

## Hillary Clinton's Crisis: A Polling Question for History Fans: If the Election were held Today...

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Global Research, September 16, 2016

[John Zogby Strategies](#) 15 September 2016

*Here is a polling question for history fans: If the election were held today and the candidates were Republican Nero, Democrat Catherine de Medici, and Libertarian Timothy Leary, for whom would you?*

*An impossible match up but, in some ways, a real one. None of these are credible or beloved characters from history - at least when we think of the Black Box with the button, making a nationwide television address, or attending the G8 Summit.*

But today we have the moral equivalent of each and the polls clearly reflect the public's revulsion toward this race.



As I have noted before, there is really no good reason why this race for the presidency is even close. Hillary Clinton is running for President Barack Obama's "third term" and voters don't seem to mind that idea, Even though only a third or fewer voters feel the country is headed in the right direction,

Obama's approval rating is at a respectable 52%, the unemployment rate is less than half of what it was when he entered the White House eight years ago, there is finally some credible upward movement on wages and salaries, and the country has mainly extricated itself from two disastrous and protracted wars.

Besides, the GOP has no real plan to make things better except that they will do things differently and "Make America Great Again". Add to that the demographic advantages and Electoral College history since 1992, and this race is the Democrats to lose.

And the problem the Democrats face is that Clinton seems, at least up to now, to be rising to the occasion to do just that. Her favorable ratings are worse than when the campaign started and she is mired in the high thirties and low forties in both the nationwide and state horse race samples. I said earlier in the campaign that there was little she could do to actually improve her image.

She has been around so long, is the best known active political figure in the country, has few people who are undecided about her, and lacks the nimble political personality needed to change her image to one that is perceived as beloved. In this context, she decided to expose Trump and his supporters.

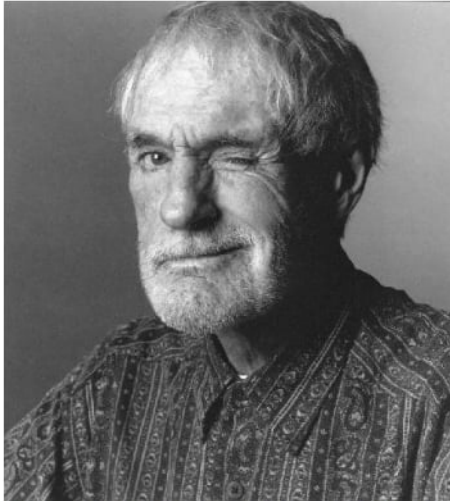
But this year has been so different. Trump actually exposes himself, is “in your face” about how ridiculous and dangerous he can be, and has actually kept his numbers within Clinton’s range right along. Attacks from someone who is less likable than him seem to have done him no harm.



But this week has been nothing short of a crisis for Clinton and her campaign. As I wrote recently, the “basketful of deplorables” statement revealed an arrogance, a meanness, and a lack of willingness to understand her opposition that raises serious questions about her ability to govern. She has yet to adequately deal with that yet. It will haunt her.

Then the entire fainting and pneumonia issue is nothing short of a disaster and raises many questions beyond her (and her campaign’s) capacity for truthfulness.

It actually makes voters consider whether she possesses the judgment to be our President. She knew she had pneumonia on Friday, decided to not tell the American people (who would have understood), proceeded to collapse and lie to the press on Sunday, then announce she had the illness. And there is much more to all of this.



**“The sensible thing to do about drugs is this, get yourself a really good dealer.”  
-- Dr. Timothy Leary**

Anyone paying attention heard her staff say that she was resting and “playing with her grandchildren”, then came out later and tenderly hugged a five year old. Adorable – except she has PNEUMONIA. It is contagious, after all. And to the ardent supporters who have been telling me that she is “past the contagious phase”, then why did she pass out?

This has all been badly done. New polls have come out today that show Clinton down 5 points in Ohio, down in Florida, New Hampshire, Nevada, and Iowa – and none of these polls reflect more than just one day’s sample. A new CBS Tracking Poll now shows her leading Trump 42% to 40%. I probably shouldn’t speculate but I suspect she will lose a few more points.

But the real crisis here is how she gets back on track.

She will most likely have a good debate performance on September 26. But then she still have to deal with the “deplorables” thing because of what it reveals about her and her supporters. And then the release of her emails in October.

She is in a tough spot.

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