

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# THE EFFECTS OF HAIR PARTS ON THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Side parts dominate again, but for the first time, a candidate with no part takes the lead

## The Hair Part Theory and the 2008 Candidates

The Hair Part Theory, an unusual but surprisingly accurate way to analyze images and personalities, reveals new insights to the 2008 Presidential candidates, and can help explain voter choices in this chaotic election season. Typical of most leaders in our culture, almost all of them part their hair on one side or the other, with only Barack Obama standing out as a charismatic “no-parter”. In fact, when you look at the top 19 candidates, more than 80% show characteristics directly related to how they part their hair. The theory says that parting one’s hair on the right projects more of a right brain, intuitive and often unusual image; on the left gives more of a left brain, logical and often more standard image; not parting at all will project more of a balanced, and often less prominent image. Personality traits and behaviors follow these general biases through “interactional continuity”, because often this image is carried throughout ones life. While choosing a candidate is based on a wide range of qualities, appearance and personality are at the top of list – using the Hair Part Theory sheds light on these and on how a candidate may act once they are in office.

## The 2000 Presidential Election

In 2000, we released a press release entitled “The Real Reason Al Gore Lost the Election” that stated that voter unease with Al Gore’s appearance and personality often was the decisive factor, not necessarily his policies or experience. According to the Hair Part Theory, this is was directly related to his right hair part – which emphasizes the right side, which is seen as “intuitive”, and often more “feminine” – qualities that are unusual and less acceptable on a man. George Bush, while not having the experience to match Gore’s, sports a left part, which is seen as more rational and masculine – qualities more standard and accepted on a man.

## The 2004 Presidential Election

In 2004, the voters had a choice between two left parting candidates, George Bush and John Kerry, and while hair parting can’t be used to distinguish between them, it still had its effects on them and the other candidates. Bush continued to project the “regular guy” personality but had not lived up to his right brain concept of “compassionate conservatism”. Kerry was often accused of being unemotional and dispassionate in his demeanor – both left brain traits. In fact most assume that Kerry picked John Edwards because he brought warmth and emotional passion to the candidacy (Edwards parts on the right).

## The 2008 Presidential Election – front runners

By early February, 2008, the initial 19 main candidates had been winnowed down to 6 front runners, all showing characteristics that can be explained by the Hair Part Theory:

**Mitt Romney:** left parter, seen as standard, all business, stay the course

**John McCain:** right parter, always seen as a maverick, causing worry among regular Republicans for not being in the mainstream;

**Mike Huckabee:** right parter, quirky character, outside the mainstream

**Hillary Clinton:** left parter, seen as unemotional, causing worry among some Democrats for being too much in the mainstream

**Barack Obama:** no parter, seen as new and different, bridging divides, has a unifying presence

**John Edwards:** right parter, very passionate, populist, outside the mainstream

## 2008 Presidential Election – All candidates

The rest of the candidates were a mixture of mostly left and right parters (Obama is the only neutral one of the final 6, and although Fred Thompson and Joe Biden have no hair part, when they were younger both wore left parts – which usually is when personality is developed). When comparing the predictions of the Hair Part Theory to the kind of personality each projects, the theory is correct for 16 of 19 candidates, a percentage of 84%. The stronger effects are always seen with men with right hair parts – the theory is 5 for 5 in predicting that each of the “right parters” is unusual and outside the mainstream.

## Why part the hair at all? What about no parts?

The biggest reason for parting on the side is that it adds flair and pizzazz to an appearance and personality. Without it, the candidate can have a hard time standing out – witness Joe Biden and Fred Thompson who both have no hair part and had lackluster campaigns. Barack Obama is unique in that he can connect with people even without the side part. It is interesting to note that almost all black men wear no hair part at all.

### **Side parts and leadership roles**

Overall, side parts dominate in all leadership roles – in business, media and politics. The percentage is usually over 90% in these roles, even though this doesn't follow the general population, which generally has about a 50% no parts, 45% left parts and 5% right parts. In some demographics, such as African American men and many of the younger generation, the percent of no parts is much higher, more than 90% in some cases. These "no parts" personalities may not have that same flair, but tend to be more balanced in left and right brain characteristics, since their hair part is not biasing every interaction. When a person does stand out, it can be more genuine and based on strong communication qualities, rather than just a hair part.

