



TrumpCruzHabic: A creature made of orangutan hair and mafia eyebrows.

Rogues, damaged idealists,
and neo-frootloopians

Description

The Next President

Words by **Robert Kilborn**.

Images by **Anthony Jenkins**.

“Madam Speaker, the President of the United States.”

THESE words, thundered out by the House Sergeant at Arms, announcing the entrance of the President at the annual State of the Union Address to a joint session of the United States Congress, and satellited in real time throughout the world, always give me a thrill.

A naive, utopian vision of what mere politics can achieve still seems to afflict many. But those with a sense of history, and of the realities of power, can separate the Ideal of America from its Reality. The Ideal is a great one. It brought about the abolition of slavery, enacted the equality of women, rebuilt Europe, transformed Germany and Japan, doubled lifespans, and fueled unprecedented prosperity. Those impingements of the Ideal upon the Real are real.

But then there’s the other side of Reality: chronic poverty, failed education, poor healthcare, wonky domestic policies, and a foreign policy that regularly jumps the rail into disaster.

Nevertheless, would anyone prefer Russia or China as the dominant world power? Only those oblivious to the differences between the governments, court systems, media outlets, and public institutions of Russia, China, and the United States would believe in the aspirational equivalency of these competing Leviathans. As Winston Churchill famously said, “Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.”



Hillary, the Teflon Dame, in Cheshire Cat, Mad Hatter mode.

