

A Political and Credibility Crisis for the Future: Black Democrats and Black Republicans in Conservative America

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Abstract

Unfortunately, there is a lot of dissatisfaction as to the ideas of both the Democratic Party and Republican Party – that is, in terms of how they relate to the “black voter” in the United States. The biggest issue that dominates the thinking of African Americans today is what political party they will caucus with, especially considering the polarizing social and political atmosphere we are in. Indeed, what are the advantages of joining either major political party? Do they (black people) have any real power per se? Whether we believe it or not, African Americans still face an uphill battle in this country when it comes to voting, because many are being denied this Constitutional right by voter ID laws and other voter suppression tactics. Obviously, there is something wrong in our Democracy. For years, this has been a real problem for both the Democratic Party and Republican Party to untangle, particularly in our divided nation; but sadly, neither political party has been able to get things right on this front. Black Republicans are disturbed and weirdly intimidated, put off, or uncomfortable with defending why they identify with a political party that embraces white supremacists. Whereas black Democrats have a lot of angst and anger over the idea that they are being exploited by the Democratic Party.

And more than anything else, both Democrats and Republicans want to win campaign elections at all cost. In essence, the two parties don't want to cede political power to the opposition, while facing criticism from all sides. Such ubiquity they say is the price of doing business. Meanwhile, the “black voter” is stuck in the middle of political warfare between the two political parties. There is also this truth: Black Democrats and black Republicans think more about what they can get from fragile alliances, before jumping on the respective, political party bandwagon. So is this really a priority, or a collaborative effort? No doubt, African Americans need time to reflect. Additionally, some “black voters” believe that joining either political party doesn't make a lot of sense, opting to become independent. This move on the part of some African Americans is an understatement, which might prompt us to ask: Why are the two political parties necessary at all? But this question really rile-up both black Democrats and black Republicans, as they are pooh-poohed for affiliating with either of the major political parties. And for the most part, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party can talk for days about the nobility of their purpose in representing all the people in the United States. But nothing can be further from the truth, as the two major political parties continue to tell us that they are concerned about making the lives of everyone better. Or is it mostly about political lies and misinformation? Above all, can the Democratic Party and Republican Party build inclusive organizations that will solve our nation's intractable problems – that is, in terms of race-relations, even in these uncertain and changing times? This paper is a commentary on why African Americans today become Democrats or Republicans.

Introduction

We must remember that African Americans (or black Americans) voted primarily as Republicans after the Civil War and during Reconstruction, but have “turned away from the party of Abe Lincoln since Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal.” (Page, 2005) Political scientist James MacGregor Burns explains it this way:

African Americans had little political power until after World War II. Owing their freedom from slavery to the “party of Lincoln,” most African Americans initially identified with the Republicans, but this loyalty started to change with Franklin Roosevelt, who insisted on equal treatment for African Americans in his New Deal programs. [Consequently], after World War II, African Americans came to see the Democrats as the party of civil rights. (Burns et al., 2004)

Given these facts, will there ever be another “critical election,” where a complete reversal of how black people vote in elections will take place – that is, in terms of African Americans switching their political parties from Democrat to Republican? Probably not. Former Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, a black man, and Republican, under George H. W. administration, said that he became an enthusiastic Republican, at an early age, because mostly white Southern Democratic-segregationists were responsible for many of the “lynchings” his fellow black brethren endured –that is, black people were murdered, not at the hands of Republicans. Another former Black Democrat, the late Pollster Patrick Caddell, in explaining why he became a Republican stated that the Democratic Party was no longer “a party of the people but had been *hijacked* by elites, the well-educated, Wall Street and interest groups.” (Lester, 2019) What nonsense. Indeed, how exactly can poor people, the middle-class, the less fortunate and disadvantage be considered *elitist*? Or how can this so-called leftist alliance that caucus with the Democratic Party be a part of Wall Street? Of course, black Democrats fundamentally disagree with *any* assertion that the Republican Party is now “the party of the people,” when this major political party identifies “with big business rather [than with] unions, and with white Anglo-Saxons rather than [with] ethnic minorities.” (Crystal, 1994) And what is so powerful about the Democratic Party coalition today? What Caddell should have known is: The *paradox* of being a black Republican is that they are in *cahoots* with a political party that is *elitist* in its purist form. Or they are *elitist* in the purest sense of the word.

Nevertheless, the Republican Party “has been especially aggressive in urging African Americans to consider a return to the “party of Lincoln.” (King, 2005) Yet, the U.S. Republican Party today, unfortunately, is more aligned or akin to the *Dixiecrats*, or States’ Rights Democrats, which was “a right-wing” Democratic splinter group” of white supremacists that broke away from the main Democratic Party, “in the 1948 election.” (Stevens, 2000a) In essence, White Southerners “objected to the democrats’ civil-rights program,” (Stevens, 2000a) and their progressive agenda moving forward. Still, big government-Republican conservatives, perhaps, believe that even a disingenuous effort to recruit more black people and other minorities would only broaden the Republican Party and its desire for a bigger tent. (Stewart, 2005) But how can *any* black voter even entertain the idea of becoming a Republican today? This question essentially says that the Republican Party does not give black people *any* power, or a real sense of belonging. So there is no need to support this political party. And this is, unfortunately, the current dilemma of the Republican Party; and the blacks who have joined are, for the most part, in lock-step with the “right-wing” extremists in the party; as well as with Tea Party Republicans in Congress and state governments. And it seems like only a small number of black Republicans, unlike Democrats, are elected to higher office, even if they have *marquee* (political) billing, like Lynn Swann, a black man, who ran for governor of Pennsylvania in 2006, and lost to incumbent Ed Rendell, a white Democrat. (Will, 2006) As a black Republican, Swann had only to look in the mirror to know that the Republican Party is more *elitist* of the two major political parties; and that he wouldn’t win the Pennsylvania governorship as a Republican. In this regard, the Republican Party has credibility issues *galore*, especially when it comes to inequality and not embracing *all* American citizens/voters.

Hence, being a black Republican today is out of the ordinary, and evocative, eliciting Democratic dread. Which is to say that the current Republican Party employs harsh election campaign tactics, such as Voting Suppression and *surgically* staged gerrymandering strategies – to win elections. Is this because such political measures are the *only* way the GOP can win campaign elections, at all levels? We must also be reminded of former President Nixon’s “southern strategy,” where he was able to pilfer or rip off the votes of white southern Democrats, and realigned conservatives in both political parties, as well as blacks, and independents. President Ronald Reagan, who was a former Democrat, masterfully employed this “southern strategy” to make hard-core conservative Democrats change their party affiliation to Republican. (Stevens, 2000b)

However, the late Senator Jesse Helms, a Republican and former Democrat (from South Carolina), “spurned black voters and their causes in order to curry favor with working-class white.” (Judis, 2002) Moreover, “by identifying Republicans as the “white party,” men like Jesse Helms helped the party revive Republican fortunes in the Deep South and in border states.” (Judis, 2002) The radical Republicans at that time also “increased racial polarization and even ethnic hatred,” (Judis, 2002) especially among white southerners who resented the callousness, and supposed heavy-handedness of the Democratic Party. Journalist James P. Gannon, a Republican Conservative, also made the point that, “The Democrats have bent over backwards to please minority groups – blacks, gays, angry feminists and atheists – at the expense of... old white guys.” (Gannon, 2005) But what Gannon fails to mention is: African Americans have experienced *cursed* racism and discrimination from both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. It wasn’t always the Republicans fighting against the *progressive* Democrats. For example, the Democratic Party turned its back on African Americans in the South, allowing racial abuses against them, and the bloody reign of terror by white hate groups, domestic terrorists, and white supremacists in the 1800s through the 1960s. So why did African Americans join or associate with a political party that was in many ways against their own best interests? What are we to make of this?

