# Don’t Gloat, Democrats By [ADAM NAGOURNEY](http://www.nytimes.com/by/adam-nagourney) NOV. 5, 2016

It is hard to begrudge Democrats their gloating about the state of the [Republican Party](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/r/republican_party/index.html?inline=nyt-org) as the campaign enters its final hours. By most measures, [Donald J. Trump](http://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/donald-trump?inline=nyt-per) appears headed for defeat. Win or lose, the Republican Party is scattered and divided, and faces wrenching post-Election Day battles over its future.

But it is not only the Republicans. Democrats face their own challenges after Nov. 8, whether or not [Hillary Clinton](http://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/hillary-rodham-clinton?inline=nyt-per) captures the White House. While not as severe as those roiling the Republican Party, those challenges stand ready to complicate the early days of a Clinton presidency, should she win, and any effort by the [Democratic Party](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/d/democratic_party/index.html?inline=nyt-org) to move into a post-Clinton era, should she lose.

The sprawling Democratic coalition lined up behind Mrs. Clinton — labor and Silicon Valley moguls, Latinos and white middle-class women — could easily splinter as attention turns from a campaign to the specifics of governance. Moderate Democrats in Congress will need to worry about primary challenges from the left, much as moderate Republicans faced [Tea Party](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/t/tea_party_movement/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) challenges from the right. That will be particularly true should Mrs. Clinton begin striking compromises with Republicans to pass, to name one example, an immigration overhaul.

And while the tensions between Mrs. Clinton and her rival for the Democratic presidential nomination, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, may be forgotten, they are hardly gone. Mr. Trump was a powerful force that helped bridge two wings of the Democratic Party through the fall, so his departure might not be an entirely welcome development for the party.

“There’s a lot of mistrust of Hillary among people who supported Sanders, even among people who didn’t support Sanders,” said Michael Kazin, a professor of history at Georgetown University. “I think there’s a lot of pent-up energy behind a social Democratic agenda.”

The challenges go beyond party fractures. Howard Dean, a former governor of Vermont who ran for president in 2004, said Democrats needed to reach out to blue-collar white voters who fled the party and voted for Mr. Trump.

### [Graphic](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/another-party-another-fracture-the-democrats-election-2016.html)

## [A Guide to the Democratic Herd, An Unwieldy Group of Donkeys](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/another-party-another-fracture-the-democrats-election-2016.html)

[After a hard-fought primary season the Democrats have plenty of internal wounds to heal.](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/another-party-another-fracture-the-democrats-election-2016.html)

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“If we win, it means we can win without them,” he said. “But this is aimed at being able to run the country properly. You can’t run the country as divided as it is today. And you can’t govern with just 55 percent of the country. We have to reach out to working-class white voters in order to govern.”

Mrs. Clinton is by nature a cautious politician and centrist. Her husband, Bill Clinton, won the presidency in 1992 by moving the party to the middle, championing policies that have come under fire from the left during his wife’s campaign.

Some of Mrs. Clinton’s advisers suggest that the ideological schisms among Democrats have been exaggerated. And Mrs. Clinton has certainly taken steps to bridge the gap, such as coming out in favor of free college tuition for some students (though not as broadly as Mr. Sanders would have liked).

“I think we can overstate the divisions,” said Neera Tanden, the president of the Center for American Progress and a leader of the White House transition team appointed by Mrs. Clinton. “Every primary in any party brings out fundamental questions about where the party is and what it stands for. The debates within the Democratic Party are pale compared to the Republican Party.”

“I’m not ignoring those differences,” she added. “But they are far less stark.”

Yet it will soon become clear just how much Mr. Trump has served as a rallying point for the Democrats. The release by WikiLeaks [of emails hacked from the account](https://wikileaks.org/podesta-emails/) of John D. Podesta, the chairman of Mrs. Clinton’s campaign, included unkind words about Mr. Sanders, including Mr. Podesta’s reference to Mr. Sanders as “a doofus.” Mr. Sanders dismissed those as the harsh private comments common in a heated campaign, but they reflect the suspicions that many of Mr. Sanders’s supporters have long expressed about Mrs. Clinton.

Mrs. Clinton faces complicated terrain in dealing with a Congress already reeling after years of paralysis. And this election has emboldened the party’s left. Though it is hardly clear if it will be the well-organized threat to moderate Democrats that Tea Party challengers were to moderate Republicans, the party’s liberal wing stands to be a powerful force with clear ideas of what the party embodies — and those ideas don’t necessarily track what Mrs. Clinton said during her campaign. And the House is almost certain to remain Republican.

“There will be a lot of people pulling on President Clinton for a lot of things,” said Representative Keith Ellison, a Minnesota Democrat who supported Mr. Sanders in the primary. “And absolutely everybody is going to have to be energetic in advocating for the things that they consider most important. But I think people like Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders will have an advantage, in that we already have very progressive positions in the party platform.”

But Mrs. Clinton will also be under considerable pressure to accommodate moderate Democrats — and some Republicans — who gave her support, centrist credentials and money during the campaign. That includes Senator Chuck Schumer, her fellow New York Democrat who is in line to be the next majority leader if the party takes the Senate. Mr. Schumer has little interest in letting Mrs. Clinton and the party move to the left, given that Senate Democrats already face an uphill battle in 2018 to retain seats.

Any effort by Mrs. Clinton to court Mr. Trump’s supporters, as suggested by Mr. Dean, will have to be done delicately, given the concerns of Latino and African-American supporters, among others, who recoiled at the racially tinged nature of some of his appeals. Within her party, she is going to face conflicting demands from old-line liberal economists intent on bolstering the American manufacturing base against the new wave of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs who have a decidedly different view of the future of the American economy.

Even if Mrs. Clinton faces the same Republican leaders who resisted giving Mr. Obama any legislative victories, Mr. Schumer said he thought both parties would be under pressure to get things done once the election was over.

“We have to work with the other side of the aisle,” he said. “Just to put things on the floor and have all our people vote for it and then say, ‘Those sons of guns opposed it but we tried’ — that is not good enough.”

In any event, there are some Democrats who suggest that even in defeat, Mr. Trump — or at least his supporters — would remain very much on the scene, allowing Mrs. Clinton and Democrats to avoid what otherwise might have been a moment of political reckoning.

“Trump may go away, but Trumpism may be around for a while,” Mr. Ellison said. “Trump didn’t invent this movement. He just spoke to it.”

### [Graphic](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/the-fractious-republican-herd-election-2016.html)

## [A Guide to the Republican Herd, A Divided Pack of Elephants](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/the-fractious-republican-herd-election-2016.html)

[The Republican electorate has fractured over the policy views and personal history of Donald J. Trump.](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/06/sunday-review/the-fractious-republican-herd-election-2016.html)

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**For the companion piece on the Republican Party (mostly graphics)**

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