

Winning over the youth voter

If Republicans are going to win future elections they're going to have to do better job at winning over the youth voter. That's not a new idea, but it seems that it's one that Republicans are continuing to ignore. For proof, all we have to do is look at the data on how many of the younger voters opted for the Democrats in 2020.

Statistics reveal most of the younger voters cast their ballots for a then 77-year old candidate who had virtually nothing in common with them. The obvious question is why? Why, indeed, would a generation that was nearly sixty years removed from Joe Biden cast their lot with him? There are probably several reasons, but one of main ones is the influence of their peers, of the media/social media AND the schooling they received at the hands of dyed-in-the-wool ideologues.

If we believe that to be true, and there is good reason to given the many studies of this demographic group that point to that simple conclusion, then our only option is to confront this group with a new reason to change their mindset. And that means re-education. Re-education requires a *syllabus* that makes sense to the young, one they can relate to AND one that demands 'teachers' they will respect and will listen to. Add to that is the fact that re-education will require capturing their attention and their time and using technology they, themselves, use in their daily lives.

On the surface, the task seems daunting, even impossible, but given the success the opposition has had in registering young people and motivating - some would say *brainwashing* them - it is possible. To achieve success, Republicans must first put aside some preconceived notions about the young and accept certain realities. The younger voter is different from us. They grew up in a different era with different parents who instilled in them different values (if they were lucky enough to have parents who were involved in their upbringing).

Many of yesterday's parents of the 1990s and 2000s were secular when it came to religion and were agnostic about patriotism and somewhat ignorant about American history. That, in itself, presents some formidable obstacles to re-educating a whole generation or two about what has made America great. The Presidency of Donald Trump brought out the reality of the political divide and made us realize that our ideological chasm was deeper than we initially imagined.

It showed us that we are not evenly split, that the Left has gained strength and numbers since the end of the Bush years. The most motivating force for political and social change came about during the two Obama campaigns when he tapped into the dreams of the young and talked TO them instead of AT them as so many Conservatives did over the decades. And he used, for the very first time, the tools of modern technology to accomplish his wins. Social media became the political handbill and megaphone, and it worked. Obama got their attention, and when he did he messaged to them, consistently and powerfully.

The young lapped it up. They not only signed on as individuals, but they also joined together in groups to echo and slingshot the Obama message to their brothers and sisters in all parts of society. The fact that he himself was younger and a minority worked to reinforce his message. He was one of THEM, not part of an older generation whose values were foreign to them (the values of their parents and grandparents). He counted on their rejection of the old 'outmoded' beliefs of their elders, beliefs that were grounded in our traditional views of family, of work, of racial and social congress and trumpeted a new way forward, away from past that in his view and the view of his party had failed. THAT was a strong appeal that resonated with many groups that felt left behind by the old power structure. He advocated for a brand new approach to rid us of our attitudes and replace them with his own more inclusive ones. He repeatedly stated that America needed a rebirth that was based on more tolerance and made room for neglected minorities to reclaim their *rightful* place in American society. This included women, those who embraced alternative sexual lifestyles and minorities like Blacks and Hispanics.

These were powerful constituencies that Republicans had ignored for way too long. If the Right wants to recapture more of those voters it will need to offer something different, something equally as meaningful. But what would that be? During Obama's second election attempt, Republicans only offered backward change, a return to the past, a past that included something unfamiliar to the young. Republicans campaigned for an old-time, traditional America that was based on patriotism and love of country by an unconvincing candidate the Left regarded as too wedded to corporate America - a corporate 'raider', Mitt Romney.

While Romney appealed to the Republicans' traditional base, he did nothing and said nothing that would move America's youth towards a vision they could not identify with...because they were never exposed to it - not by their parents, their teachers or those they admired, like entertainment figures, movie stars or icons of THEIR generation. In that way, Obama was clever. He engaged those icons and used them to his advantage. The Republicans could only offer a few token country western musicians and out-of-touch representatives of their generation. It was no wonder that their attempts failed to turn the tide.

So what will turn that voter tide now that the Trump years are over and that the Democrats have won the White House, the House and now a one-vote majority in the Senate not to mention their victories in local elections? The answer is obvious, to me, at least. It will require a new approach to the youth voter, an approach that will address what is most important to them...themselves.

Yes, Republicans will need to reduce their approach to one based on the young's narcissism, their own self-absorption. The message must be one of "how does this benefit me, myself and I" and it must be carefully packaged to include one that guarantees a willingness on the part of the Right to accept the new 'political reality' that what will win must benefit both parties. We will need to convince the youth voter that by accepting the Right's ideas they will not abandon the gains their generation has made in changing the social makeup of the country.

To do this we will have to recruit new interlocutors and new political role models that can speak the language of our young voters and use the technology tools they use. Make no mistake, this will be a formidable challenge, but it is one we cannot afford to ignore IF we are to wrest political power from the hands of the Left that now includes the Deep State, radical Congressional Representatives, the 'Fake News' media, tech oligarchs and elitest politicians, born and bred in the 'swamp.'

This is the perfect time to begin as the Biden Administration is in the early stages of dismantling the structure we need to rebuild our defenses. If we wait, the Administration will use its momentum to destroy our chances to take back America from an inevitable and rapid downward spiral, back to a failed governing ideology.

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