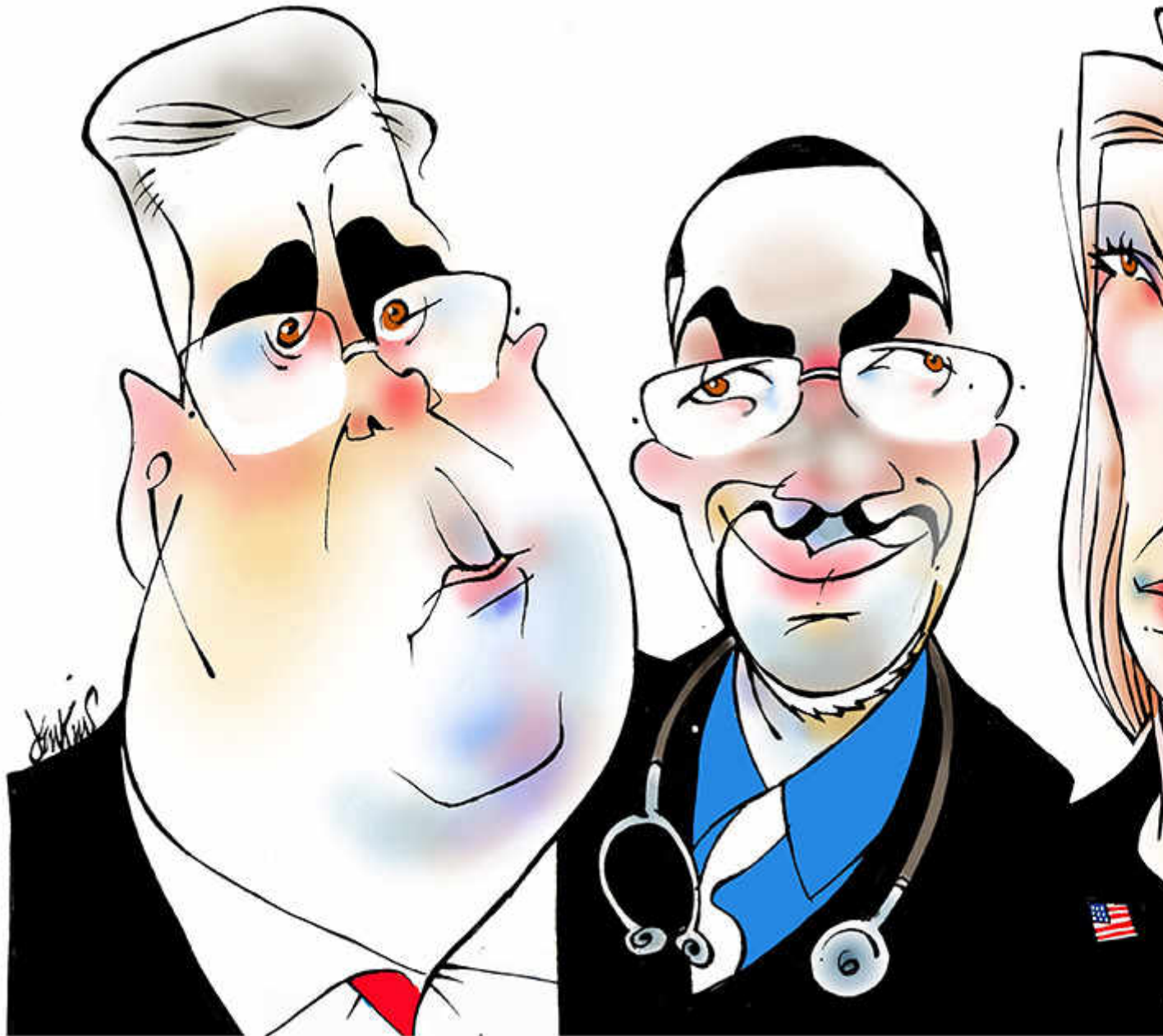


Bernie Sanders, Social Democrat, wants a Danish model (of government).

Trumping, Cruzing, and Hillaryty

The friction between the Ideal and the Real abrades every race to the Presidency. But in Canada, the United States, Europe and a few other places, no one gets jailed, tortured, or killed for lampooning political or religious leaders. That separates us from much of the rest of the world. Yes, however imperfect, our system is better.

The price we pay for democracy, however, is an endless Cirque du Soleil of politics. In the liberal democracies, politicians' words, bodies, and worldviews twist, bend, and contort in virtuosic performances of salesmanship and equivocation. These performances are most spectacular in America, where the stakes—leadership of the free world—are epoch-makingly high.



Jeb Bush denies climate change. Dr. Ben Carson, Neurosurgeon, doesn't believe in evolution. Carly Fiorina wants to



Rick Santorum and Mick Huckabee, religious fruitcakes. Chris Christie just loves fruitcake.

The author of these images, illustrator and caricaturist Anthony Jenkins, Wonderlanded the pages of Canada's national newspaper, The Globe and Mail, for nearly 40 years. His depictions of the rogues, damaged idealists, neo-frootloopians, romantic fantasists, and marginally acceptable candidates warring for the leaderships of the Democrats and the Republicans are a knowing take on a State of the Union that, willy-nilly, involves the interests and fate of the entire world.

Only laughtears can save us.



Robert Kilborn has written fiction, nonfiction, essays, articles, and reviews for the National Post, the Montreal Gazette, La Scena Musicale, Westmount Magazine, Cult Montreal, Whitehot Magazine of Contemporary Art (New York), and Tuck Magazine (London, England). He started out as a rock singer. At the University of British Columbia he read Literature, Philosophy, and Art History. He's been an English teacher, a restaurant consultant, a Don Draper, and General Manager of one of Canada's leading modern dance companies, Anna Wyman Dance Theatre.

Check out [Robert Kilborn's LinkedIn profile](#) and [Westmount Magazine listing](#). Contact him at rkilborn@sympatico.ca.



Illustrator, caricaturist, and writer Anthony Jenkins frolicked, gambolled, and capered at Canada's national newspaper, The Globe and Mail, for nearly 40 years. He has freelanced for publications including The Wall Street Journal, Maclean's Magazine, The Medical Post (Canada), The Straits Times (Malaysia), The South China Morning Post (Hong Kong), and The Melbourne Age. He has also created book covers and illustrations for numerous publishers, including The Lonely Planet series of travel guidebooks. Most recently, he created the cover art and author illustrations for Douglas Gibson's [Across Canada by Story](#), published October 2015 by ECW Press.

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Date Created
December 2015