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Although many may argue that a nation's leaders must be held to a morally superior standard and use only honesty and candor in their pursuits, the Machiavellian nature of politicians, the attempt for politicians to seem more ordinary, and the regular attempts to hide scandals prove that artifice is essential on the road to political office. Individuals must ~~use~~ employ artifice and create an ideal ego in order for society to accept them as trustworthy and similar to the common man.

Throughout history, rulers have utilized countless different methods of achieving power, however none have been so successful as ~~the art~~ mastering the art of lying. In his advice to future rulers, ~~the~~ Niccolò Machiavelli ~~argues~~ encourages them to lie and maintain the illusion of sympathy to the common struggles in order to retain power. He asserts that it is imperative for a ruler to appear caring and sympathetic



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even if he has no objective but power. Machiavelli argues that to be sincere and honest is akin to being vulnerable. A ruler must be skilled in the art of deception if he is not to fall prey to usurpers. Thus, it is essential that he appear humble and morally upright to his constituents as he is to appear idealistic, despite his nature being identical to his fellow citizens.

Many popular politicians employ this ~~is~~ illusion of modesty in the modern age. Barack Obama, a favorite among much of nation was the first sitting President to ever appear on a talk show. ~~Despite this statement~~ Despite his many addresses to the nation, his appearance on a talk-show enabled him to win the hearts of millions as he was ~~to~~ shown to be humble, ordinary, and accessible. This played an enormous role in him winning the trust of the American people and securing a second term. Similarly, Bill Clinton was the first



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Presidential candidates to appear on a talk show, allowing him to easily reach the public and assert his ideas, winning him the Presidency. Therefore, the appearance of modesty and vulnerability plays an enormous role in a politician's chance of success.

The recent election was extremely polarizing as the American people were presented with two of the most ^{radical} candidates, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. Throughout ~~the~~ 2016, each news cycle was gripped with scandals from both sides, scandals that the two parties had attempted to hide. However, despite almost daily accusations against Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton's issue with the deleted emails ultimately resulted in her loss. The truth of the matter is, all politicians have secrets and scandals but the difference between those who succeed and those who don't is the skill to cover them up. Hillary Clinton was not well-versed in the art of deception though she tried countless ~~of~~ times. Whenever

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she attempted to cover up a scandal, it was tactless and forever painted her as untrustworthy and deceitful, despite the innumerable scandals against Donald Trump as well, resulting in her ultimate loss of the presidency. Thus, a politician cannot simply lie but must be skilled in that art; he must be willing to go to extreme measures to cover up scandals because ultimately, they will be discovered.

Thus, despite the ~~usually~~ superior moral superiority we ascribe to politicians and leaders, it is essential for them to employ artifice as demonstrated by Machiavelli, Barack Obama, and the recent Presidential candidates. For, only then can they win over a nation's trust and hopes, if they are considered better but act ~~the same~~ humble.

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The American people love a good story, whether it be true or not. If a politician can weave a good story that tugs on people's heartstrings, they are practically ~~guaranteed~~ guaranteed a win.

Which is why Chris Hedges' argument that "the most essential skill... is artifice" is true.

To use a recent example, in last year's presidential election, Donald Trump gathered mass support by proclaimed that he was not the typical politician. He was a "man of the people", a home grown American that just wanted to make America great again. He used the old Reagan campaign slogan to create a name for himself and get enough support to carry him into the White House. People connected to him because of his practically non-existent political ties and believed in his message and direction for our country. Finally, there was someone the everyday person could ~~connect to~~ relate to and trust enough to let him lead them.

even bigger

Evidence of using artifice isn't just found in elections, but also in literature. In the book "The Hunger Games" ~~the~~, the two main characters of Katniss and Peeta create a story to foster compassion for them in



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the hopes that it would help them both make it out of the Hunger Games alive. The plan works and they are sent medicine and other help throughout the games, ~~making~~ making it out in the end ~~both~~ both alive. They made their audience believe they were in love, angering the gamemakers while ~~drawing~~ drawing sympathy from the crowds of people that watch the games. In the next book, "Catching Fire", they take ~~it~~ it even further by implying that Katniss is pregnant, again using a false story to reach their desired outcome. People believed it, of course, and it worked to their advantage.

~~Politics has always been known as a platform for lies and storytelling. Yet, people believe those lies and revel in the ingenuity of their storytelling, always hoping that their lies are actually truths and their stories more fact than fiction. They choose to give politicians the benefit of the doubt and believe it if it sounds good, or right, or whatever they want to believe. Because Americans have always been a sucker for a pretty face and a good story.~~

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Most Americans would agree the politicians lie to ~~get~~^{get} into office. Which is a prime example that the essential skills are artificial. Politicians will say almost any thing to get into office whether its be creating a wall or breaking the glass ceiling. People have come to expect this making it apart of our culture in ~~USA~~^{America}.

Another example would be actors on red carpets or at interviews they sound ~~like~~^{generous} and relatable, but in reality they could be selfish people who doesn't care about anyone. To the Public they act charming, honest, and sincere. They do ~~that~~^{this} so they can get famous and rich. They do ~~that~~^{this} so they will never get ignored.

Personally we have all done this we make up fake stories to impress some one, or we ~~ex~~ over compensate on a job application. Why do we do this? We do ~~do~~ this to get a job or a raise. We do this to get a date or a new friend. We do this to get ahead in life to make sure we are ~~all~~ always better than the person beside us.

All this examples show us how



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Are essential skills are artificial. In the end we all lie or pretend to have a skill that we don't have. Sure there are people who would never lie, but look around Humans started lying ~~then~~ ^{since} since the start with Adam and Eve. Which leaves ^{us} ~~the~~ ^{proof} ~~only~~ that all our skills are fake.

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