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WELL-DRESSED MAN

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Decision 2009

Undecided as to which way to vote? Christos Garkinos is quick to point out that fashion and politics go hand in hand.



STYLE HIGH CLUB

Christos Garkinos

EVER SINCE I WAS a wee fashionisto I've anxiously awaited fall fashion issues. Incredible-looking models in the hottest clothes, as beautifully lit as a falling leaf. It would come down to hard choices: Prada or YSL? H&M or Club Monaco? Or maybe something more indie....

This fall the fashion picture is a bit more complicated. While I'll probably choose YSL, the real decision is in November: McCain or Obama.

I admit to choosing a horse based on the jockey's jersey color, motivated by a strongly held personal belief that a man's style is a barometer of his ability to lead. Look at JFK, for instance. In our kitchen, my mom had a framed picture of him, splendidly dressed in a narrow-lapel suit, starched white shirt, and chic tie. I would gaze at his photo over dinner, secretly wishing I could be a Kennedy—or look like one. Join the Peace Corps? Whatever you want, Mr. President. 'Cuz you look good, Mr. President.

Despite my objection to some of his political philosophies, Ronald Reagan did project a strong vision of an American president. Remember Ronnie chopping wood in a plaid shirt? Total influence on Seattle grunge.

Bill Clinton, however, threw a wrench in my theory. Sure he could lead the country, but lord, those micro running shorts... I still shudder at the image.

Moving forward to Decision '08: I have to give John McCain a fashion pass. The Hanoi experience was bad enough. Worse yet, he's vertically challenged, he needs to wear hats for medical reasons, and the wife fashion-blocks him at every step. Is he a leader? Yes. Would I put money on his horse? Um, no.

Now Barack Obama... the fashion gods have truly smiled on the man. Tall, slender, a total Prada model (if Miuccia would ever cast a black one). There's a photo of him (and yes, it is my screen-saver) disembarking from a plane with a gray suit jacket in one hand and his bag in the other, and wearing a rep tie, slightly askew. Perfection.

Is he a leader? Absolutely. Would I put money on his horse? I've already double-downed.

