



## Trail Trax: A Campaign Music Database

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www.traxonthetrail.com

### Background

Trail Trax is a M.A.N.A. database built into the Digital content management framework for the purpose of cataloging campaign music. Trail Trax is an open access research tool available at [Trax on the Trail](http://Trax.on.the.Trail.com), a website collaboratively created by an interdisciplinary team of academic experts and students who are tracking and analyzing the creation of music and sound on the 2016 American presidential campaign trail.

### Data Collection Process

Trax on the Trail defines "campaign music" as any type of music (vocal or instrumental, preexisting or newly composed) that is used in association with a presidential campaign. Campaign music can be created or disseminated by the official campaign, celebrity endorser, political organizations, political parties or the public (Fig. 1).

Trail Trax categorizes the following types of campaign music:

- Campaign theme songs
- Specialty-themed songs or anthems, vocal and instrumental
- Specialty anthems or songs such as YouTube and songwriting
- Parody songs used to endorse or oppose candidates
- Parody performances of songs
- Other performances or recordings created for specific candidates
- Songs or anthems created on the spot
- Songs with the candidate's name placed in the lyrics and found by students during the process of participating in events & rallies with campaigns
- Songs used in official or unofficial campaign events

Fig. 1

### New Campaign Process

All examples of music on the trail are categorized according to the parameters outlined below (see separate user manual table).

•Country	•Type of Instrument
•Music style	•Type of Music
•Instrument Category	•City
•Genre	•State
•Type of Event/Event	•Year

The Trax website includes video and audio files, additional performance data, and a video archive (songs in digital format). When available, a cover art is also provided. All items also include the candidate(s) leading party "RFP" (see the Google Sheet) (Fig. 2). These designations appear in green text on your right-hand side on the Trail Trax.

A single user may allow the administrator to edit the data for each entry (see the manual) (Fig. 3).

Fig. 2

### Trail Trax Interface

A user of Trail Trax can search for music entries by genre, candidate, political party, state, type of event, and date.

A user of Trail Trax can also search for music entries by date. The availability of budget search filters allows users to search for music entries of a particular candidate under a budget of the candidate or a given day throughout the duration of the campaign trail.

The status of the database is visible throughout the website (see Fig. 3). As of October 1, 2016 Trail Trax included 108 entries.

Fig. 3

Fields grouped according to the collection area include other search filters except for candidate or instrument type.

<b>Media sources:</b>	<b>Social Media:</b>
•Campaign website	•Facebook
•News website	•Twitter
•YouTube	•Vimeo
•SoundCloud	•iStock
•YouTube	•iStock
<b>Sample words:</b>	<b>Keyword fields:</b>
•"Name of Music and Artist"	•Genre, state, campaign, instrument
•"Candidate name"	•Candidate name, duration of performance
•"Event/Event name"	•Candidate name, media management
	•Instrument name, campaign website

Fig. 4

### Conclusions

Trail Trax allows scholars, students, journalists, citizens and other interested parties to explore candidates' knowledge of music, their own music creation on the 2016 campaign trail, a genre list of musical entries on the campaign trail, and other music that is associated with a political candidate's campaign strategy. The website also allows users to search for music entries of a particular candidate under a budget of the candidate or a given day throughout the duration of the campaign trail.

### Who is using Trail Trax?

