

# Trump's Hair

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Even after all this time, whenever I see that hair—on television, in the pages of a magazine, glowing on my computer screen—my first impulse is to laugh. The coif is so contrived, so Halloweenish, he looks like a peach-coloured Elvis. But I don't laugh; instead, I feel queasy. I even feel a touch of guilt, as if I had been about to laugh at someone whose head is deformed. Repellent hair—what ill-fated circumstances (there must have been many) led him to violate it? Not that he wants sympathy, much less understanding. He wants magic. He wants to turn back time. His hair is at war with time, with being the age he is. Pop wisdom has it that you are only as old as you think you are. You can age backwards! Buy time! But buyer beware: to the extent that anyone can deny something as intimate, natural, and elemental as aging, he can deny anything.

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He will unleash a racist kleptocracy. It will be autocratic and infantile in depressingly familiar ways, but I do not think fascist, except in the loose sense of the word to mean repressive. He is not America's Mussolini. The world survived Mussolini. It has survived worse, much worse—which is no consolation. Trump is the public face of forces far more dangerous than fascism. The world we know cannot survive extreme global warming. This, along with mass extinction and nuclear war, subsume all other dangers.

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Physics, as Bill McKibben says, doesn't care. It doesn't care about justice or catastrophes or hair that looks like a duck. Physics doesn't care about the human species. We do not have a Ten Commandments for a time of nuclear weapons, or a Sun Tzu to tell us how to fight mass extinction. We know only that we need something we do not have: a functional ecological culture based on reciprocity and sustainability, whatever those words may mean.

We need the alertness of hunter-gatherers.

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