### **The issue: Imbalance is caused by a side part**

Either of the side parts creates an inherent imbalance to the image. Through long term interactions, it also affects personality and behavior. While the right side (intuitive), and the left side (rational), are both valid, emphasizing one side at the expense of the other, could be a source of the strong polarization we have in our politics and culture. In contrast, for example, the rousing speeches by Barack Obama are a believable call for unity and acceptance of our common nature. As predicted by the Hair Part Theory, Obama would be coming from this centrist place - he is one of the few politicians you will find that have no part at all.

### **Voting biased by hair parts**

Voters have been having their judgments subtly affected for years by this bias towards one side or the other, possibly overshadowing the candidates' ability to govern. The presidency of Jimmy Carter is a good example – voters chose him because he was honest, warm and outside the mainstream (he parted on the right). But when it came to governing the country, he had a very difficult time – even with his own party controlling Congress (As a side note, in 1979 he switched hair parts after a letter from John Walter, and has had a significantly different public persona since then.) Consider left parting George Bush, whose popular personality and widespread connections helped him win the presidency, but in governing, it would appear that popularity overshadowed competency, not to mention the strong polarization that occurred on his watch. Al Gore would likely have been competent, but his right hair part and personality are disconcerting to the public, as the right part usually creates that on a man, and he too may have had trouble with Congress. Hillary Clinton has the competency and the left part, but because she is a woman, the left part is often seen as too aggressive for many, and she definitely polarizes the electorate.

### **Hair Part theory origins and purpose**

The Hair Part Theory was discovered by John Walter in 1978, and researched by his sister Catherine Walter in 1998. It is such an unusual idea, but one that becomes more and more valid the more you look at it and at famous people through the last 100 years. Not just in politics, but in entertainment and in business, the hair part effects can be seen over and over again in. Historically, it's a pretty recent phenomenon – old pictures and portraits before 1850 rarely show a side part. The first President with a side part was Andrew Jackson. The goal in publicizing the theory is that it may make a difference in changing people's viewpoints and choices. Perhaps a larger representation of neutral, or center parts will become more common in our leaders and we as a country can actually get less polarized. When Mr. Walter first discovered it, he changed his part from right to left, and completely changed his social life and standing for the better. However, it wasn't until he put a center part, and then no part at all that he discovered some truly beneficial aspects of balancing out his image.

### **Mirrors, the True Mirror® and the Hair Part Theory**

Because there are effects caused by left or right parts, then one's self image as seen in a regular mirror can be quite different than the world's understanding of the persons image, because the mirror image is reflecting the opposite side part. What is thought one is projecting is actually the opposite. In fact, watching the candidates in a mirror is quite revealing – seeing them backwards can show an entirely different side of the person, and often makes more sense! In the appendix to this release, the list of candidates is shown below alongside a reversed image...looking at them side by side shows a strong difference in many of them. This effect of mirrors is what led to the creation of the True Mirror – the mirror that reflects without being reversed. Within this image, one can see exactly what is projected, so if a side part is chosen, at least the choice is conscious.

### **Disclaimer and Qualifications**







Important disclaimer about the Hair Part Theory: While it is often very illuminating, it isn't a necessary or sufficient condition for predicting the nature of a candidate's public image and personality, nor are there any direct correlations with public policies. It is a contributing factor, along with the other, well known determinants of personality, such as gender, age, race and background. One thing that sets it apart from these other determinants is that it is by personal choice – and therefore can be changed if desired. See the full theory on the True Mirror website at [www.truemirror.com/hp](http://www.truemirror.com/hp).

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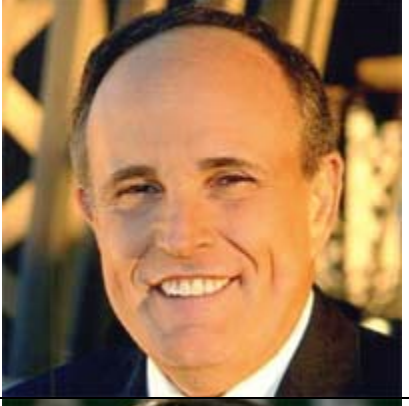





