

Really: Stop Making Sense

Written by Alex Baer

Saturday, 25 February 2012 11:52

Stop making sense with Republicans: Studies are showing you're just wasting your time, trying to be reasonable with this group of humanoids in our family, all the while hoping facts will illuminate the path, facts will help turn the corner, facts will help reveal the righteous path we all need to walk.

Ain't gonna happen. Clouds won't be parting, there will be no shafts of penetrating sunlight appearing on non-fact-believer foreheads, no sudden appearance of brightening light bulbs overhead, no swirls of St. Elmo's Fire ambling through to expose Republican minds to instantaneous and thunderstruck activation.

Save your breath, save your time, save your mind: All of them are terrible to waste.

Here's the reason: Reason does not even one lick of good in swaying Republicans to your logical way of thinking. You might as well be sputtering in Sumerian, muttering in Macedonian, babbling away in Babylonian.

It all boils down to a seeming attack of, well, zombies -- feel free to say, "*Aha! I knew it all along!*" as much as you like, and until you feel better.

The zombies in this case are "smart idiots," as mentioned in the superb article noted below. If you have time for only one more article in the next hour or day, or this week or year, this is the one to go to. *Seriously.* ☐ *This is not said lightly, you know.*

The article below will amply reward your miniscule investment in reading time with savings of years in wasted time, and saved brain cells, and aggravation never created. If you are *really* short on time, stop reading this piece here, and go read the one noted below, right away. *Not kidding.* ☐ *Won't be offended.* ☐ *Scout's honor.*

"Smart idiots" refers to an unusual and unlikely phenomenon: Politically sophisticated or

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knowledgeable people are often more biased and less able to be persuaded in other views than those who are ignorant.

This, of course, defies logic. Which, of course, is exactly the point. Republicans defy logic, and they will continue to defy your efforts to educate them with facts. You will only bloody your head that way, and the cold, dead, stone wall of zombie logic will not budge a micron.

As Chris Mooney notes in his excellent article, "It's a reality that generates endless frustration for many scientists -- and indeed, for many well-educated, reasonable people."

More education, in short, does not bring a higher response to facts -- it does just the opposite, makes Republicans more dismissive of facts and information that come their way. Tea Party members were the worst offenders overall, carrying with them special, twin catastrophes and cataclysms: ignorance fueled and emphasized by the self-delusional belief they are really "very well informed," as the article mentions.

The trends hold up in scientific fact, and in nonscientific realms of contested facts, too: *Obama's birth certificate, or, death panels, anyone?*

The more information Republicans knew, the more dismissive of information and facts they became. Now, *there's* an unhelpful evolutionary curve-ball, wouldn't you say?

Liberals, by the way, tracked as being open-minded sorts drawn to the facts, willing to discuss them, wanting to show them around -- perhaps, as a guess, to reach a reasonable consensus, one based on the facts of any matter, rational brokers to the bitter end.

The typical "hierarchical individualist" -- now, there's a featherbed landing as naming conventions go -- does not become more open to facts with more education. There is an ancient joke, supplied now as the fit is spectacular: *Republicans have already made up their minds -- don't confuse them with the facts!*

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Fox is in the Republican henhouse of thinking, too of course, informing Republicans what they should be thinking on any particular matter. *Fact-free teevee -- whew, what a relief!*

Speculations elsewhere have suggested Republicans see life as a team sport, as a series of attempts to win, trying every possible twisted rarity in the book, marching lockstep, arms linked -- while Democrats wander around in occasional and informal huddles, seeking consensus on the correct nuance of play, eventually, maybe, some day.

It's enough to make you wonder: Is life just some unending junior-high hell of Muscle-headed Jocks versus Brainiac-boxed Geeks? Does this all just keep getting re-hashed and re-translated into Haves and Have Nots, to the Bosses and Workers, the Big Shots and Little People? Doesn't it always seem to come down, in the end, to the same sort of inscrutable expression of two camps of Yin and Yang?

As liberals, we have a penchant for the facts. Now, we need to sincerely face them, accept them, and begin to embrace them.

"Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please." □ - Mark Twain

The Republican Brain: □ Why Even Educated Conservatives Deny Science -- and Reality

http://www.alternet.org/teaparty/154252/The_Republican_Brain%3A_Why_Even_Educated_Conservatives_Deny_Science_--_and_Reality/?page=1

Chris Mooney's new book is due out in April.

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