

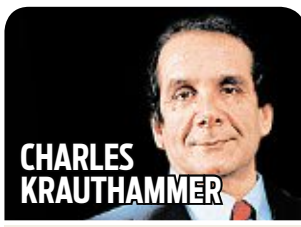
# Editorial Opinion

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## The Racing Form, 2nd edition: Sorting out early GOP leaders

WASHINGTON — The Republican nominating race is a mess: a strong field, but with 10 declared candidates and a half-dozen more to come, we need a bouncer to keep order.

I've given myself the job. Rope lines separate the four categories.



CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER  
COMMENTARY

### TOP TIER:

**1. Jeb Bush:** Solid, no sizzle. Sizzle may be in less demand than eight years ago, but his inability to separate from the pack, his recent campaign shake-up and his four-day stumble over Megyn Kelly's "knowing what we know now" Iraq question have given even his supporters pause. Nonetheless, a bulging war chest, a fine gubernatorial record and a wide knowledge of domestic issues guarantee top-tier staying power.

Chances: 25 percent.

**2. Scott Walker:** Maintains a significant lead in Iowa and it's more than just a Wisconsinite's favorite-son advantage.

He's got a solid governing record, has raised respectable money and has gone almost errorless for more than a month. One caveat: His major wobble on immigration threatens his straight-shooter persona.

Chances: 25 percent.

**3. Marco Rubio:** Good launch, steady follow-up. With his fluency in foreign affairs, has benefited the most from President Barack Obama's imploding foreign policy. Polls well, but with seven or so within the margin of error, the important question is less "Who do you support?"

than "Who could you support?" (measuring general acceptability). Rubio leads all with 74 percent. The New York Times' comi-

cal attempts to nail him on driving (four citations in 18 years — "Arrest that man!") and financial profligacy (a small family fishing boat characterized as a "luxury speedboat") only confirm how much the Democrats fear his prospects.

Chances: 35 percent.

### POLLS WELL, BUT CAN'T WIN.

**4. Rand Paul:** Fought a principled, if hyperbolic, fight on metadata collection and privacy rights, but his ambivalent national-security posture alienates many in the GOP base. Consistently ranks among the leaders in the polls and is the most successful libertarian ever, but libertarianism is still far from becoming a governing or majority persuasion. High floor, low ceiling.

**5. Ben Carson:** Ditto. Broadly popular, but major rookie problems. His national finance chairman, deputy campaign man-

ager and general counsel have all resigned within the past month. And while Obama showed that rookies can win, we haven't elected a nonpolitician since 1952 — and that guy won World War II.

### SECOND TIER, WITH A CHANCE TO JUMP

**6. Ted Cruz:** Candidate on the cusp. Has the best chance to join the leaders. Only 16 percent "would never vote for." His claimed \$40 million raised (campaign plus super PACs) suggests a serious presence throughout the early contests at least.

Chances: 5 percent.

**7. John Kasich:** My personal long-shot wild card. Jack Kemp on steroids, a bleeding-heart conservative, articulate and voluble, but somewhat less disciplined than Kemp. Which can be a problem. It's entertaining when he says, "I'm not going to have Bush money; Wells Fargo doesn't have Bush money," but not when implying

that if your policies don't match his on the Kasich compassion index, you have no heart.

Chances: 3 percent.

**8. Carly Fiorina:** Has proved strong and steady on the campaign trail. The question is: Can you reach enough of Iowa and New Hampshire with just a car and a clipboard? To jump, she needs to get into the debates. But to get into the debates, she needs to jump (to the top 10 in the polls). Catch-22.

Chances: 2 percent.

### SECOND TIER, IN NEED OF A MIRACLE

**9. Rick Perry:** Energetic launch. Spoke well, looked good. He's learned that you don't run for president right after back surgery and that you need an answer to "Why are you running?" His 2011 statement that his wife said to him "get out of your comfort zone" (as governor) was the worst since Teddy Kennedy had none at all in 1979. After four years

of studying and prepping, Perry looks ready. Achilles' heel: After his 2011 "oops" moment, he is on 24-hour gaffe watch.

