

Entertainment: *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* will be the biggest grossing film of 2016-2017 (\$1bn on 25 Jan 2017), followed by *Star Wars Episode 8: The Last Jedi* when its released in December 2017.

La La Land will win all but one Oscar at the Academy Awards. My predictions for key awards:

Best Film: *La La Land*
Best Actor: Cassey Affleck (*Manchester by the Sea*)
Best Actress: Emma Stone (*La La Land*)
Best Supporting Actor: Mahershala Ali (*Moonlight*)
Best Supporting Actress: Michelle Williams (*Manchester by the Sea*)

Britons Dev Patel (*Lion*) and Naomie Harris (*Moonlight*) will be close, but not close enough for Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress respectively.

Sports: Barclay's Premier League standings 2016-17:
1 Chelsea
2 Liverpool ☺
3 Manchester City
4 Tottenham
5 Arsenal
6 Manchester United

Liverpool isn't not strong enough to beat Chelsea but should win the FA Cup... well, maybe ☺

UK Politics: Jeremy Hunt will be forced to resign over handling of the NHS and social care issues.

Sports: Lewis Hamilton will be 4-time Formula 1 World Champion in 2017 without much competition. New team mate Valtteri Bottas will do well too.

Technology: Microsoft will fight back with the launch of Xbox 'Scorpio' but Sony will still reign as king in the console wars.

The PS4 is very popular a very good VR has cemented that position. Microsoft's Scorpio will have superior hardware though, but will still play catch up.

Nintendo will make good games but way behind Sony and Microsoft.

US Politics: President Trump will realise Iran and Cuba deals are good and will not repeal it completely. Like with many Obama policies, Trump will merely change a few clauses.

US Economics: US GDP will grow by 2.1% - but all depends on President Trump's economic policy.

The Federal Reserve will raise the Interest Rate to 1.25% by end of 2017.

North Korea: North Korea tends to test everyone's patience but given President Trump acts on impulsive emotion, even Kim Jong-Un might be a littler quiet from now on.

However, North Korea will test at least one nuclear missile.

Terrorism: The US will attack Islamic State's capital Raqqa. Russia, Britain and France will join but there will be less enthusiasm from other members of the UN Security Council.

Russia: Russia moved nuclear-capable missiles very close to Poland and Lithuania in 2016 and so Moscow will make provocative moves towards the Baltic states.

It will be interesting to see how Vladimir Putin tests Donald Trump's friendship.

Technology: Microsoft will do brilliantly with Windows 10 but will struggle in the mobile market and bow out gracefully. Android will continue to dominate and Apple will manufacture technology of yesteryear.

China: The US will oppose China's expansion in the South China Sea and President Trump will rant and tweet, but it will be ignored. The US will not start a trade war with the second largest economy who has over \$1 trillion invested in the US.

Politics: The most dangerous economic risk for Europe and North America has come from populist movements. These forces have created uncertainty over economic policy and have constrained political options for policymakers. America has elected the most unqualified person to the highest office and the most unpopular of any incoming President in history.

For over a year, I have been making the point that populism has played a major role in getting the likes of Donald Trump elected and not so much their policies. And this trend will continue in 2017.

There has been a populist surge throughout the western world. People feel frustrated by established politicians and have therefore turned to figures who appear to represent their concerns. These figures say what the people want to hear despite very little or no experience of delivery. Populism does not have any boundaries and appeals to people across the political spectrum – left-wing and right-wing.

Originally outlined in my blog *The Establishment versus The Reality TV Star: Hillary Clinton versus Donald Trump* (November 2016), below is a brief outline of some key characteristics that make a political figure 'populist' and why they are attractive to certain types of people.

Populist figures include Donald Trump, Republican (US), Bernard 'Bernie' Sanders, Democrats (US), Nigel Farage, UKIP (UK), Jeremy Corbyn, Labour (UK), Marine Le Pen, National Front (France), and Alexis Tsipras, Synaspismos (Greece).

