

# A Hairy Issue for the GOP Presidential Candidates



Over the past few weeks, we've been watching presidential candidates jump into the 2016 race, and have listened to them make visionary speeches about why they want to be the leader of the free world. For people like me, who follow politics closely, these speeches have been fascinating for their messaging. They've hinted at the platforms the candidates intend to run on,

as well as given us an idea of how successful they'll be in connecting with voters.

For people who don't really follow politics, however, the rhetoric has served primarily as an introduction. Much of the electorate knows little (if anything) about people like Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, Scott Walker, and Marco Rubio. Their names and faces are foreign, which is clear from the national polling. Unlike Hillary Clinton, who has been in the national spotlight for decades, most GOP candidates are making their first impressions on America.

First impressions are pretty important (especially if you want to be the president), and this early in the race, a candidate's stated vision isn't nearly as significant as *how* they present them self. In the often shallow, image-obsessed society that we live in, one of the things people deem relevant is personal appearance.

That's not to say that someone has to look and dress like a professional model in order to get elected in this country. I

don't believe that to be the case. At the same time, however, it seems to me that if a Republican candidate is going to present himself or herself as a young, vibrant, forward-looking alternative to the stale politicians of yesterday (which most are aiming for to contrast themselves with Hillary Clinton), they've got to look the part.

As of now, they don't. And a big reason for that is their haircuts. They're making the candidates look... well... a little dopey.

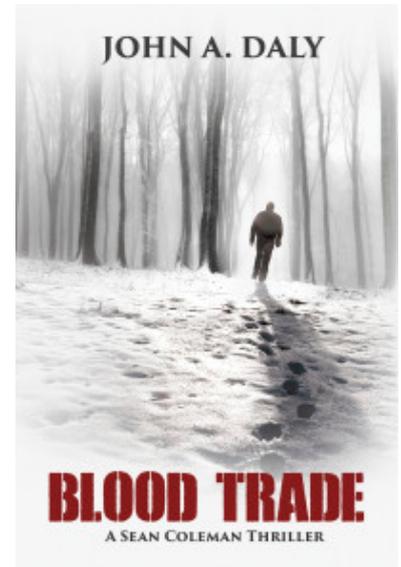
Now, I fully realize that I'm the last person who should be criticizing anyone about their hair. I've got a weird, uneven receding hairline that seems to take on a slightly different shape and direction each time I look in the mirror. My remaining locks are overly thick where they shouldn't be, embarrassingly thin where I wish they were thick, and even appear multicolored at times, depending on the angle of the sun when I'm outside... It ain't pretty, folks.

The key difference, of course, is that *I'm* not running for president. For the people that are, this kind of thing actually *does* matter.

Sure, it's a superficial criticism that in no way reflects how effective of leaders they are. But that doesn't change the fact that people (importantly voters) notice, and let it effect their perception of an individual. If a serious candidate presents them self with a look that is noticeably far-removed from what is contemporary, it keeps many people from lending them their ear.

Specifically, at this point in time, Ted Cruz looks like the aging hot-rod driver from *American Graffiti*. Marco Rubio is sporting a comb-over, which makes no sense because his hair isn't that thin, and he's not a G.I. Joe action figure from the early 80's. And then there's Rand Paul... On good days, he looks like a freshly-trimmed Lyle Lovett. On bad days, I'm

half expecting his hair to start hissing and his eyes to turn me into stone. Even Scott Walker could stand for a new look.



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I promise you that my intent isn't to degrade these men. On the contrary, my intent is to help them. In this day and age, a presidential candidate just can't afford to let something as otherwise unimportant as their hair distract from their candidacy. The future of the country is at stake, and like it or not, personal appeal is necessary to win.

My suggestion to each of the candidates is to consult a professional, contemporary stylist—preferably one not recommended by Trey Gowdy—and let them work their artistic magic. Someone gave that advice to Paul Ryan in 2012, and there's a far bigger need for it today.

***If you're interested in a signed, personalized copy of my novel "From a Dead Sleep" you can order one from my website. It also makes a great gift!***

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# Do We Really Want Another Coronation in 2016?

☒ Maybe you've seen the bumper stickers, or at least heard about them – the ones that say “I'm Ready for Hillary.” Surely you know about the CNN documentary about Mrs. Clinton that's in the works – and the NBC mini-series that's “in development.” Or how about The New York Times decision that's already put a reporter on the Hillary beat – full time? Or that Twitter account she just opened. So why waste everybody's time with that silly question we all know the answer to?

Of course she'll run in 2016. And when she does, she'll win the nomination even if some other Democrat is foolish enough to waste his time running against her. The more important question, the only one that really matters, is: Will she win the presidency in 2016?

