

Midlife crisis: the GOP's existential meltdown and the future of American conservatism

OBAMA'S RE-ELECTION PROVES THAT THE COUNTRY IS STILL UNDERGOING A POLITICAL SHIFT

On Nov. 6, as the Fox News correspondents witnessed President Obama gaining momentum in the election, conservative poster-boy Bill O'Reilly made a pertinent comment: "It's not a traditional America anymore."



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I will not continue with his offensive rhetoric about how Obama voters want "stuff" and "things." Instead, I'd like to focus on his "epiphany," which came off more as a lamentation. O'Reilly indicated a conservative anxiety: "What are we going to do now?"

I'm no political scientist, but I do know of a phenomenon called realignment, wherein the landscape of the political system undergoes a shift in power and policy. Notable examples include the elections of Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, FDR and Reagan. Arguably, the most

recent was in 2000 with the ascendance of George W. Bush and a focus on aggressive foreign policy, evangelical values and bleeding the country dry.

At least, until now.

Barack Obama's election in 2008 was certainly monumental: we elected our first non-white president. However, his re-election further indicates a sea change — a realignment — in response to Bush's policies. Americans witnessed the fallout from W's regime over the past decade, and America wants no more of it. This election proved that, for every race and walk of

and the young. He's a political has-been and now looks like Bruce Campbell on a bender.

Likewise, there's no way the Republicans will flirt with the Tea Party. Candidates from that pool proved themselves unelectable or insane, whether commenting on "legitimate rape" or their college Wicca phase.

Additionally, the GOP can't rely on their base: Southern whites. Though Romney nearly swept Dixie, it was not enough for him to clinch the election, even if he had won Florida and Virginia. Thus, relying

divisive.

Basically, Republicans should stop bashing progressives — as if progress is a bad thing — and accept that America should join the rest of the free world and provide for all of its citizens.

As Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Duncan stated in a Nov. 7 interview, "You want to do the max good for the max people, and if that means the wealthy don't get to be so wealthy, then so be it."

That's what progressives want to do: good. It's not "gifts." It's not "stuff" and

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life, Barack Obama represents a guiding light leading the country out of the dark cavern of neoconservatism and into the 21st century.

So, how will the Grand Old Party react?

Obviously, the Republicans will not run Mitt Romney again. They've thrown him under the bus after he made comments similar to O'Reilly's election night musings, stating that Obama bought the election by promising "gifts" to minorities

on the Southern evangelical vote will not get a Republican into the White House. Reagan's Southern strategy has run its course.

So, what will the Republicans do?

I believe they'll follow the old adage: if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

I'm not saying they'll swing all the way left. That would be more suicidal than the track they're on now. However, I do think they'll become more centrist and less

"things." It's helping your fellow citizen. And it doesn't come free; we all pay into it.

Where O'Reilly gets it wrong is that, in my view, America has never been "traditional." Traditionally, America moves forward. The Republicans need to move forward with America, and their message and policy should reflect social and economic progress in some way.

After all, can't there be progressive Republicans?

Take a chance and try dating in college ... what's the worst that could possibly happen?

DATING IN COLLEGE CAN BE SCARY BUT DO NOT LET FEAR OF REJECTION STOP YOU FROM ASKING SOMEONE OUT

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The women in my history have been strange to say the least. Being a comedian has many drawbacks, and a major one is the kind of women you meet in dark New York City comedy clubs.

Most of them would approach me after seeing me perform and want to meet afterwards to talk. Things would escalate and eventually, we would begin to date. But those never ended well. Let's just say that women who go after comedians, in my experience, are a little crazy.

Being with them was not healthy in the slightest. There were a couple of times when misunderstandings occurred and I would have to literally run from their apartments into busy Manhattan streets dodging cabs and bicyclists to avoid a fate I wouldn't wish on my enemy.

To be honest, I needed a change from that beleaguered existence, and coming to Guilford was the best thing that could have happened.

After leaving New York, I noticed the difference in women immediately. The girls here were beautiful, intelligent and had something that I couldn't put my finger on at first. Maybe

it was the fact that women here care more about saving the world than any group of college girls I've ever met.

Being that this is a small school, it didn't make sense for me to ask girls out for several reasons. The major one — besides the tremendous fear of rejection that I and most other men have — is that if I am rejected here, chances are I will see her almost everywhere I go, reminding me how much of a failure I am. The fear was crippling, and kept me out of a major part of my college experience when I first got here.

I kept saying to myself that the women here were out of my league. They were just as smart as I was, way more caring

about. We worked at the same place and waited for the same ride. Tuesday afternoon was my one chance because we were both alone before the ride showed up.

We waited in silence, my heart beating a million miles a minute. Then I started talking, about what I don't remember, and the mood was lifting. We were both laughing, and I went for it. I asked her out, stunning her into an abrupt silence. That silence lasted a while, as she pondered me for some time. To my surprise, she said yes, totally shocking me.

She has since transferred to another school and I have pursued other women here, being both rejected and accepted.

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than I could ever be and more classy than any woman I had ever dated in my life. But I did not want to give up. I had to conquer this fear of rejection so I set out on a journey. That journey was to ask a girl out, no matter the consequences, and take what happened, positive or negative.

It began with a girl in Globalization class. She was a beautiful Marxist, but I was pretty sure she hated me. Our politics clashed and she would often yell at me. But, she was the one that I had to ask out. There were no other girls I cared

The rejections have been soul crushing, the acceptances soul enlightening, but what has been most important, is the conquering of that fear.

The fear kept me sequestered in my mind, convinced that I wasn't worthy of the brilliant and beautiful women who exist at this school. But ever since I beat that fear, I have yet to run out of anyone's apartment into oncoming cars and bicyclists wondering whether I was wasting my life or making the wrong choices.