

A Fresh Breath of Colbert

Sweet truthiness, Stephen Colbert is running for president!

Yes, we've all heard it. And if the size of the Facebook group is any indication of this candidate's popularity (497,245 as of last Monday night) and I do believe that it is, everybody's favorite faux-conservative is going to be our next Democratic and Republican nominee for president—even though he's only on the ballot in South Carolina.

But as every student within reach of a computer is jumping on the comedy bandwagon in support of the fake newsman, his candidacy is not as ridiculous as you might think.

Sure, he's not going to win. But he doesn't want to win. He wants to *run*, and that's the important part. In our two-party system, very few candidates ever actually have a chance.

Democratic hopeful Dennis Kucinich is an interesting man, but I highly doubt that his supporters expect his presidential run to be anything more than a very expensive publicity campaign.

Still, these non-mainstream candidates

are an important part of the presidential election process.

Pretty much doomed from the start, these candidates have the freedom to bring up sensitive issues and point out flaws in other candidates that "mainstream" candidates would never touch.

"Colbert's genius lies in his amazing ability to stay in character. By overdoing other people's positions, he can uncover the flaws in any argument."

Love him or hate him, Ralph Nader did this for years; he educated anybody who would listen about car safety for decades before the 2000 election debacle. If Nader can do it, Stephen Colbert can too.

Colbert has taken a new stance on comedy and satire, which will work on the campaign trail as it does from behind the desk on his "news" show. He outdoes politicians, exposes their flaws, makes

them explain their ludicrous statements, and brings a whole new attitude to politics.

This is why it is important to have non-mainstream candidates.

Stephen Colbert is also not a pundit, one of the bloodsucking pseudo-

commentators who meekly argue one way or another while cashing a fat check from Rupert Murdoch. Rather, he opposes the pundits, and fights his one-man war against the norms of politicking.

Just as Al Gore has been exponentially more useful out of office than he ever was in the White House, Stephen Colbert will be able to embarrass, shame, and satirize anybody within reach.

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"Marriage is the basic building block of society. And if gay men get married, that threatens my marriage immediately because I only got married as a taunt toward gay men because they couldn't," Colbert said on Meet The Press. "Well, I just don't know why else—why I got married, other than to rub it in gay people's faces."

It's blunt. it makes people scratch their heads and wonder why gay marriages threaten the "institution of marriage."

This is his genius, and this is why it is important to have non-mainstream candidates there to uncover the ridiculous facts in our tired sound bites and punditry.

Then again, the Facebook group has nearly doubled by Wednesday. Maybe South Carolina's favorite son has a fighting chance.

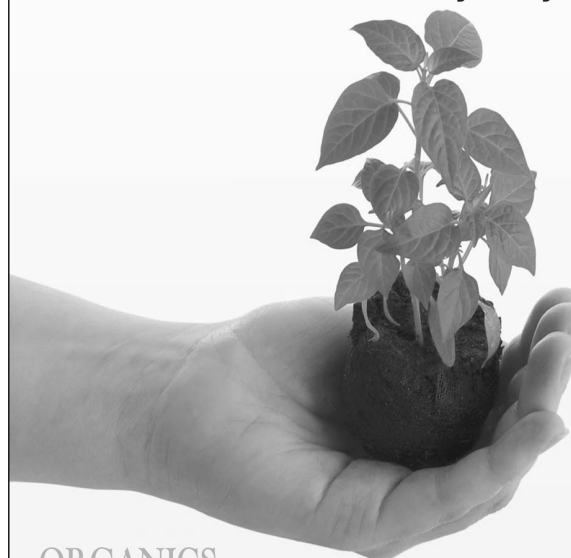
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