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## The Real Obama

Ken Blackwell

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*"[C]ivilizational war is real, even if political leaders and polite punditry must call it by another name."*

--Robert D. Kaplan in the [December 2001 issue of the Atlantic Monthly](#)



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It's an amazing time to be alive in America. We're in a year of firsts in this presidential election: the first viable woman candidate; the first viable African-American candidate; and, a candidate who is the first frontrunning freedom fighter over 70. The next president of America will be a first.

We won't truly be in an election of firsts, however, until we judge every candidate by where they stand. We won't arrive where we should be until we no longer talk about skin color or gender.

Now that Barack Obama steps to the front of the Democratic field, we need to stop talking about his race, and start talking about his policies and his politics.

The reality is this: Though the Democrats will not have a nominee until August, unless Hillary Clinton drops out, Mr. Obama is now the frontrunner, and it's time America takes a closer and deeper look at him.

Some pundits are calling him the next John F. Kennedy. He's not. He's the next George McGovern. And it's time people learned the facts.

Because the truth is that Mr. Obama is the single most liberal senator in the entire U.S. Senate. He is more liberal than Ted Kennedy, Bernie Sanders, or Mrs. Clinton.

Never in my life have I seen a presidential frontrunner whose rhetoric is so far removed from his record. Walter Mondale promised to raise our taxes, and he lost. George McGovern promised military weakness, and he lost. Michael Dukakis promised a liberal domestic agenda, and he lost.

Yet Mr. Obama is promising all those things, and he's not behind in the polls. Why? Because the press has dealt with him as if he were in a beauty pageant.

Mr. Obama talks about getting past party, getting past red and blue, to lead the *United States* of America. But let's look at the more defined strokes of who he is underneath this superficial "beauty."

Start with national security, since the president's most important duties are as commander-in-chief. Over the summer, Mr. Obama talked about invading Pakistan, a nation armed with nuclear weapons; meeting without preconditions with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who vows to destroy Israel and create another Holocaust; and Kim Jong II, who is murdering and starving his people, but emphasized that the nuclear option was off the table against terrorists — something no president has ever taken off the table since we created nuclear weapons in the 1940s. Even Democrats who have worked in national security condemned all of those remarks. Mr. Obama is a foreign-policy novice who would put our national security at risk.

Next, consider economic policy. For all its faults, our health care system is the strongest in the world. And free trade agreements, created by Bill Clinton as well as President Bush, have made more goods more affordable so that even

people of modest means can live a life that no one imagined a generation ago. Yet Mr. Obama promises to raise taxes on "the rich." How to fix Social Security? Raise taxes. How to fix Medicare? Raise taxes. Prescription drugs? Raise taxes. Free college? Raise taxes. Socialize medicine? Raise taxes. His solution to everything is to have government take it over. Big Brother on steroids, funded by your paycheck.

Finally, look at the social issues. Mr. Obama had the audacity to open a stadium rally by saying, "All praise and glory to God!" but says that Christian leaders speaking for life and marriage have "hijacked" — *hijacked* — Christianity. He is pro-partial birth abortion, and promises to appoint Supreme Court justices who will rule any restriction on it unconstitutional. He espouses the abortion views of Margaret Sanger, one of the early advocates of racial cleansing. His spiritual leaders endorse homosexual marriage, and he is moving in that direction. In Illinois, he refused to vote against a statewide ban — ban — on all handguns in the state. These are radical left, Hollywood, and San Francisco values, not Middle America values.

The real Mr. Obama is an easy target for the general election. Mrs. Clinton is a far tougher opponent. But Mr. Obama could win if people don't start looking behind his veneer and flowery speeches. His vision of "bringing America together" means saying that those who disagree with his agenda for America are hijackers or warmongers. Uniting the country means adopting his liberal agenda and abandoning any conflicting beliefs.

But right now everyone is talking about how eloquent of a speaker he is and — yes — they're talking about his race. Those should never be the factors on which we base our choice for president. Mr. Obama's radical agenda sets him far outside the American mainstream, to the left of Mrs. Clinton.

It's time to talk about the real Barack Obama. In an election of firsts, let's first make sure we elect the person who is qualified to be our president in a nuclear age during a global civilizational war.

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