

Checkmate within the Margin of Error

Written by Bruce Enberg

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Obama has said his position on Marriage Equality has been evolving, probably not. Public opinion however, has been evolving, as have the demographics. The old, rigid, fearful of gays, generation of voters has been dying off. They're being replaced by a generation that began voting right after Y2K. Remember the computer panic by that name? It was a real threat, and not just a hoax, but not the end of the world the way the same people who have lately been selling gold made it out to be. (BTW, gold dropped under \$1600/oz today, it could be on the way down to \$700)

Computers have come along way since Y2K, and they know what you think, literally. Maybe better than you do. Obama's campaign planners are using computer power that is running algorithms on data sets that were unimagined back when we worried that the year turning over zero would crash the entire world. All the small but trackable moves that Obama's people have made over the past couple of weeks, and the predictable but also trackable moves that Republicans made in response, gave them the numbers they wanted to see.

I know it sounds like voodoo, but it really does work. The computers have a pretty good idea within the margin of error (of course) exactly how many votes are to be gained and lost by the President's announcement, right down to the city block. They know how many people will be motivated to go out to knock on doors and how big their donations will be. They also know how many Republicans will be affected, as more and more them discover that their own families are rife with gay folk. Just how much does it affect them having a candidate they really don't like to begin with reflexively behaving like a 19th century bigot.

This whole individual rights thing could even brings Libertarian voters into play. Soundly rejected on all points by the Republicans, they might, or might not vote for Obama (you'd have to ask the Big Computer in Chicago). But, you can bet their potential support for Romney is diminished still further.

Obama making a move on equality this early in the year also gives the far right Republican candidates an advantage in the primaries. If they beat more moderate Republicans (it's a relative term), it gives an opening for Democrats in the fall who will be facing off against Republican Taliban candidates.

In case this all seems familiar, Obama worked the very same number on Republicans over

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women's privacy issues, forcing them to respond to him in a way he could control. This is where I could use the comparison between chess and checkers. Chess is child's play for computers. The Republicans have the advantage with billionaires pushing their message, controlling the news feeds and such. The Republicans have the muscle, and their own strength is defeating them. Obama's people have become skilled at getting the Republicans to promote Obama's message. All they have to do is get the Republicans to reveal who they (the Republicans) really are in a way that enough people will pay attention to.

The Millennium generation is the largest demographic, even out numbering baby boomers. They are probably the most socially and politically engaged generation since the Progressives of a hundred years ago. Obama is successfully portraying himself as the 21st century candidate they want to support, and the Republicans' reflexive response to Obama's moves betray themselves as being from 19th century and the enemies of everything the Millennials care about. I'll use the old chess analogy anyway, the Republicans will checkmate themselves.

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