The Appeal of Populist Politicians	Populist Politicians
Why do people support them? - Considered an 'outsider' and unconventional - Anti-establishment - 'Principled' and say what he/she thinks - Some are not a 'career politicians' - Become the 'voice of the people'	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn, Le Pen and Tsipras
They are popular amongst their Party membership - They tend to have the mandate of the membership - They attract thousands of people to their political rally	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn, Le Pen and Tsipras
They are divisive amongst public - They don't have the mass appeal with the general electorate	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn and Le Pen
They have little support from their Party's establishment - Elected Party officials tend not to like them	Trump, Sanders and Corbyn
They blame the media - They tend to blame the media if they get scrutinised e.g. Right-wingers call the media 'liberal' and Left-wingers call the media 'Conservative'	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn, Le Pen and Tsipras
They have passionate but abusive supporters - Supporters tend to abuse people who disagree with them on social media using abusive language, make rape and death-threats against women and hurl anti-Semitic & Islamophobic abuse	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn, Le Pen and Tsipras
They share similar policy ideas - Anti-austerity - Anti-globalisation - Against European Union - Against NATO	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn, Le Pen and Tsipras
Where is their electoral base? - Disfranchised working-class people	Trump, Sanders, Farage, Corbyn (some but mostly middle-class liberals), Le Pen and Tsipras

Populist demagogues can galvanise people under populist themes and conjure up conspiracy theories against the establishment and the government of the day. There are some differences on ideology though – right-wing demagogues tend to focus on immigration and sovereign whereby left-wing demagogues tend to focus on replacing Capitalism with Socialism.

Following the election of Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen will do well when France goes to the polls.

Europe: Greece will remain in the Eurozone as it continues to implement austerity. Germany will continue to bail out the Eurozone as it does not want other countries to follow Britain's exit from the EU.

Shahid Miah's

UK Politics: Around 300,000 days are lost due to Trade Union strikes. Trade Unions have been acting on political ideology rather than supporting their workers with RMT saying that they want to "Overthrow the Tory government". Public support for strikes is down with 47% saying 'No' and only 26% supporting them.

Trade unions will be clamped down by the government with essential services banned from striking.

UK Politics: The Supreme Court has ruled that Parliament must vote to trigger Article 50, which enables Britain to exit from the EU. This is the way I think the vote will go. :

For triggering Article 50:
Conservatives... 328
Labour... 199
DUP... 8
UKIP... 1
Others... 2
Total: 538

Against triggering Article 50:
Scottish National Party... 54
Labour... 30
Liberal Democrats... 9
Sinn Fein... 4
Plaid Cymru... 3
Green... 1
Others... 9
Total: 110

According to Parliament.UK there are 650 MPs in total but two are vacant with by-elections coming up.

2017 Predictions

US Politics: President Trump's Executive Orders on his key promises:

1.The Wall – Over 79% of his supporters are in favour of the wall and so will he be able to deliver it and get Mexico to pay for it? Partly. He was say Mexico will pay for it via trade tariffs, visa fees and so on. He says the wall will cost \$8bn, but experts say \$25bn. His mandate rests upon this.

2. Obamacare – He will keep most aspects but he will replace it by simply changing the name... maybe calling it 'Affordable Care Act'!

3. US jobs/Trans-Pacific Partnership – Already in action and there will be more bilateral deals including with the UK

4. Security – Department for Defence will look into cyber attacks, particularly from Russia, which Trump does not believe.

5. Immigration – Department of Labour will look into immigration policy, particularly deporting illegal Mexican immigrants and restricting people from Muslim countries.

UK Politics: Jeremy Corbyn is a decent guy but he is totally incompetent as a leader. He has spent over 30 years opposing every Labour leader and Labour policies. Furthermore, he has never put himself up for any parliamentary positions and therefore has not ever delivered anything he has spoken of.

Not sure why some people believe he will keep to his word if he ever became Prime Minister, but since we live in a world where populism is popular, he can say whatever he likes and some people will believe him.

Unfortunately for Labour and the country, he is going to continue to be the most ineffective leader of the opposition in Parliamentary history and so the government will do as they please.

Corbyn will lead Labour to the ground and there will be another attempt to replace him... particularly after the two forthcoming local by-elections.

Terrorism: ISIS will morph into social media presence and inspire attacks in Europe.

Germany, France and Spain will be vulnerable.

Syria: Bashir Al Assad will remain as leader of Syria.

The fall of Aleppo, has meant that Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers have a very strong position. And President Trump will be happy to back them and leave them alone.