**10. Chris Christie:** Damaged by Bridgegate, boxed out (ideologically) by Bush. Shows guts in openly advocating entitlement reform. It's a gamble because that's what voters say they want, but rarely vote for.

**11. Mike Huckabee:** A dead-set-against-entitlement-reform populist. Major social conservative appeal, but given the leftward ratcheting of the nation's cultural center, it may be less of an asset, even in the GOP primaries, than in 2008.

I've done no justice to Lindsey Graham, Bobby Jindal and Rick Santorum, all eminently likable and highly qualified, but yet to make their move. If they do, The Racing Form will be there.

The Washington Post  
Writers Group

### On this date

Today is the 165th day of 2015 and the 87th day of spring.

**Today's history:** In 1775, the U.S. Army was established.

**In 1777,** the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the national flag.

**In 1900,** Hawaii became a territory of the United States.

**In 1982,** Argentine troops surrendered their last stronghold in the Falkland Islands to the British, ending the Falklands War.

**In 2007,** Palestine's Fatah-Hamas unity government was dissolved after Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip.

**Today's birthdays:** Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-96), author; Alois Alzheimer (1864-1915), physician; Burl Ives (1909-95), singer/actor; Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1928-67), revolutionary leader; Donald Trump, businessman, is 69; Boy George, singer-songwriter, is 54; Diablo Cody, screenwriter, is 37; Kevin McHale, singer/actor, is 27.

**Today's fact:** The highest rank in the Army, general of the armies, was created for John Pershing in 1911. The rank was awarded posthumously to George Washington in 1976.

**Today's quote:** "When you get into a tight place, and everything goes against you till it seems as if you couldn't hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that's just the place and time that the tide'll turn."  
— Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Old Town Folks"

**Today's number: 1,826** — billionaires in the world, according to a Forbes report from March 2015. The billionaires on the list hail from 66 countries and have a combined net worth of \$7.05 trillion.

**Bible quote:** "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?"  
— Luke 12:6

### Help line

Collier 211 information and referral service, operated by the United Way of Collier County, offers free, anonymous, confidential help 24/7, in a variety of languages. Dial 211 or 239-263-4211. Visit [www.Collier211.org](http://www.Collier211.org) for more information.

### Guest commentary

## Be aware, and be an advocate against elder abuse

By Linda Oberhaus

Executive director,  
The Shelter for Abused Women & Children

At 63, Cynthia (not her real name) had never known a time without verbal, physical and emotional pain. Abandoned by her teenage mom and raised by an angry and abusive grandmother, her learned behavior as a victim led to a lifetime of unhealthy relationships.

Timid and soft-spoken, Cynthia's desire for love and acceptance combined with an extremely low self-esteem made her an easy target for abusers. Even before she was out of her teens, she suffered numerous beatings and date rapes. After she married, the abuse continued. On several occasions, her husband would slam her head to the floor so hard she sustained permanent damage. Her son followed his father's pattern of abuse into Cynthia's senior years.

When she was 62, Cynthia thought she found respite with a female colleague, who offered her a room in her home with promises to help care for her and share expenses. The colleague quickly took control of Cynthia's car, finances and ATM card. Soon after, unauthorized expenditures, unpaid bills and lapsed insurance caused Cynthia concern. When questioned, her new abuser threatened to kill the only things Cynthia truly loved and that loved her back — her two cats.

Months later, with nowhere to turn and no one who cared, Cyn-

thia arrived at our emergency shelter, broken and emotional, with nothing but the clothes on her back and a cat under each arm.

Cynthia's story is heart-rending but more common than you think. She could be your neighbor, an elderly churchgoer, possibly your own mother or grandmother. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), an estimated 5 million older Americans are victims of elder abuse each year, oftentimes at the hands of the people they trust most — spouses, family members, personal acquaintances or professionals in positions of trust. For every case reported, the NCEA estimates that 23 cases go unreported.