One-time presidential candidate and former Democratic National Committee Chairman, Dr. Howard Dean, predicted that there wouldn’t be a big erosion of the “black vote” *anytime* soon, but he is concerned about Blacks “staying at home on Election Day[s].” (Lester, 2005) Finally, it should be noted that, “Republicans [sometimes] out hustle Democrats in getting their [base and] supporters to the polls” (Drinkard, 2001) – to vote in many critical elections, unlike Democrats who sometimes fail to do the same in many campaign elections. But in the end, if African American voters feel under-appreciated or *slighted* in some profound way, they will absolutely stay away from the polls and voting booths during *any* election, even for Democratic candidates. See Table 1 for partial list of black Congressional Democrats over the years.

Blacks and the Democratic Party versus the Republicans

Several years ago, while teaching public administration as a visiting professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, one of my former graduate students, a smart, very ambitious black woman and former life-long Democrat, unceremoniously changed her political party affiliation and became a hard-charging Republican in the late 1990s, in order to run for local, state and national political offices in Nevada. Did she believe that the *only* way to win an election was to run as a black Republican? Probably so, given the circumstances of why she switched political parties. No doubt, today there is a *vacuum* of constructive black leadership in the Republican Party, as they try to appeal to black voters. So what are the alternatives?

Indeed, my former graduate student changed her political party, when she was *outright* rejected by the Democratic Party of Nevada (that didn’t take her seriously). Therefore, she decided to get actively involved in conservative-Republican politics, causing her to regrettably make the unfortunate comment: “From my perspective, there is one last plantation in America, and it’s called the Democratic Party.” (Rake, 2004a) So do black Democrats have a *slave-master* mind-set after all? My former graduate student’s disparaging comment and poor choice of words were surprising and perplexing to me, given that the modern-day Democratic Party and previous Democratic presidential administrations have been responsible for passing much of the major legislation that has helped not only women, but other minorities, in general, and all American citizens as well (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, etc.). On the other hand, under Republican leadership, “unemployment reached its highest point in 1994, and black unemployment was up 26 percent when [George W.] Bush took [the presidential] office in January 2001.” (Rake, 2004b) Unfortunately, the Republican Party, in recent history, hasn’t passed *any* major national legislation that has really helped the average American worker, or black people, in particular. So can black Republicans even offer an accurate assessment of the black community, without some kind of political bias?

And what does it matter to African Americans who consider themselves Democratic? To be sure, many Republicans think that they have a better understanding of our nation’s racial politics – that is, in terms of the two political parties. But some Democrats today try hard to tackle contentious political issues like racism, inequality, injustice, homophobia, toxic ideology, and racial discrimination of all kind. These are the inherent struggles. The Democratic Party today has also tried *unyieldingly* to give voice to the voiceless people in our society, whereas the Republican Party essentially wants to shut down voices that don’t agree with them. Or so it seems. Also, many white southerners (today) are Republicans, mainly because they became disaffected “with the national Democratic policies on civil rights, segregation, and economic issues.” (Harris, 1975)

Furthermore, the Democratic Party is more progressive than ever, because of a change in ideology, where they address issues of concern that might negatively affect people of color. And although the conservative Democratic Party of the past (in the 1850s), “called for protection of [black] slavery in the [US] territories,” (Stevens, 2000c) it is now “the party of black voters [and] the party that promotes black presidential candidates and black candidates for Congress and governor, even in fairly conservative parts of the country.” (Bacon, 2018) Therefore, black voters (today) caucus more with politicians that have ideas of social liberalism, while supporting the middle-class and the rights of poor people, and the less fortunate.

Of course, “the modern Democratic Party represents an uneasy alliance among labor, urban, and ethnic minority groups, intellectuals and middle-class reformers, and the traditional Southern Democrats;” (Harris, 1975) and this association is critically important in a *multi-racial* Democracy such as ours. The reality is that the Democratic Party today is not that concerned about political warfare or raw political power. Not surprisingly then, Democrats connect with more black people and other minorities than the Republicans. And although they might take the “black vote” for granted, we can understand the multiple dimensions of black Democrats. According to Democratic strategist and former *interim* Democratic National Committee chairman, Donna Brazile, “The Democratic Party isn’t perfect and has not served us [blacks] perfectly, but since the Civil Rights Movement, it remains the best vehicle for Black political participation, representation and empowerment.” (Brazile, 2006) Rightly, my former Republican graduate student later apologized to the black community in Las Vegas (which was reluctantly accepted), after initially stating incredulously that she stood by “her [previously mentioned] comment and [saw] no need to apologize for her characterization of a rival political party,” (Neff, 2004) or the Democratic Party. However, she finally explained to the local public (in Las Vegas) that her harsh comments were made “within the context of explaining her conversion from Democrat to Republican in the late 1990s.” (Rake, 2004a) This might have been true; but perhaps she wasn’t aware that:

The Republican Party’s capacity for effective self-governance [has] degraded slowly, over the course of a long chain of rhetorical excesses... corruptions and philosophical betrayals. Basically, the [Republican] party abandoned traditional conservatism for right-wing radicalism. Republicans [have come] to see themselves as insurgents and revolutionaries, and every revolution tends toward anarchy and end up devouring its own. (Brooks, 2015)

New York Times columnist David Brook is absolutely right in his assessment. Unfortunately, some black voters, for whatever reasons, believe that they are benefiting in some way by being Republican today. Black Republicans have also made a calculated risk, asserting that they are on the right side or political team – and that there is more money in being a Republican. Some even believe that the Democratic Party “exploit the problems of the less fortunate, promoting a sense of entitlement rather than self-sufficiency and hope,” (Setmayer, 2006) without providing any evidence. So does the Republican Party actually acknowledge the Haves and Have nots? Or are Republicans concerned about what is in the best interest of all its citizens? Perhaps not. This is to say that the needs of black people and other minorities are not an overriding priority for the Republican Party. In other words, over the years, the *inequities* between blacks and whites and other social matters concerning people of color are ignored. Moreover, “a few ambitious black politicians,” like Republican Allen West, “have figured out that one of the best ways to get ahead is to separate themselves from the black mainstream and present themselves as right-wing extremists.” To be sure, “they don’t waste time trying to convince other blacks to go along with their [kooky] ideas because they know that most of us are not crazy enough to support them.” (White, 2014) Black Republicans are also “out-of-touch” with most issues and concerns of the black community. Furthermore, black Republicans, unfortunately, look past the despicable actions of black Republicans, like with Allen West; and they don’t have a lot of political power within the Republican Party either. Or why can’t the most ardent black supporters of the Republican Party walk away from liars, cheats, or deceitful individuals; or believe in the truth or the *experts*? We may never know.

Nevertheless, some African Americans have changed their political party identification, because of some elusive or unfathomable ideas about religion and family values (or loyalty to “the party of Lincoln”). Conservative commenter Tara Setmayer, a black woman, writes that, “the strong influence of the church and the importance of family structure are just a few reasons why” black people should become Republican. (Setmayer, 2006) But this is not the case today, because the Republican Party (today) remains in the dark when it comes to the terrible plight of the black community; and their actions in normalizing unconstitutional things, like limiting the voting rights of blacks and other minorities – through Voter ID laws – suppress “the black vote” in most elections throughout the United States.

