



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on March 29, 2019

Biden Early Front-runner in Democratic Party Field

If the first Democratic Party caucuses and primaries were held today, polling indicates that former Vice President Joe Biden would be the party's nominee to take on President Donald Trump.

But, of course, the elections are not being held today, and history is littered with front-runners — Gary Hart, Jeb Bush, Hubert Humphrey, Rudi Giuliani in recent years — who ultimately faltered.



Yet, in a recent Quinnipiac University poll, Biden leads the 2020 field with the support of 29 percent of Democrats, far ahead of Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who had 19 percent. Following Sanders was former Representative Beto O'Rourke (D-Texas), who despite losing to Republican Senator Ted Cruz in last year's Texas Senate race, is now making a presidential bid. He had 12 percent.

Despite all the media hype about female and African-American candidates, it is interesting to note that the top three candidates right now are all white males, with two of them well into their 70s. Senator Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) is a black woman, but she could only get eight percent in the poll, putting her in fourth place. Another white male, Mayor Peter Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, has four percent in the poll, enabling him to tie Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) for fifth place.

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Quinnipiac surveyed 1,358 registered voters and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points.

Much of the lead enjoyed by Biden — and Sanders and O'Rourke — for that matter, can be chalked up to simple name recognition. This is not to downplay name recognition, because there is no question that Donald Trump's role in his TV show, *The Apprentice*, helped him tremendously early in his campaign. Name recognition clearly helped Richard Nixon in 1968, Ronald Reagan in 1980, and Hillary Clinton in 2016. After 36 years in the Senate, and an additional eight years as vice president under President Barack Obama has made Biden's a household name, and such familiarity can only help, as it already has.

The question, of course, is does Biden have what it takes to use that foundation of name recognition to actually win caucuses and primaries, and ultimately, the Democratic nomination? Past performance indicates that he does not. He has run for president twice before, in 1988 and again in 2008, and he did not do well.

First of all, front-runners become targets of the campaigns of candidates who want to beat them. In a long, drawn-out primary campaign process, Biden will no doubt be taken to task within the Democratic Party for his perceived support for corporate interests. (Delaware is the home to many corporations because of its rather generous incorporation polices.)

Biden is already 76 years old, leaving him open to questions as to whether a man nearing his 80th birthday by the time of the election should be entrusted with the strenuous job of president. President Ronald Reagan deftly handled that issue during his second debate with Walter Mondale, when he said



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he would not “make an issue” out of Mondale’s “youth and inexperience.” But Reagan was five years younger than Biden would be if he were to take the oath of office in 2021, and no one thinks Biden is as “quick” or as humorous as was Reagan in 1984.

In fact, Biden’s tendency to gaffes rather than clever retorts will cause many observers to be watching for even more gaffes in the coming months. It is likely that Biden will suffer some, as that has been his track record.

Among several gaffes, Biden once said, “When the stock market crashed, Franklin D. Roosevelt got on the television...” It is difficult to imagine how he could have so much wrong in one sentence, as Roosevelt was not president in 1929, when the stock market crashed, and he certainly did not go on television, a technology that was not widely available until after World War II. Another gaffe had him calling jobs — J-O-B-S — a “three-letter word.”

Finally, sounding much like the former New York Yankee hall of fame baseball player Yogi Berra, Biden said to House Democrats in 2009, “If we do everything right, if we do it with absolute certainty, there’s still a 30 percent chance we’re going to get it wrong.”

Realizing that it is a new day in Democratic Party politics, Biden apparently views his white skin, and his maleness as obstacles to overcome in the campaign, as he has taken to criticizing the entire white race, calling “English jurisprudential culture” a “white man’s culture,” that has “got to change.”

His staff even put up the trial balloon of choosing a losing Georgia governor candidate from last year — Stacey Abrams — as his “running mate.” Apparently, he thinks that Abrams’ ethnicity and sex as a black woman would help him overcome his own white maleness. Unfortunately for Biden, Abrams nixed the idea almost immediately, as she has presidential ambitions of her own. Like O’Rourke in Texas, losing political contests is now a resume-enhancer for Democrats wanting to run for president.

But Biden is not the only Caucasian in the race who views a white skin as a disadvantage in today’s Democratic Party. Senator Elizabeth Warren, a white woman, has tried to claim status as a “Native American.” After that claim backfired on her, Warren has been struggling to get back on track, and met the radical Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) for lunch on Thursday. Ocasio-Cortez was a backer of fellow socialist Sanders in 2016, but it can be assumed that Warren thinks the support of the 29-year-old leftist could help her in a Democratic Party primary.

In the end, it is hard to see how either Warren or Biden will wind up heading the Democrat ticket next year. But stranger things have happened. After all, who could have predicted a little-known governor of Georgia (Jimmy Carter) getting the nod in 1976, or another little-known governor of Arkansas winning the nomination in 1992?

Somebody will be the Democratic nominee in 2020, and they can expect the overwhelming support of the mainstream media, academia, and the popular culture.

Image of Joe Biden: [Screenshot from Biden’s Facebook page](#)



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