

President Barack Obama's reelection on Tuesday was a victory for the new America and its demographics. Remarkably, according to [CNN exit polls](#), Obama lost the white vote by 20%, including the white female vote by 14%. These numbers somewhat overstate Obama's strength among whites because those Jewish and GLBT voters who are also white are included in this sample. If they are excluded, then the numbers rise to something like 23% and 17%. Despite this, Obama won a resounding electoral college victory while winning a clear majority of the popular vote.

Republicans are, unsurprisingly, trying to figure out who to blame and what to do next. Obama's victory can be understood as a victory of the future over the past, suggesting his campaign slogan "Forward" was both appropriate and effective. The Republican problem is obvious, they are fighting a Sisyphean demographic battle, not just because of changing demographics but because of the complete collapse of support for the Republican Party among voters who are not white, straight and Christian. At first glance, it seems that party that wins 59% of the white vote, even in today's America should win a national election handily. However, Romney did not only lose among African American, Latino, Asian, LGBT, Jewish and Muslim voters, but he lost all of these groups by margins of more than 2-1. In some cases, the margin was significantly larger than that. Additionally, Romney's support from white voters was skewed towards older voters as, among whites under 30, Romney's margin was only six points.

The Republican Party is not, however, on the verge of collapse. The legal, financial, regulatory and historical factors which reinforce our two party system are too strong. The Party is, however and inevitably, going to change. There are two major reasons why the Republican Party appeals to such a narrow and conservative slice of America. The first is their radical positions on social issues. This should be obvious to anybody who pays attention to politics. Republican positions on abortion, contraception, marriage equality and the role of Christianity in every day civic and political life makes the party unpalatable to millions of voters, particularly those who are young, unmarried, LGBT or not Christian. Smart Republicans are beginning to recognize this, although strategies about how to address this will not come easily to a party whose primary electorate appears to be heavily influenced by radical social conservatives.

The second reason is that the Republican economic program makes it very hard to appeal to voters who are neither wealthy or socially conservative. This is a major contributor to the persistent Republican problems winning votes of Latinos and African Americans. While the Republican position on reaching out to African American voters is essentially to try to prevent them from voting, the Party periodically makes efforts to win Latino votes. We will undoubtedly see more of these efforts in the next months and years. These efforts are unlikely to be successful unless economic issues are addressed.

Substantive efforts by the Republican Party to increase Latino support are likely to consist largely of immigration reform. The Party will also seek to put a Latino on their national ticket in 2016. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), for example, has already emerged as an early frontrunner for the 2016 nomination. Rubio would obviously be a big help in Florida, but is unlikely to move enough Mexican Americans in the Southwest back to the Republican Party to put states like

New Mexico or Nevada back in play. Latinos in these states, many of whom are middle or lower income, voted for Obama for economic reasons, not, as the Rubio strategy suggests, for reasons of identity

Republican economic policies have always favored the wealthy, but this year was far more extreme and less subtle. Thus, the ticket looked like the spirit of [Montgomery Burns](#) and Ayn Rand had been placed inside the bodies of two generic politicians from central casting. There was no attempt to hide or change policies that were not just conservative but explicitly focused redistributing wealth upwards. CEOs spoke unabashedly about coercing workers to vote Republican; operatives all but boasted about efforts to limit the franchise of poor people; moderate social programs were implausibly, and laughingly, described as socialism; and in a time of economic suffering the vibe given off from the Party made Marie Antoinette seem comparatively sensitive to the plight of the needy.

Changing these policies and the rhetoric around them will do more to bring back young and Latino voters than nominating Marco Rubio or pushing through immigration reform will. This will also be extremely difficult as it means changing the core message of the Republican Party, but failing to do it keeps the Party on the treadmill of fighting against big picture demographic forces. On social issues, the best advice for the Republican Party is probably just to stop talking about them so much, but on economic issues, the Party needs to change its message. This will not occur easily, but the relevancy and future of the Republican Party, lies in the balance.