



## Obama Versus Trump

Obama just handed Trump not one, but *three*, victories: first, with the disclosure of the birth certificate on which he sat for years, Obama legitimized Trump's as a voice with which to be reckoned, for it was in response to the latter that the former was prompted to act; second, Trump attained what he demanded — Obama's *birth certificate*; third, Trump insists that if he were elected President, he would be as successful in politics as he has been in business in getting things done, and the promptness with which Obama responded to his demands appears to have confirmed this.



It has been close to three years now since the subject of Obama's birth certificate has raised enough concerns to generate a movement of a sort — derisively referred to by Democrats and Republicans alike as “the birther movement.” Yet in spite of this, Obama has not only refused to budge on this issue, he has gone to considerable lengths to prolong the controversy by resisting the demands of “the birthers.” Why shouldn't he have? Courtesy of “the mainstream” in both Washington and the media, “the birthers” have been relegated to the fringes.

But all of that changed thanks to Trump. With a single utterance, Trump endowed legitimacy to this formerly marginalized group of people.

It is a truism that in politics, perception is reality. At no time in the history of the world has this been truer than in our imagistic age. It was imagery that catapulted Barack Obama from obscurity to the presidency, and it will in no small measure be imagery that will account for the fortunes of the next President. That Republicans ran an old, partially maimed, ghost-white establishment figure like John McCain against the young, charismatic, largely unknown bi-racial Obama as recently as 2008 suggests that they still have much to learn on this score.

Yet precisely because it is the imagination to which successful politicians must appeal, and because the popular imagination is constituted in large part by a media dominated by Democrat sympathizers, it is that much more imperative that *Republicans* be nothing less than artists when it comes to devising images. That is, the deck being stacked against Republican candidates as it is, these candidates must be masters of media manipulation.

No one among the potential Republican presidential candidates for 2012 is more adept at this craft than Trump. The face-off with Obama over the latter's birth certificate was but the latest proof of this. What did Trump do when he was informed that Obama had finally substantiated that he was indeed born in the United States? Without batting an eye, the Donald expressed some much deserved self-satisfaction for being, as he said, *the only person* thus far capable of forcing the President's hand on this issue.

He also said something else that shouldn't be lost on us. He expressed regret that Obama didn't just put this whole issue to rest three years ago when first asked about his birth certificate. I hope that Trump



Written by [Jack Kerwick, Ph.D.](#) on April 30, 2011

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will eventually elaborate upon this, for it is a crucial point: Obama refers to this issue as “silliness,” a “distraction,” and a “side show,” but if so, then it is ultimately *the President* who is responsible for diverting attention away from the challenges that we face. If Obama could effortlessly disclose his birth certificate *today*, then presumably he could have showed it with comparable ease years ago. But instead, he chose to conceal it as more controversy over his origins and paternity brewed.

The question people should be asking now is: Why did President Obama not show his birth certificate when first asked for it?

Maybe Trump will move on to that next.



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