

# Candidate 8

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## Politics: Public Profile over Policy?

In 2020, we may have the privilege to witness both Boris Johnson and Donald Trump lead two of the most powerful countries in the world. In a world where every day is a bad hair day, can we afford to elect our world leaders based on their exploits on The Apprentice? A politician's public image is more important today than it has ever been. The celebrity world has transferred into government and people are voting with their eyes rather than their ears. With several of the main UK parties pushing for the voting age to be lowered to 16, the internet is going to have an increased role in promoting potential MP's. When an Armenian woman's arse can "break the internet", a clued up politician could quite easily manipulate their online persona so it goes viral. As absurd as it sounds, politician's policies now take a backseat to their constructed identity. Scandals have rocked the political world for years and now more than ever, candidates strive to keep their dirty secrets classified. Should we, as voters, not only have access to our world leaders' private lives but elect accordingly?

In today's world of phone hacking and GCHQ, many campaign for the right of privacy (does anyone really want their internet browsing history to be public knowledge?). But when national security is at risk, most of us agree that these checks need to be made for the greater good. In the early sixties, tensions between the Soviet Union and the West were building. Meanwhile, a nineteen year old model, Christine Keeler, was sleeping around. This on its own is not a problem; Keller did not have a public image to smear. However, it was her exploits with John Profumo, the UK's "Secretary of State of War" that introduced the problem of national security. If Profumo had the espionage resources of GCHQ he would have known that Keller was also doing the dirty with Yevgeny Ivanov, a Soviet spy. When story broke, Profumo was forced to resign and MacMillan's government was doomed to fail. John Profumo was a well-respected member of the Conservative Party before his scandal was revealed. He had held several positions within government and had been deemed as successful in all. His experience was exactly what the country needed in time of potential unrest. Although he may have put national security at risk, the likelihood that Profumo would have relayed secret British intelligence onto his nineteen year old mistress in his state of euphoria is unlikely. MacMillan also suffered, failing to be re-elected, which many blame on the Profumo Affair. Why should a weathered Prime Minister that did not do the rumpy-pumpy with any questionable people have to feel the consequences of what one of his Ministers did in his private life, something which MacMillan had no control over? Similar things have happened in more recent times, most notably with Bill Clinton and his affair with Monica Lewinsky. Government attempted to impeach Clinton but eventually he was acquitted. However, his legacy has been forever smeared all because he couldn't keep it in his pants.

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But the same question needs to be raised. Does Bill's inability to be faithful to his wife have any real impact on his ability to be a good politician? After all, politicians are just human, and if there is one thing we know about humans, it is that they can't help but karma their sutra.

One thing politicians love to hide is their money. With so many modern politicians being born into enormous wealth, it is important for them to deceive the public into thinking that they understand the worries many have over their finances. Many members of the British Government feel as though by pretending to be in normally financial standing, voters will be empathetic towards them. However this theory fails due to what seems to be a common trait within the majority of wealthy people. Greed. Money is addictive and, just like heroin, once you get a taste for it, you need to have more. The Expenses scandal rocked British politics in 2008 as it was uncovered that wealthy politicians were claiming things such as a luxury breakfast on their expenses. Millions in tax payer's money was going towards unnecessary items for the rich politicians. Several were prosecuted for fraud. However this kind of problem is also experienced over the pond. Jesse.L Jackson Jr spent over \*\*\*\*\* in campaign funding on novelty items such as mounted elk heads, cashmere capes and Michael Jackson memorabilia. Jesse was eventually caught and diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Since then we have had other problems concerning the Government and money. The Panama Papers uncovered tax avoidance right at the top of the pile. Prime Minister David Cameron and his family have been involved doing what is not exactly illegal but is certainly immoral. It is in instances such as these that the question of does Cameron's money saving scheme hinder his ability to be Prime Minister cannot be raised due to the fact that his government had lost hundreds of millions of pounds in taxes from corporations such as Google and Starbucks. When the men in charge of our country not only avoid tax themselves but allow vast amounts of money to be lost due to tax avoidance from the biggest companies in the world, their private lives need to be examined. In this case, the lines between their private lives and their public policy are blurred. No self-respecting person could stand up and prosecute tax avoidance when they know that they are just as guilty. But I guess that no self-respecting person would put their genitalia into a dead pig's mouth.

Racism is something that the vast majority of voters will not tolerate. If we were walking down the street and witnessed racism we would be horrified. Racism in the workplace used to be common place but now jail time can await employers that turn to such dirty tactics. Racist politicians stand no chance at being elected into office. Oh. Maybe that last point is not strictly true. Government seems to be the only place where people are tolerant of racism. Donald Trump is ninety percent there to securing the Republican candidacy for the 2016 US Presidential election. It is unnerving to think that so many Americans support a fascist and a racist. This may be a case of picking policy over

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personality. Trump does have some good ideas for what he is an expert in. I am confident that if he were to become President, Wall Street would benefit greatly. However, he is undeniably a racist. He has on several occasions verbally attacked refugees, Mexicans and immigrants. Ninety years ago they would have called him a W.A.S.P. But in today's society, people like him have no place. We live in an ever changing world, sculpted by warfare and unrest. Our world leaders need to be tolerant of overseas tragedy. In the UK, UKIP had a big impact on the 2015 General Election. Their anti-Europe and anti-immigration policy was supported by many in fear of possible terrorist groups being able to walk freely in the UK from mainland Europe. Despite being borderline racist, Nigel Farage and his mob were well supported in the South of England especially, where UKIP candidates often received more votes than their Labour counterparts. In the run up to the election, UKIP became a viral hit. The internet was rife with memes of Farage and his party. Although most of these satirical jokes were at the expense of UKIP, no publicity is bad publicity. Many people saw UKIP as a joke and therefore, as "a joke", voted for them at the polls. They probably laughed about it in the pub later on with their mates, not realising how close we actually were to electing MP's from a racist party.

Politics is become more popular with younger people. Things such as the voting age being lowered has made the youth of today more politically mobile. Twinned with the rising world of celebrity, voting based on personality is becoming more and more dangerous. Throughout history, the public image of politicians has been priority for voters. Whether or not you like a candidate should not be taken into consideration. The policy supported by the candidate should be the most important thing on your mind when voting. You should be voting for who you believe to be the best for your society. Names and faces should not account for anything when it comes to politics. Kanye West and Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson have both been reported to be running for Presidency in 2020. These two titans of music and film both have massive online followings. If we continue to vote for who we like and not for the best candidate, we will live in a world where stars of the screen will transfer over to the political world. Winston Churchill, arguably the greatest Prime Minister of all time, was a racist. He made several comments about British territories and the "savages" that occupied them. However, in our countries time of need, he was the man to get the job done. Something which I doubt could have been achieved by the next reality star.