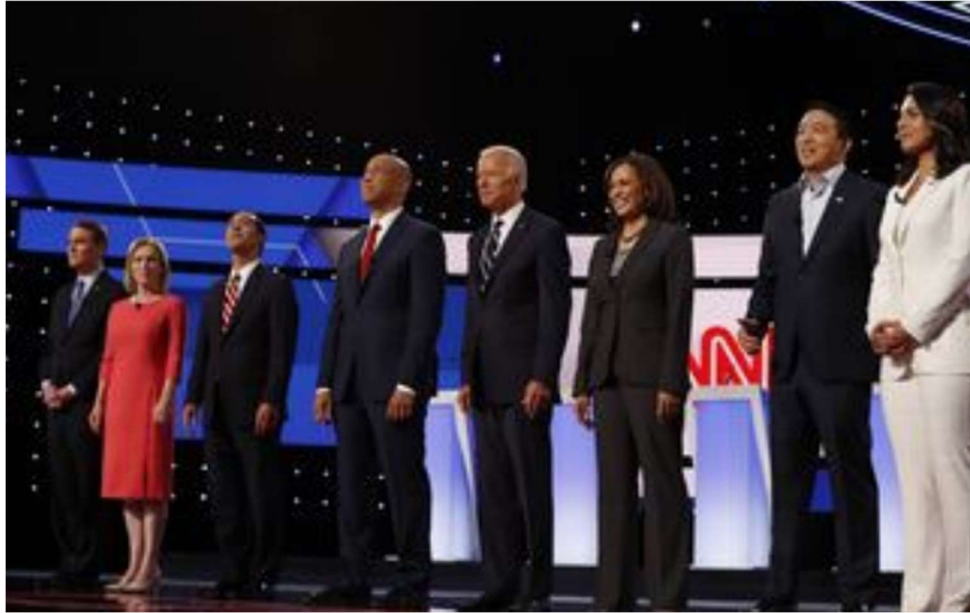


# I'M THROWING MY HAT IN THE RING

By Peter Jedick

Cleveland Plain Dealer, Aug. 5, 2019 (Opinion)

In a guest column today, Peter Jedick writes that if Cleveland's Dennis Kucinich could run for president, he can, too.



From left, Sen. Michael Bennet of Colorado, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, former HUD Secretary Julian Castro, Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey, former Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Kamala Harris of California, entrepreneur Andrew Yang and U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii are introduced before the second of two Democratic presidential primary debates hosted by CNN on Wednesday, July 31, 2019, in the Fox Theatre in Detroit. In a guest column today. (AP Photo/Carlos Osorio)

After watching the Democratic debates by our presidential hopefuls and researching their resumes, I've decided to throw my hat in the ring and announce my campaign as the Democratic candidate for president of the United States. (Does anyone know how awesome that sounds?) I figure I already have more experience as a president than any of them.

After all, I was president of my senior class at the old West Tech High School, once the largest high school in the state of Ohio. And I was president of my freshman dorm at Kent State University, one of the biggest universities in the state. I'm also the president of "Hook and Ladder Press," a small publishing company. It only has a payroll of one, me, but that already gives me more experience in the business world than most of them put together. Plus, I was president of a nonprofit organization with more than a half-million-dollar budget. And we all know how Democrats like to give away other people's money.

You do realize what an awesome job being president is, don't you? You get free room and board for you and your family for four years, eight if you win a second term. You get to fly on your own private jet, how cool is that? You can go to as many state dinners as you want and eat like a king every night. And even if you lose, you can spend the rest of your life giving speeches for thousands of dollars a pop like the Clintons. Where's the downside? Who wouldn't want to give it a shot?

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I'm surprised there are not more candidates jumping into the circus. And I think the top three Democratic hopefuls are all easy pickings. What do Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren all have in common? They all served or serve in the U.S. Senate. Joe Biden spent most of his life as a U.S. senator. And what do senators do that makes them qualified to be president? They live in the Washington, D.C., beltway, go to cocktail parties, hang around with lobbyists and vote on things. Wowee. A nice gig if you can get it.

But it hardly qualifies them to run the world's largest military and economy. Most of you probably don't remember, but this isn't the first time I've ventured into the world of politics. Back in 1977, I almost ran against Dennis Kucinich for mayor of Cleveland. I was pretty young and I just returned from traveling around most of the United States and Europe. I'd visited most of the great cities of Western civilization and I thought Cleveland had the resources to be one of the great ones.

But it was suffering from poverty, pollution and a huge negative image. The city of Cleveland was in a world of hurt. Its schools were dismal, its finances were in ruins, its streets were riddled with crime and its air and water were polluted as hell. And what was Dennis Kucinich's response to all these problems? "Save the Muny Light Plant." Big deal. Who cared?

So I started a new political party, "The Party in the Park," to challenge the establishment. I was even interviewed by Channel 5's Ted Henry while collecting signatures on Public Square to get on the ballot. (I wish I had a tape of that interview to look at today.) I think I could have beat Dennis if I had stuck it out. I would have changed Cleveland's history. And as you know, Dennis went on to become a U.S. congressman and a Democratic presidential candidate himself. He was even included in the televised debates back in 2004.

So if Dennis Kucinich, a career politician from the West Side of Cleveland, could run for president, why can't I? I think I'd be the perfect candidate. I would be "The King of Free Stuff." The only problem is that I'm not a Democrat anymore. Not that anyone seems to care.

*Peter Jedick is a Cleveland-based writer who may have presidential aspirations. His latest book is the novel, "The West Tech Terrorist." He now counts himself in the ranks of the Republicans.*

