



Written by [Jack Kerwick, Ph.D.](#) on May 6, 2013

## **GOP Doesn't Have a Hispanic Problem**

Even had Republicans won the much coveted Hispanic vote in November, Mitt Romney still would have lost.

Thus declares Byron York while writing in the *Washington Examiner* last week.

Using a *New York Times*' calculator devised by Nate Silver, York reports that even if Romney "had been able to make history and attract 50 percent of Hispanic voters," he "still would have been beaten, 283 electoral votes to 255." And had he "been able to do something absolutely astonishing for a Republican and win 60 percent of the Hispanic vote," he "would have lost by the same margin, 283 electoral votes to 255."

To show just how wide of the mark is the conventional wisdom on the GOP's need for Hispanics, York reveals that even had Romney "been able to reach a mind-blowing 70 percent of the Hispanic vote," he "still would have lost." In such a situation, Romney would have won the popular vote while losing the Electoral College, 270-268.

York informs us that Romney would have had to increase his share of the Hispanic vote from the paltry 27 percent that he actually received to a whopping 73 percent to have won in 2012. Obviously, York concludes, "Romney, and Republicans, had bigger problems than Hispanic voters."

Indeed. Some of us have known all of this for quite some time. We also have known what York tells us next: "The most serious" of Republicans' problems "was that Romney was not able to connect with white voters who were so turned off by the campaign that they abandoned the GOP and in many cases stayed away from the polls altogether."

Romney, like McCain before him, failed to resonate with white voters.

And judging from the number of whites who decided to either sit out the election or throw in behind Obama or some third party candidate, this failure to connect was huge. "Recent reports," York relays, "suggest [that] as many as 5 million white voters simply stayed home on Election Day." What exactly does this mean? Well, if whites "had voted at the same rate [that] they did in 2004, even with the demographic changes since then, Romney would have won."

York adds that "the white vote is so large that an improvement of 4 points ... would have won the race for Romney."

Given all of this, York facetiously asks: "So which would have been a more realistic goal for Romney — matching the white turnout from just a few years earlier, or winning 73 percent of Hispanic voters?"





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York asserts that if 2012 voting patterns remain constant — “whites voting in lower numbers but about 60 percent for Republicans, blacks and Asians turning out in large numbers and voting 90 percent and 70 percent, respectively, for Democrats” — then “Republicans will have to win an astonishingly high percentage of the Hispanic vote to capture the White House.”

York then proceeds to debunk the conventional wisdom among Republican politicians and pundits as the conventional folly that it is. “It is simply not reasonable,” he states, “to believe that there is something the GOP can do — pass immigration reform, juice up voter-outreach efforts — that will create that result.”

So, what must the GOP do?

The bulk of York’s piece has all but spelled out the answer to this question: appeal to the millions of disenchanted whites who feel that their interests have been neglected by both national parties. Yet even now, and in spite of all that he has written, York still tries to avoid being explicit. Instead, he writes of the need for Republicans to reach “the millions of Americans who have seen their standard of living decline over the past decades,” those to whom Romney failed to appeal. The next Republican presidential candidate who can do this, he is convinced, will win.

York is to be commended for daring to speak a truth that far too many try at all costs to deny. And he is certainly correct when he concludes his article with the reminder that reaching those millions of Americans who otherwise feel betrayed or ignored by Republicans “would do more than any immigration bill or outreach program ever could.”

But neither York nor any other Republican can afford to be afraid to say that it is reaching millions of white voters that will guarantee the GOP future electoral victories. Nor should they ignore the fact that these same whites do not live by bread alone. It isn’t just material concerns that motivate them, but the sense, the conviction, that political and cultural elites have silently declared a kind of cold war against them: They are the only group that is not supposed to have legitimate interests.

Until Republicans come to terms with this reality, white voter turn-out will remain low.

And Republicans will remain losers.



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