Monday is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The shelter will observe the day with a private candlelight vigil for participants in our Elder Abuse Response Program. Since 2006, this program has assisted more than 322 seniors by providing emotional support, customized safety planning, direct services, community referrals, transportation and legal advocacy. Our elder abuse advocate continually develops and maintains relationships with community agencies that are involved with the elder population to bridge service gaps.

Elder abuse can occur anywhere and it affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures and races. Dementia, mental health and substance-abuse issues — of both abusers and victims — are risk factors. Isolation can also contribute to risk.

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Findings show that even professionals who work with older Americans miss signs of abuse, so it is important to note the warning signs.

Be alert for unexplained bruises, lack of hygiene or medical care, malnutrition, dehydration, withdrawal from normal activities or unusual behavioral changes. Note if they seem to be withdrawn, nervous, fearful, sad or anxious, especially around certain people, when they have not seemed so in the past. For those closer to the victims, take note of sudden change in finances and accounts, altered wills and trusts, unusual bank withdrawals, checks written as "loans" or "gifts" and loss of property.

Keeping in contact with older friends, neighbors and relatives will help decrease isolation, a risk

factor for mistreatment. It will also give them a chance to talk about any problems they may be experiencing.

If you suspect a potential problem, please take steps to report it to the Florida Elder Abuse Hotline — 1-800-962-2873 — and/or Collier County Senior Crime Advocate: 239-252-0720. You do not need to prove that abuse is occurring; it is up to the professionals to investigate the suspicions. If a situation has already been investigated, continue to speak out if you believe circumstances are getting worse.

Each of our lives has been touched by an aging individual. They are our parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, colleagues and neighbors. Imagine the difference in Cynthia's life had there been someone who cared enough to identify and report her abuse early on.

You can be that person. Visit our website [naplesshelter.org](http://naplesshelter.org), Collier Senior Resources ([www.collierseniorresources.org](http://www.collierseniorresources.org)) or the National Center on Elder Abuse ([ncea.aoa.gov](http://ncea.aoa.gov)) for more information.

### Commentary

## Bush takes risk by agreeing with Obama on Russia

By Jonathan Bernstein  
Bloomberg View

Does a Republican presidential candidate have to disagree with Barack Obama on foreign policy if he wants to be president?

Identical relations scholar Dan Drezner is afraid so. Drezner liked what he heard from Jeb Bush on Russia, but thinks that's a problem — for Bush. Why? Because there's practically no daylight between what the Republican candidate wants and what the Democratic president

is doing with respect to Russia. And the one place Republicans don't want to be on any policy is where Obama is.

Using "perfectly sober and reasonable-sounding foreign policy language" risks putting them there. They can, as Drezner sees it, "sound crazy" on foreign policy — or they can sound like Obama.

This doesn't mean Republican candidates don't have room to attack Obama (and Hillary Clinton) if they forgo language that isn't sober or reasonable-sounding. After all, however responsible,

mainstream and moderate his policies may be, Obama hasn't succeeded in reining in Vladimir Putin's Russia or in solving messes in other parts of the world. (Are they good policies? That's a separate question from whether they are mainstream.)

But as long as Republican voters insist their politicians always do the opposite of what the president does, the party's candidates have an incentive to use language that can sound unreasonable to attack Obama's reasonable-ness.

So what can Bush do,

since he can't sound like Obama but is also no outlier on foreign policy? Drezner misses a third option: Invent an Obama who sounds nothing like the real one. That was Mitt Romney's foreign-policy strategy in 2012 — running against, for example, Obama's mythical "apology tour." This approach also explains the scandal version of Benghazi, which Republicans can't get enough of (while Libya as a real foreign-policy failure has been mostly ignored). Hinting that Obama was uninterested in saving U.S. lives,

or even more darkly that he is on the side of terrorists, leaves Republicans with plenty of space to distance themselves from sounding "perfectly sober" on foreign policy.

Granted, not all of the candidates would go that far in their accusations. But expect more strawman Obamas (and Hillary Clintons) from candidates who want to advocate a sensible course but don't want to sound anything like a Democrat.

Bernstein is a Bloomberg View columnist covering U.S. politics.