Indeed, some black Republicans just don't want to hear it, nor are many receptive to something different when it comes to public policies that are enacted by the Democratic Party. Equally important, the false narrative by some black Republicans that "conservative policies are beginning to resonate with both the Black middle class, as well as with the disadvantaged," (Setmayer, 2006) must be rejected, because it perpetuates a *lie*. Perhaps some believe that joining the Republican Party is the right thing to do, all things considering. Is this because the Republican Party has a better plan or *moral compass*? Absolutely not. Or is it just fashionable to join them because they are in power throughout the country? Some black Republicans contend that they are able to keep things into perspective; and see the Republican Party as the "wave of the future" for blacks and other minorities, instead of working with the Democratic Party to make the Republicans more appealing, sustainable and stronger for all ethnic groups. Is this just wishful thinking?

Black Republicans also express their strong belief in our Democracy and the American Dream; but so does the Democratic Party. In fact, "even historically, Democrats have elected more than three times as many African-Americans to Congress than Republicans, and three-quarters of the Republican African Americans were elected before 1900." (Brazile, 2006) In truth, the best understanding of black Republicans is: the national Republican Party maintains a tight leash on them, demanding fealty, and respect, which they crave, but don't necessarily deserve. According to Brooks, American "citizens may fall into different political factions," but Republicans "still are joined by chains of affection that command ultimate loyalty and love." (Brooks, 2015) So are Republicans intellectually smarter? Probably not. Or is it because they are *exclusive* of the so-called "others?" Perhaps. According to Dr. Howard Dean, who was (as mentioned) a one-time presidential candidate and former Democratic National Committee chairman, the Republicans are a pretty *monolithic* party. (Wickham, 2005) However, Professor Lucius J. Barker, and *et.al.* tell us:

The views of the new black [Republican] conservatives, like those of other groups, *are not* monolithic. Nevertheless, we can identify certain positions that constitute the core of their creed. What distinguishes them from the more traditional black leaders and thinkers is their belief that rather than being a positive force, government and government sponsored social welfare programs are primarily impediments to black progress. Like their white counterparts, black [Republican] conservatives are generally opposed to the interventionist state. They deride social welfare programs and claim that government and government-created dependence are among the major problems confronting African Americans. (Barker, 1999)

So does Barker's accurate and extensive quote explain why some black voters join the Republican Party, which has been historically hostile to African-Americans in the recent past? And how exactly do their repressive actions humanize all ethnic groups, let alone steer them in a certain direction that might *benefit* the Republican Party? It must be difficult for some black Republicans to organize their political thoughts, as they accept a doctrine or philosophy that is foreign to many African Americans. For example, black Republicans have a tendency to pretend that we don't live in a racist society, which is based on "white privilege." More importantly, some black Republicans believe that there is nothing more important than their short-sighted ideology, which reaches the level of almost religious conviction. But how can black Republican *commensurate* and *enable* an unprincipled, conservative administration? For some, it is almost comical and tragic at the same time to watch black Republicans give in to a philosophy that they don't really share, either; and despite all of their hard-scrabble hopefulness. More than anything else, they have a morally bankrupt view of the world. It is as if black Republicans have very low expectations. Also, to say the least, the United States today is a more demographically diverse nation, so it is a surprise that black Republicans can put aside their *misgivings*, where the truth lies, particularly about their political party. Or they seem to have thick-skin about so-called *hackneyed*, political matters. Moreover, the Republican Party, in general, is notorious when it comes to playing the "race card" in campaign elections. For example, when Democratic candidate Harold Ford, Jr., a black man, sought the vacant, Tennessee Senate seat in the 2006 election against Bob Corker, a white man, Republicans launched and broadcasted an *ad* that sent a blatant, racist message. Essentially, the *ad* showed "a white woman with blond hair and bare shoulder who says she met Ford at a playboy party and whispers, "Harold, call me." ("RNC pulls," 2006) This highly charged, defamatory *ad* made "an implicit appeal to racial fears about black men and white women." ("RNC pulls," 2006) This negative campaign *ad* was later pulled from TV stations in Tennessee, but the damage had been done, which was *manifestly* wrong.

But Republican campaign officials, at that time, indicated that Harold Ford Jr. couldn't win such a conservative state as Tennessee, so he would likely lose anyway, despite the racist, senatorial campaign advertisement. Or it might have been "a tall order" if Ford had *any* chance of winning. (York, 2006) Harold Ford, Jr. lost that particular election to Bob Corker, and he later left the State of Tennessee (entirely) for New York. We should also mention President George H. W. Bush's uncharacteristically racist and infamous, but "successful campaign for the presidency in 1988," which was tainted and "marked in part by racially charged politics of crime that continues to reverberate [in our society] to this day." (P. Baker, 2018) Indeed, it was this racist stench of the Willie Horton episode that was shamefully introduced in U.S. presidential politics. According to journalist Peter Baker: "Mr. Horton was an African American prisoner in Massachusetts who, while released on a furlough program, raped a white Maryland woman and bound and stabled her boyfriend. Mr. Bush's campaign and supporters cited the case as evidence that his democratic opponent, Gov. Michael S. Dukakis of Massachusetts, was insufficiently tough on crime." (P. Baker, 2018) So will the Republican Party do almost *anything* to win elections, short of assassination? How can such unforgivable, uncouth actions be acceptable or good for our Democracy?

TABLE 1
(Partial List of Prominent, Congressional Black Democrats from the early 1900s to Today)

1. Carol M. Braun U.S. Senator from Illinois (1993-1999) (1st Black woman to serve as a U.S. Senator in Congress.)	12. Augustus F. Hawkins House - California 21st (1963-1975) House - California 29th (1975-1991)	22. Andrew Young House - Georgia's 5th (1973-1977)	32. Bennie Thompson House - Mississippi's 2nd (1993-present) (Serves on the Committee of Homeland Security in Congress.)
2. Barack H. Obama U.S. Senator from Illinois (2005-2008) (Elected as the 1st Black President of the United States, 2008-2016.)	13. John Conyers House - Michigan's 1st (1965-1993) House - Michigan's 14th (1993-2013) House - Michigan's 13th (2013-2017)	23. Harold Ford Sr. House - Tennessee's 8th (1975-1983) House - Tennessee's 9th (1983-1997)	33. Maxine Waters House - California's 35th (1993-2013) House - California's 43rd (2013-present)
3. Roland Burris U.S. Senator from Illinois (2009-2010)	14. Shirley Chisholm House - New York's 12th (1969-1983)	24. William H. Gray III House - Pennsylvania's 2nd (1979-1991)	34. Sheila Jackson House - Texas's 18th (1995-present)
4. Cory Booker U.S. Senator from New Jersey (2013-present)	15. Louis Stokes House - Ohio's 21st (1969-1993) House - Ohio's 11th (1993-1999)	25. Harold Washington House - Illinois's 1st (1981-1983) (Elected as the 1st Black Mayor of Chicago.)	35. Jesse Jackson Jr. House - Illinois's 2nd (1995-2012)
5. Mo Cowan U.S. Senator from Massachusetts (Feb 2013-Jul 2013)	16. Ron Dellums House - California's 7th (1971-1975) House - California's 8th (1975-1993) House - California's 9th (1993-1998)	26. Mike Espy House - Mississippi's 2nd (1987-1993) (Ran for MS Governor in the 2018 election.)	36. Elijah Cummings House - Maryland's 7th (1996-present) (Chairman of Investigative Committee in Congress.)
6. Kamala Harris U.S. Senator from California (2017-present)	17. Parren Mitchell House - Maryland's 7th (1971-1987)	27. John Lewis House - Georgia's 5th (1987-present) (Civil Right Icon.)	37. Harold Ford Jr. House - Tennessee's 9th (1997-2007)
7. Arthur W. Mitchell House - Illinois's 1st (1935-1943)	18. Charles Rangel House - New York's 18th (1971-1973) House - New York's 19th (1973-1983) House - New York's 16th (1983-1993) House - New York's 15th (1993-2013) House - New York's 13th (2013-2017)	28. Kweisi Mfume House - Maryland's 7th (1987-1996) (Served as leader of the NAACP in the 1990s.)	38. Gregory Meeks House - New York 6th (1998-2013) House - New York 5th (2013-present)
8. William L. Dawson House - Illinois's 1st (1943-1970)	19. Yvonne B. Burke House - California's 37th (1973-1975) House - California's 28th (1975-1979)	29. Jim Clyburn House - South Carolina's 6th (1993-present) (Currently serving in the House of Representative leadership.)	39. Al Green House - Texas's 9th (2005-present)
9. Adam C. Powell Jr. House - New York's 22nd (1945-1953) House - New York's 16th (1953-1963) House - New York's 18th (1963-1971)	20. Cardiss Collins House - Illinois's 7th (1973-1997)	30. Cynthia McKinney House - Georgia's 11th (1993-1997) House - Georgia's 4th (1997-2003) House - Georgia's 4th (2005-2007)	40. Yvette Clarke House - New York's 11th (2007-2013) House - New York's 9th (2013-present)
10. Charles Diggs House - Michigan's 13th (1955-1980)	21. Barbara Jordan House - Texas's 18th (1973-1979)	31. Bobby Rush House - Illinois's 1st (1993-present) (Served as a member of the former Black Panther Party.)	