Predicting the outcome of a presidential election more than three years off is like predicting the weather – 300 years from today. Anything can happen in politics and it usually does. But let's play Carnac anyway.

Here's what we know for sure: the so-called mainstream media will be her most loyal base just as they are currently President Obama's. The media were in charge of making the arrangements for the coronation in 2008 and 2012 and they'll be just as anxious to put on another one in 2016.

But a slobbering media won't be enough. Journalists didn't single-handedly sink John McCain or Mitt Romney – they weren't great candidates in their own right – and it won't be enough to ensure a Hillary victory. There are other factors working

in her favor.

I recently came across a few in a piece in the Daily Beast by Myra Adams, a self-described “lifelong Republican” which ran under the headline “16 Reasons Why Hillary Clinton Will Win in 2016.” I won’t torture my conservative friends with all 16 reasons, but here are a few:

The media, as I’ve said, will be ready to crown a “queen.”

Also noted earlier, she will have no primary opposition, or a symbolic opponent at best.

She has plenty of money.

The black voting bloc along with Hispanics and Asians are hers to lose.

Bill Clinton will be a tremendous asset.

Hillary has the Electoral College working in her favor. Here’s what Ms. Adams writes about that:

“In 2012 the final Electoral College results were 332 for Obama and 206 for Romney. If Romney had won the battleground states of Florida (29 votes), Ohio (18 votes), and Virginia (13 votes), *Obama would still have been reelected* but by a closer margin of 272 to 266.

“Now, just because Obama won well over 300 electoral votes does not mean Hillary will repeat that achievement. However, the path to 270 is much easier for any Democrat candidate given current and future demographic growth and established voting patterns.”

And then there’s The Great Social Movement argument put forth by Ms. Adams:

“A great social movement to elect the first Madame President is gathering wind and will reach sustained hurricane strength

on November 5, 2014—the day after the midterm elections and the ‘official start’ of the 2016 presidential campaign.

“Akin to the movement that elected the first African-American president in 2008, the ‘Madame President movement’ will be propelled by the mainstream media, Hollywood, and social media. Together they will build momentum and coalitions across all platforms, while reveling in their awesome social and cultural significance. You will hear the ‘triumph of the ‘60s feminist movement.’ You will hear that you will be ‘voting to make history.’ And you will hear that your vote will be used as a ‘hammer to break through the glass ceiling of the Oval Office.’

“Warning,” Myra Adams tells us, “Prepare for the onslaught, because it is coming your way.”

But can the race really be over before it’s even begun? Conservatives say anyone who thinks Hillary Clinton is invincible has a very short memory. With all her name recognition she still couldn’t beat a virtually unknown senator who hadn’t even served one full term in Washington – so how is she going to beat a real GOP candidate with ideas, especially after 8 years of chronically high unemployment and the onset of ObamaCare?

There’s more. Americans don’t usually elect a candidate from the same party three times in a row. It happens, but only rarely. George H.W. Bush did succeed Ronald Reagan, who served two terms. And FDR won four times in a row – and was succeeded by Harry Truman. But historically, the odds are against another Democrat winning the White House after two terms by fellow Democrat Barack Obama.

But Republicans need to understand that history isn’t destiny. It’s only a rear view mirror.

What about another Republican argument, the one that says when you get right down to it, Hillary has no real record to run

on. Name one major (or even minor) accomplishment she's had while Secretary of State, they ask? And that line about "what difference does it make" how four Americans were killed in Benghazi will come back to haunt her, they predict.

I don't think so. We live in the United States of Low Information Voters. They don't care about Hillary's record. They *like* her and that's enough for them. And there are plenty of "them." Hillary constantly scores high in favorability polls. And don't forget that Barack Obama had no record to run on either. He won because there were enough fans out there who just plain liked him.

I have no predictions on the outcome of the 2016 race, not this far out anyway. But I will predict this: If Republican true-believers demand ideological purity – if the nominee has to be a rigid, take-no-prisoners conservative on every issue from immigration reform to abortion, and gay rights, and embryonic stem cell research – Hillary Clinton will be the next president of the United States of America.

"Real conservatives" didn't like Mitt Romney and about 3 million of them stayed home on Election Day, assuring a second term for Barack Obama. If a hard-right candidate gets the nomination in 2016, a different 3 million Republicans may very well sit home.

This is not an argument in favor of a moderate Republican. I believe what the great Bill Buckley believed. He wanted the most conservative candidate *who could actually win the general election* to get the nomination. So do I.

But if the GOP insists on having a Civil War instead of a Big Tent, if the hardliners refuse to understand that in politics you don't always get precisely what you want, then they will get something they not only don't want, but don't even want to think about: President Hillary Clinton.

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