

Holy Sh*t Megan McArdle

wonkette.com (<https://www.wonkette.com/holy-sht-megan-mcardle>)

It's a mystery! Megan McArdle, libertarianess, has been doing some Thinkering, and holy fuckballs! Cogitating, she was, about who is really to blame for the rise of Trump and racism in the Republican Party, and she is prettttty sure it is not the Republican Party! Or Fox News. Whose fault is it? The weather's.

(No, really. It's the weather. Not even Barack Obama! The weather.)

McArdle does not like racism, or Trump, but she is damned if she is going to let the people under whose standard Trump is the nominee be blamed for it. And then she gets suuuuuuper racist.

Let's smear some zinc oxide on our noses, and dive into the lakefull of frothing pig shit that is McArdle's brain place!

Writing at Bloomberg, McArdle begins "Don't blame the Republican Party for the rise of Trump" (<http://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-05-23/don-t-blame-the-republican-party-for-the-rise-of-trump>) with some bullshit boilerplate, as one does when one is noodling around making a thesis.

Until a few early polls started coming out showing Donald Trump pulling ahead of Hillary Clinton, liberals could be forgiven a certain amount of schadenfreude. After 20 years of relentless partisanship and personal attacks, the monster that Republican leaders created had broken free of its chains and was hell bent on destroying its former master.

Or maybe those liberals shouldn't be forgiven so easily. I've been pondering these theories -- advanced by everyone from Barack Obama and Harry Reid to Bill Maher -- and the thing is, they don't make a heck of a lot of sense.

They seem to posit a Republican electorate that is, on the one hand, so malleable that the GOP leadership could create the emotional conditions for a Trump candidacy -- and on the other hand, a Republican electorate so surly and unmanageable that it has ignored the horrified pleading of conservative leaders and intellectuals, in order to rally behind Trump.

McArdle's logic here is not quite such a gotcha as she thinks. Certainly a group can be "malleable" enough to be whipped into a frenzy and then "surly and unmanageable" enough to ignore Dr. Frankenstein's pleas to not drown that nice girl in the stream. It's why we have the idiom "created a monster." It is a quite well-known idiom!

But this is just dumb, not offensive. Let's keep going!

Consider the five major planks of the “Everything is the fault of the Republican Party” argument:

1. Talk radio and Fox News made conservatives crazy.

[many paragraphs; Megan McArdle does write long! Anyway ...]

2. Blocking president Obama’s legislation.

This theory, as advanced by Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, holds that by relentlessly delegitimizing Obama, Republicans somehow paved the way for the rise of Trump and his “no holds barred” style of politics. Now, again, I have been pretty harsh on some of the more theatrical exhibitions of pointless political power over the last eight years. But this explanation for Trump's rise is absurd. First of all, the leadership was frantically trying to stop those folks, and was unable to because the conservative base elected hard-liners who wouldn’t cooperate.

Nope. (<http://wonkette.com/489466/obama-tried-to-call-mitch-mcconnell-and-john-boehner-on-election-night-but-they-lied-that-they-were-sleeping>)

3. Personal attacks on Democrats. This is just -- I have no words for what it is. At least, not words that can be printed in a family-friendly column. It is triple-distilled balderdash ... high-test twaddle ... self-congratulatory swill ... nonsense on stilts. It suggests that the Republican leadership could have somehow shut down all such attacks, which would have, at the very least, involved both government censorship and flagrant violation of our nation’s campaign finance laws.

We'll stop there for a moment to suggest that in fact, the Republican *leadership* could have refrained from consistently delegitimizing the president and the entire Democratic party with personal attacks, without even once putting a Free Republic poster in Free Speech Jail. But Megan McArdle understands the threat to freedom of expression that is saying "hey county GOP chairs maybe don't forward that White House watermelon patch email, (<http://wonkette.com/406562/406562>) even though it is OBJECTIVELY HILARIOUS."

4. Fox News gave him so much air time. C'mon. C'mon. Every time I tuned into MSNBC or CNN, I thought I had mistakenly woken up in Hugo Chavez's Venezuela, where television stations were legally required to air hours of the off-the-cuff ramblings of their local strongman.

I don't much care for Morning Joe either, Ms. McArdle, but he was awfully, genuinely sweet to the Wonkette baby, (<http://wonkette.com/598652/wonkette-babby-wins-all-important-new-hampshire-morning-joe-primary>) and I don't think it's nice to call him Hugo Chavez.