NOTE: In modern American (political) history, more Black Democrats, including Black women have been elected and served, or are currently serving in the U.S. Congress today.

Blacks and the Republican Party versus the Democrats

Apparently, black Republicans sometimes believe in whatever sweeping, racist and dishonest schemes that the Republican Party might present? What they should know is that some hard-right extremists and white supremacists in the Republican Party have a disdain for black people and other minorities, as well as a disregard for the notion of fair play, in terms of sustaining Democratic institutions. Furthermore, Republican conservatives tend to favor *order* and *control*, “and consequently are inclined to be somewhat *sanguine* about inequalities of outcomes.” On the other hand, Democratic “liberals tend, however, to infer unequal opportunities from the fact of unequal outcomes.” (Will, 2007) Bluntly speaking, and as mentioned, the Republican Party is not really concerned about the welfare, or best interests of African Americans, or *all* American citizens, for that matter; and despite words to the contrary. This is to say that “the Republican Party is not serious about tackling *racism* because *racism* is an effective tool in their electoral politics.” In other words, “the path to Republican victory requires exploiting stereotypes and prejudices.” (Foster, 2018) So are black Republicans paying attention? It is as if they are ignoring a strong stench that permeates the entire Republican Party, while it festers into a *fetid* pool of ignorance and racial animosity.

To back up this harsh comment, we only have to look at the twisted activism of black Republican Niger Innis, the son of the late Roy Innis, who was once the celebrated director of CORE (or the Congress of Racial Equality). Niger Innis has no shame, and is now the spokesperson of the group, appearing “on Fox News and other conservative media outlets throughout the country denouncing Black Lives Matter and claiming to be a representative of the civil rights movement.” (Fang, 2015) But Niger Innis *is not* really a representative of the famed and venerable civil rights movement today, but only a “mouthpiece” for the white victimhood faction of the Republican Party. And the CORE organization, according to Nekima Levy-Pounds, a professor and Black Lives Matter activist, “provides rhetoric that reinforces a “white supremacist view” of Black Lives Matter.” (Fang, 2015) Perhaps it is time for the disagreeable Niger Innis to look deep into his soul and learn that law enforcement officials should be held accountable for the *plethora* of “shooting deaths of numerous unarmed black people across this country,” (Fang, 2015) as the Black Lives Matter movement has tried to expose. Question: Should black Republicans totally ignore these serious matters, or pretend that they are not occurring? For some African Americans, the Republican Party has become a “right-wing” nightmare. Many black Republicans think of themselves as moderates, but this is not the direction that the Republican Party is going these days; and being a “Republican in name only,” or a RINO, is not tolerated, for the most part, in the Republican Party today. Also, identifying the social and political issues (that hurt people) is very difficult for some black Republicans to acknowledge. And, “when an African American signs on with the GOP [or the Republican Party], he’s often belittled as an Uncle Tom, a Stepin Fetchit, or, more malevolently, an Alan Keyes.” (Labash, 2006) Keyes has been a *perennial* candidate for higher office, as a black Republican, whose extremist views brook no compromise when it comes to the abortion issue. Accordingly, Keyes is outright dismissive of political “candidates who espouse other conservative issues but support abortion rights as “unfit to lead the country.” (Keen, 1995) Keyes also had the gall to say that black Republican and retired Army General Colin Powell “ended his chances of winning” the presidency when he confirmed his support for abortion rights.” (Keen, 1995) Perhaps Keyes has forgotten that the right to an abortion is constitutionally mandated.

Many African Americans also see being a Republican is like a “double-edged” sword in that this political party does not represent or address the legitimate concerns of black people, as mentioned earlier. So is it a false choice to be a black Republican? Indeed, can we say that the black Republican is “the lawn jockey of American politics?” (Labash, 2006) Labash also tells us that the black Republican is “largely regarded as exploited and ornamental, a toady showpiece that enables mister [white] Charlie to say, “See, we have some, too.” (Labash, 2006) Equally important, can we say that African Americans “vote Democratic based on tradition, [and] not [because of some specific] ideology?” (S. Carter, 2004) Dr. Howard Dean, a Democrat, believes, as well as many others in the Democratic Party, that “taking black voters for granted is a long-standing problem for the party that dates to the 1960s.” (Lester, 2005) This is to say that the Democratic Party is good at “talking the good talk, yet failing to offer meaningful reform in [minority] communities.” (S. Carter, 2004) Black Republicans, moreover, believe that the Democratic Party has black voters by the *heartstrings*, blinded, perhaps, to the obvious: That is, what the Democratic Party (really) represents and stands for in terms of power politics. And for years, “Republicans have been stressing to black voters (rightly, if not cynically), that there is no surer way to be taken for granted than to reflexively pledge allegiance to the same [political] party in perpetuity.” (Labash, 2006)

To be sure, taking “the black vote” for granted must not stand if the Democratic Party is to be successful in the future – that is, in political elections; and if long-standing ethnic groups are to gain complete confidence and trust in the political party. Former Republican Governor Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. even claims “that democrats are racist for assuming that blacks should belong only to their party.” (Bellantoni, 2004) But Ehrlich’s statement is, of course, ludicrous. What Ehrlich should know is that, “The Black community continues to vote [Democratic], simply because of party allegiance,” and because Republican officials “do not create an environment in which innovative [and progressive] policy-making can happen.” (Ali, 2015) Additionally, we must ask: Are African Americans systematically marginalized and isolated from the power centers of the Democratic Party today? The answer is no. However, “the experience of blacks with the Democratic Party can be seen, at its best, as mixed.” (Barker, 1999) But this does not mean that loyal black Democrats should abandon their party and run-out and join the ranks of the Republican Party. But black, hard-nose conservatives have seriously suggested that, “the Republican Party might be worth another look, especially if the GOP more directly addresses issues of concern to blacks.” (Gilgoff, 2005) Nevertheless, would a change in political party affiliation even be possible? Probably not. That is, given that blacks make-up *only* a minority of the Republican Party faithful. Of course, the dominant Republican Party must sustain and maintain its power-base of white Christians and white Southerners to be successful in the future. Therefore, this coalition of white Americans will always be the Republican Party’s first priority in *everything*. Moreover, John Eisenhower, the son of the late President Dwight D. Eisenhower has written that, “The current Republican Party leadership has confused confident leadership with hubris and arrogance.” (Eisenhower, 2004) He goes on to scathingly point out that the Republican Party no longer emphasizes *fiscal responsibility*, which has been a part of their platform for years, nor have they balanced “the budget whenever the state of the economy [allows] it to do so.” (Eisenhower, 2004) Keep also in mind that “after years of *hysteria* about the evils of debt, establishment Republican economists endorsed a [recent] budget-busting tax cut.” (Krugman, 2019) In this sense, the Republican Party has sadly failed its constituents; and African Americans, in particular – that is, with the possible exception of the wealthy, or *plutocrats*, just as much as the Democratic Party has failed its “power base” in recent history. In this regard, according to black American economist and arch-Black Republican, Thomas Sowell:

The black vote today goes automatically and overwhelmingly for the Democrats, just as the old “solid South” voted Democratic for more than a century. But nothing political is eternal and Democrats today have to scramble to try to win victories in the south, which they could once take for granted. (Sowell, 2004)

What Sowell suggests is that the Democratic Party’s grip on African American voters can be eventually broken with time and patience. But can critically thinking, black voters *really* feel differently or favorably about the current Republican Party? Indeed, can black people join the Republican Party if they don’t generally share the same beliefs, opinions, xenophobic goals and racist philosophies? Perhaps not. For some people of color today, the Republican Party is a constant reminder of elitism, “white privilege” and support for big businesses, and the wealthy. Although this embrace of such plutocratic entities has kept conservative voters intrigued and supportive, it has been a nightmare, as mentioned, for the poor and downtrodden. And to make things even harder, black Republicans, for whatever reasons, put up with the racist and fundamentally discriminatory treatment of black people and other minorities that occurs all around them (in the Republican Party). Or needless to say, black Republicans grudgingly accept whatever the main Republican Party does – that is, for the sake of *unity*. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that very few African Americans will join the ranks of the Republican Party, even if they see opportunity as being the most paramount thing in their lives. See Table 2 for a short, but complete list of black Republican members of Congress over the years.

TABLE 2

(Complete List of Prominent, Congressional Black Republicans from the 1800s to Today)

1. P.B.S. Pinchback U.S. Senator-Elect from Louisiana (Denied seat because of his race; served briefly as the 1st Black Governor in the United States from Louisiana.)	9. Jefferson F. Long House - Georgia's 4th (Jan 1871-Mar 1871)	19. Robert Smalls House - South Carolina's 5th (1875-1879) House - South Carolina's 5th (1882-1883) House - South Carolina's 7th (1884-1887) (Smalls was a River Boat Captain and Naval hero during the Civil War.)	29. J. C. Watts House - Oklahoma's 4th (1995-2003)
2. Hiram R. Revels U.S. Senator from Mississippi (1870-1871)	10. Benjamin S. Turner House - Alabama's 1st (1871-1873)	20. James E. O'Hara House - North Carolina's 2nd (1883-1887)	30. Allen West House - Florida's 22nd (2011-2013)
3. Blanche Bruce U.S. Senator from Mississippi (1875-1881)	11. Josiah T. Walls House - Florida's at-large (1871-1875) House - Florida's 2nd (1875-1876)	21. Henry P. Cheatham House - North Carolina's 2nd (1889-1893)	31. Will Hurd House - Texas's 23rd (2015-present)
4. Edward Brooke U.S. Senator from Massachusetts (1967-1979) (1st U.S. Senator elected after Reconstruction.)	12. Richard H. Cain House - South Carolina's at-large (1873-1875) House - South Carolina's 2nd (1877-1879)	22. John M. Langston House - Virginia's 4th (1890-1891)	32. Mia Love House - Utah's 4th (2015-2019) (Although Love was the 1st Black woman to be elected from Utah as a Republican, she was defeated in her re-election bid.)
5. Tim Scott U.S. Senator from South Carolina (2013-present) (1st Black Republican to be elected after Reconstruction and modern Congressional history from South Carolina. Also served in the House of Representatives - South Carolina's 1st District, 2011-2013.)	13. John R. Lynch House - Mississippi's 6th (1873-1877) House - Mississippi's 6th (1882-1883)	23. Thomas E. Miller House - South Carolina's 7th (1890-1891)	
6. Joseph Rainey House - South Carolina's 1st (1870-1879)	14. Alonzo J. Ransier House - South Carolina's 2nd (1873-1875)	24. George W. Murray House - South Carolina's 7th (1893-1895) House - South Carolina's 1st (1896-1897)	
7. Robert C. De Large House - South Carolina's 2nd (1871-1873)	15. James T. Rapier House - Alabama's 2nd (1873-1875)	25. George H. White House - North Carolina's 2nd (1897-1901)	
8. Robert B. Elliott House - South Carolina's 3rd (1871-1874)	16. Jeremiah Haralson House - Alabama's 1st (1875-1877)	26. Oscar S. De Priest House - Illinois's 1st (1929-1935)	
	17. John A. Hyman House - North Carolina's 2nd (1875-1877)	27. Melvin H. Evans House - Virgin Islands' at-large (1979-1981)	
	18. Charles E. Nash House - Louisiana's 6th (1875-1877)	28. Gary Franks House - Connecticut's 5th (1991-1997)	

NOTE: After the Civil War and Reconstruction, Black males were predominantly Republicans, and were elected to the U.S. Congress. However, Black Democrats are overwhelmingly elected to the U.S. Congress today. Additionally, Black women were not given the franchise until 1920, with the passing of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Conclusions

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party will probably always be apart on the many racial/social, economic and political issues today, especially as the nature and ideologies of the two major political parties have (drastically) changed. Black conservatives have indeed changed their party affiliation, too, as they try to come to grips with joining a political party of racists, and embracing white supremacist fantasies. The Republican Party today, however, would like to distant itself from their “sordid legacy,” (Judis, 2002) and dubious past. And one thing is certain: The (new) Republican Party has become “a haven for southern Segregationists and Northern “white flight” conservatives.” (Page, 2005) So is the Republican Party fascist, *elitist*, or even racist? And why do white supremacists join this intrepid political party? Perhaps even some American citizens believe that the so-called Grand-Old Republican Party is “begotten by and raised on racism.” (Lambus, 2005) And still others believe that newly-minted, black Republicans, especially in the South “are just disgruntled... former Democrats.” (Lambus, 2005) Obviously, though, something has to change if the Republican Party is intent on courting blacks and other minorities. Conversely, according to political commentator, Steve Rozman:

The Democratic Party has already been criticized by some party loyalists for previously abandoning some party principles. If it were to throw in the towel on key social issues for short-term gain, such opportunism would probably provoke the flight of many of the party’s core supporters and financial contributors – with no guarantee that large numbers of former Democrats would return to the party fold. (Rozman, 2005)

