

## Why are all the tea-partiers republicans?

ON POLITICS



I want to ask you a possibly silly question; why are all of the Tea Partiers *de facto* Republicans? The tea partiers strongly favor shrinking the size of the federal government and reducing the federal deficit. They generally favor fiscal responsibility and oppose most federal intervention ... but the Republicans, as a part of the bureaucracy any way you put it. Furthermore, in states like Alaska and Florida, Tea Partiers won Republican Senate primaries only to be challenged (or possibly challenged) by former Republican moderates that have been shunned by the party. I have been pondering this for a while. If the Tea Partiers possess all of these extreme views, why do they all seem to operate on the fringe of the Republican Party instead of forming their own distinct party?

Discount the obvious frustration with the Democratic agenda over the past nineteen months and I think I have a point. History tells us that Republicans are responsible not only for the biggest federal deficits in history but also for eight years of federal government expansion. Did they just happen to forget George W. Bush's two wars, unpaid for handouts, and undisciplined tax cuts? It seems to me that everything the Obama Administration has done while in office from the outset has been in the name of reducing the federal deficit. While Obama's major pieces of legislation may seem like federal over-reaching, they are all targeted at growing the private sector and reducing the deficit in the long run. Are the Tea Partiers too blind to see the upside?

Consider the Recovery Act, healthcare, and consumer financial protection. All of these pieces of legislation, whether they were popular or not, are in the name of reducing the long term deficit, a trait that should endear them to the Tea Partiers. The stimulus

plan, tax credits included, was all meant to stimulate, strengthen, and grow the private sector, and loosen up the credit market all to benefit American industry; from big conglomerates to small businessmen like shrimpers on the Gulf Coast. Healthcare reform is another tool that was mischaracterized by an uncompromising Republican opposition. If enacted fully, new policies will bend the cost curve of healthcare to make it cheaper for not just employers but for the system at large, thereby removing the burden from taxpayers. The inherent goal remains to remove a burden from small business owners who could not hire more workers. Finally, consumer financial protection reform is intended to regulate the industry that played such a large role in the build up to the Great Recession of 2008 and the financial collapse. These are not examples of government overreach; these are examples of the government acting responsibly despite overwhelmingly misguided opposition.

Finally, the Republicans nearly unanimously opposed the recent passage of the Pay-Go laws that existed under President Clinton but were repealed under President George W. Bush. The Pay-Go law ensures that all new legislation and federal programs must be paid for by offsetting tax cuts or raising revenue. The rule, signed back into law by President Obama, was designed with the intention of controlling the federal budget deficit. This ensures that we do not sell the future of our children to the foreign countries that lend money and capital to the United States.

Ultimately, the ridiculous partisan opposition to the President's pragmatic solutions has caused even Senators like George Voinovich (R-OH) to oppose the GOP gridlock. The government needs to function and if we allow it to do so, we will be doing ourselves a big favor. The President's agenda for change should be implemented, and in the process, will do everything that the Tea Partiers of 2010 want from their leaders.

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## Respect isn't a partisan issue

KENNETH LANDERS  
Guest Contributor

It's a classic case of liberal media bias, another story that has been turned into a partisan issue that news networks like to use to boost ratings. The story is the proposed mosque in Lower Manhattan, just across the street from Ground Zero. CNN flashes pictures of angry protesters; the network's captions read "anti-Islamic center activist" and "Pro-mosque activist." On the air, liberal pundits lecture us about accepting the Islamic faith and respecting the First Amendment. But what really is at issue here? Is this a matter of constitutional law or mere respect for some 3,000 civilians that perished as a result of terrorism?

When we cut through the political polarization that today's media seems to love we learn that this is not an issue of politics, law, or public policy, but of historical reflection and, most importantly, remembrance of those who perished on 9/11. The liberal media seems convinced that any campaign against this proposed mosque is evidence of hatred against Islam. But a careful review of some easily accessible poll numbers proves this theory is absurd. In a poll conducted by Quinnipiac University, 71 percent of New York State voters agreed, "because of the opposition of Ground Zero relatives, the Muslim group should voluntarily build the mosque somewhere else." I see no evidence here of hatred, and I'm willing to bet that many of the producers at the major news networks could draw the same conclusion if they reported the news rather than using to the news to inflame the public. But what about public opinion at the national level? Not surprisingly the rest of Americans share the same sentiments as most New Yorkers. A national poll conducted by CBS found that 71 percent of Americans find it inappropriate to erect a mosque so close to Ground Zero. At the same time, 67 percent admitted that the developers do have the right to build a mosque near Ground Zero. Again, where is the hatred? It is clear that most Americans do not hold