Okay guys, it is time to strap on a helmet, because shit's about to blow.

5. The Southern strategy. In this theory, the original sin was the GOP's Southern strategy, in which they cynically decided to go after the South's angry white racist vote with a code-word-laden campaign about law and order. Eventually, this culminated in the nomination of an outspoken racist for the party leadership.

I have a somewhat more nuanced view of the Southern strategy.

Oh?

First of all, the idea that law and order concerns were all about appealing to Southern racists is frankly nuts; law and order concerns were mostly about appealing to voters who were appalled by the explosion of violence and disorder from the '60s to the early '90s. We can certainly argue about whether the policies enacted in response to that explosion were just, right or effective, but the idea that Republicans somehow invented this to cover up their attempt to reinvent the KKK as a major political party is just shockingly ahistorical.

Is it? Is it shockingly ahistorical, Megan McArdle? Were you ... were you THERE?

Lee Atwater was there, we should ask his ghost.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_strategy)

Lee Atwater: As to the whole Southern strategy that Harry Dent and others put together in 1968, opposition to the Voting Rights Act would have been a central part of keeping the South. Now [Reagan] doesn't have to do that. All you have to do to keep the South is for Reagan to run in place on the issues he's campaigned on since 1964 . . . and that's fiscal conservatism, balancing the budget, cut taxes, you know, the whole cluster...

Questioner: But the fact is, isn't it, that Reagan does get to the Wallace voter and to the racist side of the Wallace voter by doing away with legal services, by cutting down on food stamps?

Atwater: You start out in 1954 by saying, "Nigger, nigger, nigger." By 1968 you can't say "nigger" — that hurts you. Backfires. So you say stuff like forced busing, states' rights and all that stuff. You're getting so abstract now [that] you're talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you're talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is [that] blacks get hurt worse than whites. And subconsciously maybe that is part of it. I'm not saying that. But I'm saying that if it is getting that abstract, and that coded, that we are doing away with the racial problem one way or the other. You follow me — because obviously sitting around saying, "We want to cut this," is much more abstract than even the busing thing, and a hell of a lot more abstract than "Nigger, nigger."

Shockingly ahistorical indeed, and also go fuck yourself. But wait! Megan McArdle gets worse!

And second of all, to the extent that Republicans were tapping into such sentiments, some of it was simply because with crime and welfare benefits unequally racially distributed, any party that favored tough law enforcement and was skeptical of social spending was going to appeal more to whites than to minorities, and especially to whites who had strong negative feelings about the minorities who committed a disproportionate share of the crimes and collected a disproportionate share of the poverty benefits. This makes the “Southern strategy” look more deliberate than it was; part of what we’re looking at is simply a party realignment away from regional blocs and the old business/labor split and toward ideological size-of-government and culture war fault lines. The fact that small-government policies appealed to racists doesn’t mean that this was the motivation of the folks pushing those policies.

Well OF COURSE Republicans had to be racist! They love law and order and limited government, and black people won't stop being welfare queens in Cadillacs and also murdering everyone! Megan McArdle, you are "objectively" a bad person. (See what I did there???)

I don't like the fact that there are virulent racists and anti-Semites in our electorate.

Megan McArdle Proposes The Worst Solution To Anything Ever

(<https://www.wonkette.com/megan-mcardle-proposes-the-worst-solution-to-anything-ever>)

Untangling Megan McArdle's Feelings About The Gays: An Exegesis We Undertake So You Don't Have To

(<https://www.wonkette.com/untangling-megan-mcardles-feelings-about-the-gays-an-exegesis-we-undertake-so-you-dont-have-to>)

Trivia Night

(<https://www.wonkette.com/trivia-night>)

They learned it from YOU Megan. THEY LEARNED IT FROM YOU.

Now that we've learned that the Southern strategy just sort of ... happened one day, because of course white people hate black people for all of their crimes, let's go back to the weather.

So whose fault is Trump then, if not the leadership of the Republican Party and the conservative movement?

I tend to think that's a bad question. It is politics-as-novel, rather than politics-as-system. We are a large, fractious nation full of clashing interest groups and wildly differing opinions, as well as differing levels of engagement with politics. That system will often spit out results that most of us don't like very much. Trying to ascribe those results to a person, or even a small group, is like blaming the weatherman because it's raining, or an economist for a recession. You have selected the most visible target, not the most likely one. And, in the case of Democrats who fault Republicans for Trump, a very convenient target as well.

YOUR MOM was a convenient target LAST NIGHT.

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