Even more important, according to political science professor Ross K. Baker: “Democrats, as a [political] party, have always been better at soul searching... than winning elections,” (R. Baker, 2005) especially in state elections in recent years. Therefore, the Democrats have “ample cause... to lament its fate and search for miraculous cures” (R. Baker, 2005) after losing streaks in significant state and local elections throughout the United States. Hence, with such doubts, and losses, the Democratic Party must *never* forget its political base, or turn its back on African Americans, particularly when it comes to inclusion and basic, political rewards. Additionally, the Democratic Party must not let Republicans define the political issues, by relentlessly pressing home their progressive agenda, without retrenchment, embarrassment or feeling guilty about where they stand. Finally, Democrats must remain on the offensive, while taking a page from Newt Gingrich’s Republican playbook, where the *real* truth is told about corrupt Republican politicians of all stripes. Newt Gingrich, of course, was the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, and “conservative firebrand who won control of Congress [over two] decade[s] ago by campaigning against an entrenched, arrogant and all powerful Democratic majority.” (Toner & Hulse, 2005) But political things haven’t really changed for the better under the current Republican leadership. We must also ask: Does the Republican Party want to always control *every* aspect of our government? Unfortunately, the now, all powerful and dominant Republican Party is following in the same dangerous path as the Democratic Party (once did) by being also *overbearing*, exclusive and *rapacious*. Can Republicans ever understand this point? The contradictions are almost endless. Indeed, “the fragile credibility of the [Republicans in] Congress is [still] facing a severe test.” (Broder, 2005) As Journalists Robin Toner and Carl Hulse have written: “Republicans are keenly aware of the dangers, having ridden to power themselves on the promise of reform, and they say they will not stumble into a landslide defeat the way the Democrats did in 1994.” (Toner & Hulse, 2005) The promises made by the Republican Party do not always come to fruition, as these commitments take center stage in our society. As economist Paul Krugman writes: “Unable to make good on its promises, the GOP, like other failed revolutionary movements, [try] to maintain its grip by exploiting its position of power.” (Krugman, 2006) The racial element of it all has not been lost on black voters, either. Black Republicans are also ideologically “in-sync” with the Republican Party, promising the world (so to speak) to small businesses, but not really following through (on some successful future). More specifically, black Republicans cozy up to *any* of the disastrous policy ideas of the Republican Party, like privatizing Social Security or Medicare, or tax cuts for the wealthy and denying minority citizens their Constitutional rights to vote.

Presumably, we have a fragmented political system that rewards party loyalty above almost anything else. And many are keenly aware that, “Democrats, [and] Republicans just can’t get along [especially] these day,” (Mean, 2005) as suspicions mount between the two major political parties. The intent, of course, is to ensure that the Democratic Party or the Republican Party maintain their political power in government at all levels. In this respect, there is still a serious disconnect between the two major political parties.

Also in this context, should “we-the-people” be satisfied that the Democratic Party and Republican Party can’t work together to get things done for all the American people, no matter their background? Or will this always be the case, because “neither has *anything* to say that the other side is interested in hearing?” (Mean, 2005) Perhaps these differences are why a lot of substantial legislation is not being passed in Congress – to solve the many social and economic problems of the United States today. Nevertheless, there are black Republicans that believe, “Republican policies can lead to a better life for blacks, if given a chance.” (Setmayer, 2006) Although the Republican Party is adamant about having the right (financial) policy ideas to help all Americans, there is insufficient evidence that their policies are any better than Democratic fiscal policies. We only have to look at the abject failure of former Republican Governor of Kansas, Sam Brownback, and his “trickle-down ideology,” which tested a bankrupt government policy at the state level. Columnist Eugene Robinson said it best when he wrote:

All Brownback did was apply what passes for mainstream Republican orthodoxy these days: cut taxes, eliminate regulation, shrink government, then stand back and watch as economic growth soars. It just didn’t work. It never works. Republicans cannot point to an instance in which this prescription has led to the promised *Valhalla* of skyrocketing [financial] growth. (Robinson, 2017)

So how exactly can “supply-side tax” policies help the black community, and other people, in general, if it doesn’t work? Journalist Michael Mazerov concluded that “Kansas revenues plunged, leading to cuts to education and other vital services and downgrades in the state’s bond rating.” (Mazerov, 2018) And this misguided policy measure wasn’t good for *anyone* living in Kansas, as it was pure folly. For these aforementioned reasons and many other problems as well, the Republican Party should aggressively court and include African Americans and other minority voters in their election strategies – that is, if they want to remain in political power, or control of government at all levels. But does the Republican Party have the capacity to handle challenges in every ethnic community today? Probably not. At least the Democratic Party is trying to be more inclusive of blacks and other minorities. However, black Republican and economist Thomas Sowell once boldly predicted:

If the share of the black vote that goes to the Democrats ever falls to 70 percent, it may be virtually impossible for the Democrats to win the White House or Congress, because they have [already] lost the white male vote and their [fervent] support among other groups is eroding. (Sowell, 2005)

Sowell’s dire warning, as a staunch Republican, should give black, liberal Democratic Americans cause for alarm and serious concern. But Sowell’s predictions on the result and direction of national elections have been stunningly wrong. Furthermore, black elected officials and lawmakers also see a racial shift in black, democratic voting districts between African Americans and the larger, growing Hispanic populations. This is to say that black Democrats will – in the near future – face Hispanic challengers, who may be running under the Republican Party banner – that is, in several Congressional Districts, (J. Carter, 2001) after they have been possibly converted to the Republican Party. Nonetheless, with all the major and intractable political problems presented in this paper, is it *any* wonder that some black Americans might make the hard decision in joining a major political party that operates in their own *worse* interests. Moreover, does the so-called “infighting” between the Democratic Party and Republican Party leave an opening for an independent party to take hold in the black community? In other words, will *alienation* motivate or make black Americans abandon their major political parties, and become registered independents? This remains to be seen. However, we must bear in mind, as political scientist Robert A. Dahl has written: “Political parties and party competition are essential to representative democracy; we can be pretty sure that a country wholly without competitive parties is a country without democracy.” (Dahl, 2002) Unfortunately, the Democrats and Republicans will continue to play “identity politics,” or political warfare in its purist or rawest form. When it is all said and done, however, one political party must *never* control all branches of our national and state governments in perpetuity. And what about the related racial matters? Although this might seem improbable, we should know that multiple parties are necessary, because such political systems give us choices, unlike with *totalitarian* or autocratic government systems. In the final analysis, we must seriously note that “if inclusiveness is the true goal” of the Democrats and Republicans, “then both [political] parties must work harder to rid themselves of political paternalism that makes black voters feel slighted.” (King, 2005) Otherwise, they (black Democrats and black Republicans) will be left in the cold, and pushed away from the proverbial economic and political table.

References

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- Bacon, P. Jr. (2018, December 11). Have Republicans Given Up On Winning Black Voters? *Five thirty Eight* (<https://five-thirtyeight.com/features/have>), 5. According to journalists Martin, J. (2019, March 1), *Las Vegas Sun*, 5, "there is a growing school of thought that democrats should not spend so much time, money and psychic energy tailoring their message to a heavily white, rural and blue-collar part of the country, when their coalition is increasingly made up of racial minorities and suburbanites." See also: Martin, J. & Burns, A. (2019, March 1). Rust Belt, Sun Belt, both? Route to White House flows many directions. *Las Vegas Sun*, 4.
- Baker, P. (2018, December 3). Bush Made Willie Horton an Issue in 1988, and the Racial Scars Are Still Fresh. *The New York Times*, 10. See also: Harris-Perry, M. (2011, December 5). Note to Hermain Cain: What Lynch Mob? *The Nation*, 10.
- Baker, R. K. (2005, April 20). Soul-searching within the Democratic Party. *USA Today*, 21A. For years, juxtaposing the truth, we have been hearing about how blacks will join the Republican Party in droves. But this hasn't happened, nor is it our reality.
- Barker, L. J., Jones, M. H., & Tate, K. (1999). *African Americans and the American Political System* (4th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall. It should be pointed out that more white Americans benefit from social welfare programs, like "food stamps," not black Americans. Also, many black Republicans believe that it is their God-given right to be Republican if they want.
- Bellantoni, C. (2004, September 6-12). Democrats' claim on blacks is 'Racist,' Ehrlich says. *The Washington times*, National Weekly Edition, 23. Ehrlich also stated that "the Democratic attitude toward race opens a window for Republicans to show the diversity of the party." But clearly this remains to be seen.
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- Dahl, R. A. (2002). *How Democratic Is the American Constitution?* New Haven & London: Yale University Press.
- Drinkard, J. (2001, August 31). The two major parties may be losing grip on voters. *USA Today*, 4A. Once upon a time, Republicans were more liberal than they are today. But the Republican Party has now taken on the philosophy and reign of the former conservative Democratic Party of our past. Additionally, nothing crystallize the racial policies of the Republican Party today than denying that racism even exists. Furthermore, there is nothing black Republicans fear more than black Democrats voting in droves during election days.
- Eisenhower, J. (2004, October 3). This is not your father's Republican Party. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3D. It should also be noted that the Republican Party "was founded in 1854 to establish the principle of liberty and justice for all Americans, regardless of race." However, "in recent years, Republicans have lost their connection to that tradition." See also: Roy, A & Yoo, J. (2019, March 25). Eastern Americans. *National Review*, 33.