## Appendix: The 2008 Presidential Candidates







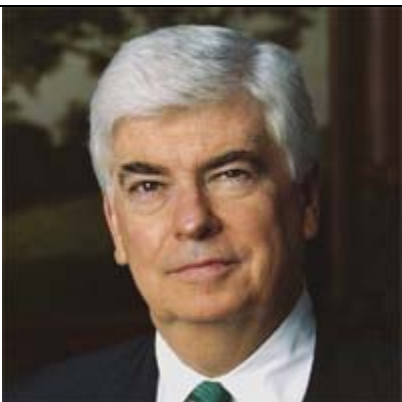
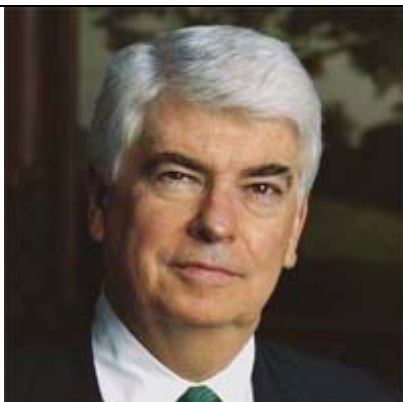
This is the original slate of the top 19 Presidential candidates for 2008. Whether and how they can lead the country is a combination of ability, vision, delegation, and a host of other characteristics. But above all, there is the communication with the world – how will their hair affect that? The Hair Part Theory shed lights on where their personality and communication styles come from. Note that the theory is never 100% - there are plenty of exceptions and the effect has varying degrees of strength. However, it can add a new dimension of understanding as to our choices in politics, entertainment and choices.








As an aside, reversing the photo shows what they might look like with the opposite hair part – and also how they see themselves in a mirror. Often the reversed image is strikingly different, especially when you look into their eyes and interpret their expression. Note how Hilary Clinton looks a lot warmer with a right part. Obama looks almost the same. McCain looks much more assertive than his laid back actual image. Romney looks less relaxed. If instead of the mirror image, you actually changed the hair part, these effects would be stronger.

Photo	Name	Hair part	Comments (note – these are just one person’s observations, not necessarily comprehensive and very subjective)	Hair Part Theory predicts correctly ?	Photo Reversed
	Hillary Clinton	Left	Standard “strong woman” image – left part typical of most women in politics.. Often accused of not being feminine or emotional. Everyone was surprised at the “moment” in New Hampshire. Has the left part to be a strong leader, but will it clash with the male dominated political world that doesn’t readily accept strong women?	Yes  Reversed image shows more warmth	
	Barack Obama	None	Often speaks of unity and balance. This style is almost completely untested in modern times (only Nixon and Ford since 1897 have no parts). However, all of the founding fathers were non-parting	Yes  Reversed image is Very similar	
	John Edwards	Right	Often said to have a high degree of empathy and passion of what he cares about (very right sided). As is typical of right parters, unusual personality. Generally out of sync with the mainstream political world – what would happen if he got elected (perhaps like Jimmy Carter?)	Yes  Reversed image seems less genuine	

	<p>John McCain</p>	<p>Right</p>	<p>Strong maverick image and personality. As is typical of right parters, unusual personality.</p>	<p>Yes Reversed image looks more assertive</p>	
	<p>Mitt Romney</p>	<p>Left</p>	<p>Classic left parting, old school male image</p>	<p>Yes Reversed image looks less honest</p>	
	<p>Mike Huckabee</p>	<p>Right</p>	<p>Alternative personality and holds some highly controversial views. Quirky nature is typical of right parters</p>	<p>Yes Reversed image looks more boyish</p>	
	<p>Bill Richardson</p>	<p>Left</p>	<p>Standard left part image, although not generally mainstream</p>	<p>No Reversed image looks less strong</p>	

	Duncan Hunter	Left	Strongly conservative, polarizing positions.	Yes Reversed image looks warmer	
	Rudy Giuliani	Left/bald	Historically on the left, just gave up on the comb over and now combs straight back. Personality is strongly male centric and dominating	Yes Reversed image looks similar	
	Dennis Kucinich	Left	Left part does not match with personality or non-mainstream policy	No Reversed image looks less assured	
	Ron Paul	Left	Left part does not match the mainstream	No Reversed image looks more inexperienced	

	Mike Gravelle	Right	Seen as a maverick and gadfly. As is typical of right parters, unusual personality	Yes Reversed image looks more challenging	
	Sam Brownback	Left (although he can appear with no part)	Standard image	Yes Reversed image looks more strained	
	Joe Biden	Center (often parts on left)	Fairly mainstream, non-part makes it hard to stand out	Yes Reversed image looks the same	
	Chris Dodd	Left	Standard image	Yes Reversed image looks more passive	

	Newt Gingrich	Left	Very standard image and personality	Yes  Reversed image looks more unusual	
	Tom Tancredo	Left	Standard image, but not mainstream ideas	No  Reversed image looks more unusual	
	Fred Thompson	Center (used to be left)	Generally neutral personality – wasn't able to stand out in race	Yes  Reversed image looks the same	
	Tommy Thompson	Right	Outside mainstream	Yes  Reversed image looks more confident	