a hatred for the Islamic faith and that opponents are probably not as ignorant as the media would have us believe. This turns the issue into something else, a question of respect for the lives lost on September 11. Let's put politics and the Constitution aside for a moment and consider the proposal as human beings. It is not hateful or ignorant to say that the September 11 attacks were carried out in the name of Allah—it is a statement of fact. It is also not incorrect to say that very small sects of the Islamic faith consist of radicals who have twisted a holy text to carry out acts of violence in the name of God. It seems quite understandable then why the families of victims of the 9/11 attacks would oppose the erection of a religious institution where some—and I place great emphasis on this word—of the followers support the actions of the 19 terrorist who killed 2,996 Americans. Most of these people do not hate Islam, and they are not looking to stir up political waters. The protesters CNN likes to label "anti-Islamic center activists" are really citizens concerned with the way a historically precious region is being redeveloped. Sadly, it may be true that some of the protesters on the streets of Lower Manhattan do hold a sense of hatred for the Islamic faith, and perhaps it is also true that that hatred is derived from ignorance; however, this portion of the population is probably proportionally equivalent to the Muslim population that praises violence in the name of Allah. Our friends in the media scold us for making generalizations about Muslims, only to be guilty of the same fault when they label the opponents of the mosque as ignorant hate mongers.

New Yorkers—and perhaps Americans as a whole—are looking for the respect that their lost loved ones deserve. Relocating the site of the Mosque is not a request that stems from hatred or ignorance. It stems from the pain and suffering that American families have endured for nearly ten years without their loved ones.

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## After M.A.W.: thinking diversity

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Guest Contributor

Davidson College has made a very conscious and deliberate effort to make its student body more diverse. Even though I agree with this goal, I find myself wondering what the words "diverse" and "multicultural" mean, and how I, a Chinese American, fit into the model of diversity.

This past week, I listened to another female student talk about what she considered to be a failed Multicultural Awareness Week. She was visibly upset, vocalizing her disappointment in the lack of student support at the planned events. She went on about how the planning committee had brought speakers to campus whose discussion topics ranged from poverty in Charlotte to Autism. "Multicultural does not just mean race," she said adamantly.

Does multicultural at Davidson mean more than just race? Does it mean increasing its number of ethnic minority students? Or does it mean the opening of the new Multicultural House? Or, does the term apply to just racial ethnicity or other factors such as poverty and mental disabilities?

I have absolutely no idea. For me, the word "multicultural" is associated with racial ethnicities. Is that what caused the lack of support for this year's Multicultural Week? Or, perhaps our predominantly white campus thought they were intruding on what was to be an event only for ethnic minorities.

Even though groups like the BSC (Black Student Coalition) and ACAA (Asian Cultural Awareness Association) are open to people other than the minority described in their titles, it doesn't necessarily seem that way. The groups are still mostly, and sometimes exclusively, made up of those minorities.

I'm not criticizing the divide between these ethnic minority groups and the rest of campus, nor am I criticizing the desire to have those groups in the first place. These groups can be great for students who want or need it, and perhaps it really does ease the transition into a predominantly white and southern school. I made the conscious decision not to be in the ACAA, thinking that I didn't need a group centered on Asian tradition and heritage and that the friends I made here would accept all of me. They did; they accept all of my "Chinglish" phrases on a day-to-day basis and celebrate big Chinese holidays like the Lunar New Year with me.

Yet even with their acceptance of me and my acceptance of myself as a Chinese American, I am reminded frequently that I am not part of the majority on campus. There's an ethnic minority reserves email list, and emails about events deemed "multicultural" arrive in my inbox. It reminds me of those events on campus, but it also makes me feel separated from the majority of the student body. It even makes me unwilling to attend those events because I feel singled out. My friends don't get those emails, but I do. They don't get the personalized reminder, but who says that they don't care about those events more than I do?

Davidson's student body is diverse. Personally, I prefer "diverse" to "multicultural" because it doesn't have those racial undertones for me when I hear it. Diverse, to me, means that every student here is unique, that the admissions office accepted him or her for a very specific reason, and that we create a community, despite coming from different backgrounds with varying opinions. My Chinese heritage adds to my uniqueness, but it doesn't define me. I'm a part of Davidson's diverse community, just like each and every other student on campus.

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