interviews with candidates.

# CAPTIONS



19 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump turns to the crowd behind him during a campaign event in Des Moines, Iowa on Friday, Dec. 11, 2015. Trump often held campaign events in the round, turning to different parts of the crowd and gesturing to get them riled up.



20 - Andy Meyer, Maggie Timboe, Sasha Fetty and Mia Tiric listen to Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speak on screen while at a debate watch event in support of Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders in Des Moines, Iowa on November 14, 2015. The debate took place across the street, but most of the tickets went to party insiders.



21 - Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton points to a question in the audience at a campaign event at Clinton Middle School in Clinton, Iowa on November 22, 2015. Clinton, despite being a strong frontrunner throughout the campaigns, did far fewer events in Iowa than her competitor Bernie Sanders, especially in small towns like Clinton.



22 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump looks out into the crowd for his Iowa campaign manager while speaking press conference at the John Wayne Birthplace and Museum in Winterset, Iowa on January 19, 2016. Later in the day Trump would be endorsed by Sarah Palin at an event in Ames, Iowa, but played coy throughout the press conference.



23 - Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum wades through the deep grass while participating in the Col. Bud Day Pheasant Hunt hosted by Congressman Steve King outside of Akron, Iowa on October 31, 2015. King is a major power-broker in the Iowa political scene, so in addition to Santorum, Ted Cruz and Mike Huckabee came out to hunt and lobby for an endorsement, one that Cruz eventually got.



24 - Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Governor Martin O'Malley lunch after speaking at the Hardin County 2016 Chili Spectacular at the Iowa Falls American Legion in Iowa Falls, Iowa on January 10, 2016. O'Malley, with less campaign funds than his competitors, often did speeches at county Democratic fundraisers and other gatherings instead of renting his own venues.

# CAPTIONS



25 - Debra Sage, a supporter of U.S. Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz, from Grinnell, Iowa listens as Cruz speaks at a campaign stop at a Pizza Ranch restaurant in Newton, Iowa on November 29, 2015. Sage spent all of her time at the event standing behind Cruz, clutching his book, or laying on the floor looking at him longingly.



26 - J.T. Kramer gets his hair cut as Republican U.S. presidential candidate Rand Paul holds a campaign event at Platinum Kutz barbershop in Des Moines, Iowa on January 18, 2016. Paul had many young college-aged supporters who took to his Libertarian ideas, but struggled to step out of his father's shadow after his moderately-successful run the last election.



27 - Protestors carry signs and chant before a campaign event for Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump at University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Iowa on January 12, 2016. Protestors often interrupted Trump's speeches during the election, but not as frequently in Iowa, a state that lacks the diversity of other later primary states.



28 - The U.S. Secret Service detail for Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump stands watch as he signs autographs at a campaign event at University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Iowa on January 12, 2016. Trump's campaign was extremely restrictive of press movements, keeping the media in a penned-in area at the back of the venue and occasionally escorting photographers to the stage to photograph him shaking hands with supporters.



29 - A woman photographs the podium before Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' speech at a rally on caucus night in Des Moines, Iowa February 1, 2016. Sanders mounted a strong comeback effort leading up the caucuses, losing by 0.3% of the vote and 4 delegates, including two delegates to a literal coin flip.



30 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump is seen on TV at the High Life Lounge in Des Moines, Iowa as he participates in the the Republican debate on FOX Business network in Columbia, South Carolina on January 14, 2016. In the debate, Trump doubled down on his proposed plan to ban Muslims from entering the country.

# CAPTIONS



31 - A supporter of Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders holds a sign as a video plays before the start of a campaign rally and concert at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa on January 30, 2016. Sanders was introduced by famous civil rights activist and philosopher Dr. Cornel West, who was preceded in the program by the band Foster the People.



32 - An ABC News crew sets up for a live broadcast in the rain. Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz speaks inside a hangar at the Webster City Municipal Airport in Webster City, Iowa on January 7, 2016. Cruz was a frontrunner in previous Iowa caucuses but struggled to make a mark in Iowa in 2016.



33 - Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders and his wife Jane wave to the crowd after a campaign rally in Des Moines, Iowa the night before the Iowa caucuses on January 31, 2016. The event was the last campaign stop ahead of the Iowa caucuses, where Sanders would lose by a small margin to Hillary Clinton.



34 - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Ted Cruz bows his head as he speaks at a campaign stop at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa on January 5, 2016. Cruz, a champion debater in college, was particularly theatrical while giving his speeches. At the end of each speech, Cruz would bow his head as the attendees stood and cheered.



35 - A photo of Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump stands over the fence at the home of George Davey, a formerly registered independent turned Republican Trump supporter in Des Moines, Iowa on January 14, 2016. Davey posted multiple cameras watching the area around the poster and eventually hired private security for the weekends to protect the poster from vandalism.