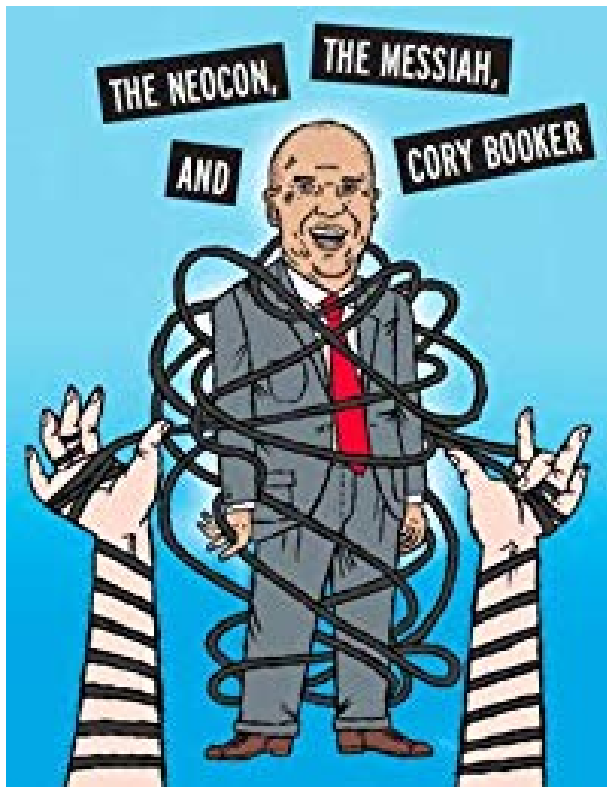


The Neocon, The Messiah, and Cory Booker



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Cory Booker, the Democratic candidate for New Jersey Senator, has been endorsed by the New York Times as the next progressive hope... a younger, more populist version of Barack Obama, a guy who's not afraid to get down and dirty. The Times' op-ed wizards described Booker as a "deeply unconventional politician," known for "once rushing into a burning house before the fire department arrived— saving a woman and traumatizing his security detail," and they predicted that he "will be able to use his political star status to fight for the neglected, the power, people who are working and people who need to work in New Jersey and nationally." Unconventional indeed. But there's a few unconventional sides to Booker's progressivism that has received much recognition. His political career was launched with the help of the Chabad-Lubavitchers, a rabidly rightwing Hasidic cult that considers its dead Rebbe a messiah and that pushes a regressive right-wing worldview that would horrify Booker's prog supporters: deep- rooted racism, violent Islamophobia, medieval positions on everything from abortion to homosexuality and women's rights, and a nasty tendency to normalize sexual abuse and protect serial sexual predators in its ranks.