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# New Haven Register

## Edward Marcus: Republicans, you have a problem (hint: it's Donald Trump)

*By Edward Marcus*

Until watching the Republican convention, I never realized how manipulative Donald Trump is.

Parading Patricia Smith front and center, the mother of Sean Smith who was killed in the 2012 attack in Benghazi, was incredible showmanship — and an attempt to make raw emotion overcome sound reason.

Mrs. Smith certainly evoked an emotional tug. We simply had to feel sorry for her, and it was easy to let her words suck us in. But then we realized that Trump is reaching as low as he can go in trying to create a political advantage out of a person overwhelmed with grief — without any concern as to the truth of her statements. Benghazi has been the subject of multiple investigations, and the latest 800-page report recently released by the Republicans found no impropriety on the part of Hillary Clinton.

That's how the convention opened. Then there is the party's platform.

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I accept the fact that most people, even the convention delegates, typically do not read their party's platform. However, the platform does give you a feel as to the soul of the party. Sadly, the Republicans have adopted a platform that is totally out of touch with the beliefs of most people in America.

Trump wants to lead this country into bigotry with walls instead of bridges. He wants to deny basic civil rights to gays, lesbians and transgender people, provide no exception for rape or a women's health in regard to abortions, force the teaching of the Bible in public schools, oppose laws that would prevent much-needed additional gun control, and even tries to sell the concept of coal as a clean energy resource.

Reading the points of the Republican platform makes us wonder how the Republican delegates could buy into this totally regressive and, frankly, dangerous document.

The most entertaining and unusual part of the convention, as I see it, has been Melania Trump's quoting sections of Michelle Obama's 2008 speech almost word for word. The news media has been filled with commentary on that one!

Equally entertaining was the near-raving of Rudy Giuliani. He may be slightly deaf but the rest of us are not. His repetition of the same old anti-Hillary stuff represents just another aging, fading politician looking for a bone from his master.

Then there is New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie using the crowd as his prop, asking over and over whether Hillary was guilty of one professed sin or another. Somehow I think we all knew what this crowd's answer was going to be.

All in all, it seems to me that the Republican convention is not likely to give Trump the five- to six-point bounce in the polls that typically follows a nomination. The Republicans are just spewing too much hate, too much racial division, and too much negativity.

How about the economy, taxes, unemployment, and the environment? How about citing solid plans to deal with these issues rather than just highlighting them to instill fear?

I was tempted not to watch the rest of the convention, but like seeing the conclusion of a bad movie, I felt compelled to see it through to the bitter end.

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