

Gordon Brown: beyond satire?

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You may think that Gordon Brown's policies are beyond a joke, but now it turns out that so is the man himself. Satirists are struggling to identify the visual tics, the physical blemishes and the personality traits that can turn a politician in to a cartoon or TV sketch subject. Somehow Gordon – despite the glass eye, the jaw crunching, the bitten finger-nails, and the Scottish drawl does not deliver. Compare that to the satirical savaging given to 'monkey' George W Bush or 'killer' bambi Tony Blair.

So the satirical photographer [Alison Jackson](#) is having to hold [auditions](#) at a London hotel today to find Gordon look-alikes. My colleague here at the LSE, the political scientist [Professor George Jones](#) is surprised:



"I'm quite a fan of those television programs where they have Beckham and Camilla but they've never had Gordon. It's intriguing. He doesn't conform to any type. I've certainly never met anyone who looks like him. He hasn't been done by anybody."

It's partly because Gordon is so familiar and yet always in the shadows. It is also because he is so resolutely dull. As the BBC's [Nick Robinson](#) has pointed out, during his China and India trip he did and said nothing that was either politically challenging or personally engaging.

I used to think that this policy of being very sober and unexciting was a healthy antidote to the Blair years of spin. But after the travails or last autumn and the expected hard months ahead Labour is now behind in the polls. Being prudent and dull may not be enough to recapture the affections of the voters.



Do we really want our politicians to act like celebrities or not? This will be discussed at Polis by a panel including Lembit Opik MP, Kevin McGuire of the Mirror, former Labour spinner Derek Draper and Angela Philips from Goldsmiths University on February 25th – details from polis@lse.ac.uk

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