- Fang, L. (2015, August 17). The Long Sad Slide from Leading Civil Rights Organization to Anti-Black Lives Matter Group. *The Intercept*, 2. See also: How Roy Innis Turned CORE into a Critic of Black Lives Matter. (2015, August 17). <https://theintercept.com/.../core-went...> Being a Republican today is not traditionally how the black community participates politically. And black Republicans know this. So will black Republicans even understand the true horrors of colluding with a political party that really (and generally) don't respect them? Or could we be wrong on this point? Unfortunately, black Republicans ultimately embrace the radical, new, right-wing direction of the Republican Party. In this regard, it is hard to gauge what black Republicans really believe; and how they might vote.
- Foster, K. (2018, December 28). 2018 Was the Year (Some) Black Republicans Finally Came to Their Senses. *Opinion*, 2. <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/.../opinion....> Republicans attempt to make it more difficult for black people to vote and other people of color; therefore, extreme voter suppression measures, and other discriminatory practices, as well as racial harassment continue *unabated* in the United States.
- Gannon, J. P. (2005, June 16). Confessions of a white Christian Republican. *USA Today*, 19A. It should be noted here that, "Right-wing politicians and their media allies pretend to the point of farce, that the primary racial injustice in America involves white people unfairly accused of racism." What nonsense. See also: Goldberg, M. (2019, March 5). Racing to the bottom in the Republican Party. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Gilgoff, D. (2005, March 21). A Courtship worth watching: Conservatives come calling, and blacks may be listening this time. *U.S. News & World Report*, 29. It should be pointed out that both, "mainstream [political] parties turned a blind eye to Jim Crow," particularly in the South. See also: Goldberg, J. (2019, February 24). Democrats shift on race. *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 1.
- Harris, W. H., & Levey, J. S. (eds.). (1975). Democratic Party. *The New Columbia Encyclopedia* (p. 744). New York: Columbia University Press. The completely dogmatic – "my way or the highway" – take no prisoners, scorched earth, political philosophy of the conservative Democratic Party, in the past, against the Republican Party is something that cannot be easily glossed-over, or forgotten.
- Judis, J. B. (2002, November 11). Can the GOP convince blacks not to vote soft sell? *The New Republic*, 12. "Mimicking the segregationist Democrats of the past," according to columnist E. J. Dionne, "Republicans have of late used the unfounded specter of voter fraud to justify voter ID laws and other measures squarely aimed at impeding access to the ballot box by blacks and the young." See also: Dionne, E. J. (2019, February 27). Republican Party has come to a crossroads. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Keen, J. (1995, September 15). The heart of Keyes' message: Responsibility. *USA Today*, 7A. Black Republicans, like economist Thomas Sowell, make the unsupportive claim that "congressional democrats really do practice the same *kind* of ethnic politics that resulted in the *Rwandan* genocide and the Sri Lankan civil war, even if they do not practice them to the same extent." *What Rubbish*. Democrats in congress (today) haven't advocated killing anyone. See also: Williamson, K. D. (2011, December). Thomas Sowell: Peerless Nerd. *Commentary*, 45.
- King, J. (2005, May 13). 'Party of Lincoln' wants blacks back. *USA Today*, 11A & 19A. Unfortunately, black Republicans seem to ignore the extreme factions of the Republican Party in our political culture, as if it doesn't matter, or fit with their mistaken beliefs. So what are their political influences in trying circumstances?
- Krugman, P. (2006, December 31). Republicans won't let voters, facts get in the way of their revolution. *Las Vegas Sun*, 5.
- Krugman, P. (2019, January 1). Bad faith, pathos and GOP economics. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3. According to economist Paul Krugman, "Republicans never actually cared about debt; they just pretended to be deficit hawks as a way to hamstring [Democratic] President Barack Obama's agenda." See also: Krugman, P. (2019, February 14). Debt double standard hamstring Democrats. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Labash, M. (2006, October). The Black Republicans. *Esquire Magazine*, 208. We must keep in mind that there is no empirical evidence that the "hard-right" philosophy of the Republican Party today has benefited *any* poor person of color. This knowledge should be cringe-worthy for *any* young, black person contemplating joining the Republican Party. Black Republicans don't like the name-calling, even if there is a semblance of truth in what critics say about them. Moreover, they don't like any criticism of a Republican, in whatever field of endeavor. Unfortunately, some black conservative Republicans are also seen, or "regarded as inauthentic, self-loathing, [and] soulless race traitors." See also: Williamson, K. D. (2011, December). Thomas Sowell: Peerless Nerd. *Commentary*, 46. But we must also note that it is a myth that there is real political power in being a Republican for African Americans.

- Lambus, G. O. (2005, July 18). Retzer wrong for Tanzania service. *The Clarion-Ledger*, 6A. We should keep in mind that, “Some white [Republican] conservatives... seem convinced that you can’t be racist if you have an affectionate relationship with a person of color.” See also: Goldberg, M. (2019, March 5). Racing to the bottom in the Republican Party. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3. No doubt, “there’s been a *schism* on the left between those who argue that class and economic equality should be the dominant *prism* for social and political reformers and those who say that race and identity should be the primary consideration.” *Las Vegas Review Journal* (2019, February 24), 1E.
- Lester, W. (2005, May 25). Party taking blacks lightly, Dean says. *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 19A. It is inconceivable now that blacks will become Republicans any time soon. And this reality, or subject matter is really the news.
- Lester, W. (2019, February 17). Carter campaign strategist Caddell dies at age 68. *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 5B.
- Mazero, M. (2018, January 22). Kansas Provides Compelling Evidence of Failure of “Supply-Side” Tax Cuts. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, 1. <https://www.cbpp.org/.../kansas.../2/16/19>. It should be understood that although Republicans consider themselves as economically conservative and fiscally responsible, they are really not. In other words, there is no real evidence to prove their claims today.
- Mean, M. (2005, March 10). Democrats, Republicans just can’t get along these days. *Las Vegas Sun*, 25A. According to journalist Margaret Talev, “Republicans say the Democrats have kept them out of the loop..., making them skeptical of Democrats’ promise of a new era of bipartisanship.” See also: Talev, M. (2006, December 31). Democrats have ambitious agenda. *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 12A. This is a preposterous argument for our future, because our two main political parties are still competing against one another for black voters. And it is overwhelmingly unlikely that the Democratic Party or Republican Party will suspend their rivalry.
- Neff, E. (2004, September 25). Boggs McDonald play race card, draws democrats’ fire. *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 1A. Despite what’s been said about the Democratic Party, it “is perceived by blacks and others as being more welcoming to and supportive of blacks, although it has been criticized for taking black voters for granted in past elections.” Moreover, “the nomination and election of Barack Obama have reinforced the view of the Democrats as being more amenable and open to blacks.” See also: McClain, D. & Tauber, S. C. (2020). *American Government in Black and Whites: Diversity and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Page, C. (2005, March 9). Blacks seeing GOP differently. *Las Vegas Sun*, 14A. According to political scientists McClain and Tauber, “On issues of race, the current Republican Party is viewed by blacks and other individuals as hostile to blacks and other non-white groups, and the party has had a tortured history with race throughout most of the twentieth century.” See also: McClain, P. D. & Tauber, S. C. (2020). *American Government in Black and White: Diversity and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press. Bear in mind that “since the 1980s,” the Republican Party has become “more conservative in outlook,” with an “Interventionist foreign policy stance,” while “advocating for limited central government,” and the so-called “protection of states’ rights.” See also: Crystal, D. (ed.). (1994). *Republican Party. The Cambridge Encyclopedia* (2nd ed., p. 933). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rake, L. (2004a, October 1). Commissioner apologizes to black group for comments. *Las Vegas Sun*, 1B & 2B.
- Rake, L. (2004b, September 24). Boggs McDonald’s remark angers blacks. *Las Vegas Sun*, 1B.
- RNC pulls *ad* in Tenn. amid racism charges. (2006, October 27). *USA Today*, 8A. Because of such despicable election antics and racist tactics, columnist Clarence Page tells us that it “remains to be seen” if “Republicans can change black or Hispanic minds” about the Republican Party. See also: Page, C. (2014, August 1). Can GOP ‘ideas’ lure minorities back in ’14? *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Robinson, E. (2017, June 14). As experience in Kansas has shown, Trump/GOP plan will cause pain. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Rozman, S. (2005, July 21). Dems must not give up on issues. *The Clarion-Ledger*, 8A. Democrats are progressive today, whereas Republicans are all about maintaining the status quo, while mostly rejecting the idea of political compromise. So is this why black Democrats are not switching to the Republican Party – to so-called get ahead?

- Setmayer, T. (2006, November). Liberals' relationship with blacks is like a bad marriage. *Ebony Magazine*, 183. However, it should be noted here that "Democratic lawmakers say their "big tent" party must embrace varying degrees of liberal ideology to match the House [of Representative] districts they hope to represent." See also: Cochrane, E. (2019, February 24). Liberal Group Is Seeking Its Next Ocasio-Cortez (Or two, Or Five, Or Ten). *The New York Time*, 15. We must keep in mind that black Republicans aren't pulling any financial strings in the Republican Party, all things considering. Some might also argue that black Republicans are essentially *powerless*, because of a lack of inclusion in the power circles of the Republican Party.
- Sowell, T. (2004, August 30-September 5). Relieving the democrat stranglehold on the black vote. *The Washington Times*, National Weekly Edition, 33.
- Sowell, T. (2005, May 26). Black voters must be kept frightened. *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 9B. Some black Republicans are even calling "on black people to escape from the country's [so-called] liberal ideology." However, "according to some polls, 92 percent of black voters... are overwhelmingly democrats," and disapprove of the current Republican administration in the White House. See also: Shear, M. D. (2019, March 9). Trump's black supporters: Inside a small, divided world. *Las Vegas Sun*, 1.
- Stevens, M. A. (ed.). (2000a). Dixie Crat. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Encyclopedia* (p. 475). Massachusetts: Merriam Webster, Inc. The Republican Party "as a whole has abandoned the embrace of civil rights and voting rights that had been, from the Lincoln era to Rockefeller's time, the GOP's calling card." See also: Dionne, E. J. (2019, February 27). Republican Party has come to a crossroads. *Las Vegas Sun*, 3.
- Stevens, M. A. (ed.). (2000b). Reagan, Ronald W. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Encyclopedia* (p. 1352). Massachusetts: Merriam Webster, Inc.
- Stevens, M. A. (ed.). (2000c). Republican Party or GOP (Grand Old Party). *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Encyclopedia* (p. 453). Massachusetts: Merriam Webster, Inc.
- Stewart, J. (2005, April 28). Rasta Republican. *Wall Street Journal*, A19.
- Toner, R. & Hulse, C. (2005, April 11). Democrats are turning to Gingrich's playbook. *Las Vegas Sun*, 9A. It should be noted here that the Republican Party was soundly defeated in the 2018 midterm Congressional elections by the Democratic Party.
- White, J. (2014, July 12). Allen West: Not Lazy, Just crazy-Like a Fox. *The Root*, 6. <http://www.theroot.com/article/culture/2012/04....>
- Wickham, D. (2005, June 14). Democrats, don't put muzzle on Dean. *USA Today*, 11A.
- Will, G. (2006, July 24). Swann swims upstream in governor's race. *Las Vegas Sun*, 5. See also: Kinnon, J. B. (2006, November). The New Black Power (Election 2006). *Ebony Magazine*, 165.
- Will, G. (2007, May 31). Conservatism is a much better route for Americans to take. *Las Vegas Sun*, 5. Black Republicans favor policies that identify with the dignity of work. This is a good thing. But black Democrats also believe in the same thing (about hard work). So is this one of the major things the two political parties want to think about? Probably not.
- York, B. (2006, November 9). Ford, Driven: Harold Ford, Jr. goes against a Corker of a candidate in Tennessee. *National Review*, 30 & 60. Also see: Lawrence, J. (2005, December 23). Family legacy cuts both ways for candidate. *USA Today*, 8A.

Biographical Sketch

EARNEST N. BRACEY is a retired Army Lieutenant Colonel, with over twenty years of active military service. He was commissioned through Reserve Officer Training (*Distinguished Military Graduate*) at Jackson State University, where he graduated with honors (*Magna Cum Laude*), and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in political science in 1974. In addition, he received the Masters of Public Administration in 1979 from Golden Gate University, his Masters of Arts degree in International Affairs in 1983 from the Catholic University of America, his Masters of Business Administration in 2009 from California Coast University, and his doctorate of Public Administration (with emphasis in Public Policy) in 1993 from George Mason University. Dr. Bracey also earned his Ph.D. in Education from Capella University in 1999.

A recipient of numerous military awards and civilian honors, he is also a graduate of the United States Naval War College and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and previously served as Director of Administration at the prestigious Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington, D.C. He was also recognized as Who's Who Among America's Teachers in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

Dr. Bracey is professor of political science, and currently teaches American Politics and Black American History at the College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas. He was formerly Chair and Professor of Political Science at Jackson State University and Chairperson of the Political Science and History Department at Hampton University. He serves as an editorial board-member for the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly. His work has appeared in professional journals and other publications, and he is the author of the books, *Prophetic Insights: The Higher Education and Pedagogy of African Americans*, University Press of America, 1999, *On Racism: Essays On Black Popular Culture, African American Politics, and the New Black Aesthetics*, University Press of America, 2003, *Daniel "Chappie" James: The First African American Four Star General*, McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003, *Places in Political Time: Voices From the Black Diaspora*, University Press of America, 2005, and *The Moulin Rouge and Black Rights in Las Vegas*, McFarland & Company, Inc., 2009. He also co-authored the book, *American Politics and Culture Wars* (2001). He is also the author of the novels, *Choson* (1994) and *The Black Samurai* (1998), and the book of short stories, *Requiems for Black Folks*, 2002.