

October 22, 2014

Time for an issue on the upcoming election. [John Fund](#) posts on what surprises might be in store.

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So who will the surprise winners be this November? The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is suddenly pumping \$1 million into South Dakota's Senate race, now that a new poll this week shows a genuine three-way race as support for the favorite, former GOP governor Mike Rounds, fades. ...

A few items here from [Jennifer Rubin](#). First she posts on the electoral nightmare the Ebola crisis has become.

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To say that Ebola coverage has crowded out other news is an understatement. (Who is in the World Series?) People normally unaware of politics are becoming experts in CDC protocols and second-guessing the president's moves. And this phenomenon is already beginning to wreak havoc on the embattled president and his fellow Democrats in ways large and small. ...

[Jennifer Rubin](#) says the distinguished pol of the week was Cory Gardner in Colorado. ... *Rep. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) has run a smart campaign, outfoxing his opponent's war on women tripe by supporting over-the-counter birth control pills. He has snagged the endorsement of the Denver Post. And to top it off he demolished a false hit piece that claimed he had never played football in high school. As of this writing, he's pulling ahead of incumbent Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) by a few points, and in most recent polling has kept the gap between him and Udall among women to single digits, practically unheard of these days for a Republican. ...*

And [Rubin](#) also has posted on Tina Brown's comments yesterday.

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Brown, however, is only partially right when she says Republicans are not offering much. In some cases, that is true. The anti-government right-wingers sound hysterical or angry or both, which is hardly comforting. As Mona Charen writes: "Republicans should not fear women voters. They are not an army of Sandra Fluke shock troops. They are repelled by perceived extremism, and they are interested in whether a candidate can improve daily life."

Hmm, that sounds a lot like reform conservatism — a thoughtful alternative to the liberal welfare state that is based on conservative values but applied to current problems. ...

For a treat we have Matthew Continetti and Noemie Emery on the gaffs of the Dem candidates. [Continetti](#) pivots off George Allen's "macaca" slur delivered during his losing 2006 campaign.

Something peculiar has happened. As I write, none of the Republican candidates for Senate has become a public embarrassment. On the contrary: For the first time in a decade, it is the Democratic candidates, not the Republican ones, who are fodder for late-night comics. That the Democrats are committing gaffes and causing scandals at a higher rate than Republicans not only may be decisive in the battle for the Senate. It could signal a change in our politics at large.

Yes, at any given moment, one of the Republican candidates could say something stupid, could be revealed to be unethical, could act like an idiot. These are human beings we are talking about. There is a little more than two weeks to go before Election Day—plenty of time for Republicans to screw it up. But the fact that the GOP field has come so far without committing unforced errors is news in itself.

Since 2006, when Republican Senator George Allen of Virginia referred to an Indian-American Democratic tracker as “Macaca,” GOP candidates have found ways to provoke, to offend, to annoy, to spawn unpleasant narratives, to let themselves become the story. In 2014, though, the Macaca moments aren’t coming from Republicans. They are coming from Democrats. ...

[Noemie Emery](#) uses Todd Akin as her GOP idiot.

For two years, Republicans have been haunted by Todd Akin syndrome, in which a spectacular gaffe in an abortion-themed context becomes a costly embarrassment to a candidate’s party. And they were right. But the good news for them is that the bug is contagious. Democrats have lately been showing its symptoms, proving no one is immune. ...

... Strike two is working itself out in the midterm elections, when the Democrats put all of their eggs in the birth-control basket, insisting that nuns subsidize contraception and that any restrictions at all on abortion mean war. They targeted Senate candidates Joni Ernst in Iowa and Cory Gardner in Colorado, with the happy result that both are now leading, quickly closing the gender gap among women. Last Friday, the liberal Denver Post rocked the political world by [endorsing Gardner](#) over the man called "Mark Uterus" because of his single-minded obsession. "[Sen. Mark] Udall is trying to frighten voters rather than inspire them," said the paper, correctly. "His obnoxious one-issue campaign is an insult to those he seeks to convince." ...

[Joel Kotkin](#) writes on the inherent contradictions in the Dem coalition.

... now many on the political left are openly critical of the president, notably for his close ties to the moguls of Wall Street and Silicon Valley. These moguls have been the predominant beneficiaries of his economic policies while middle-class incomes have continued to languish – and even fall.

This disenchantment can be seen among many professional progressives and their allies in the associated media. Michael Moore, for example, recently suggested that in the future Obama would be remembered simply for being the nation's "first black president." This disenchantment is also spreading to the Left's grass-roots, with the president's favorability ratings dropping even in such progressive bastions as New York and California. ...

... the overall Obamaism has redefined the Democrats from a broad national party to one that is essentially bicoastal, and urban.

Nowhere is this shift more evident than in energy policy. Tough controls on carbon emissions appeal to the well-educated urban liberals, mainstream media, entertainment and downtown real estate developers who are their main funders – all primary funding sources.

But this approach undermines support for the party in energy producing areas such as West Virginia, Louisiana, the Dakotas and Texas as well as those industrial states, such as Indiana, that rely heavily on coal and other fossil fuels.

In the new Democratic calculus, greens, wealthy venture capitalists, Hollywood producers feminists and ethnic warlords matter much more than coal miners, factory or construction workers.

National Review

Next Month's Upsets

Every election year has them. Which races this year might surprise us?

by John Fund

Every election has its surprises — candidates come out of seeming nowhere to score upsets. Think the stunning loss of Eric Cantor, the House majority leader, in his GOP primary in Virginia.

So who will the surprise winners be this November? The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is suddenly pumping \$1 million into South Dakota's Senate race, now that a new poll this week shows a genuine three-way race as support for the favorite, former GOP governor Mike Rounds, fades.

In New Mexico, Democratic incumbent senator Tom Udall appears safe, though polls show him weakening amid signs that Democratic voter turnout will be down. GOP incumbent governor Susana Martinez is heading for a blowout victory over an opponent, Gary King, who accused her of "not having a Latina heart" during a recent appearance. "Landslide reelection races for governor produce low turnout," Harrison Schmitt, a former Republic senator from New Mexico, once told me. That (plus Obama's 38 percent approval rating) gives Udall's opponent, businessman Allen Weh, a chance to pull an upset — especially if he pulls money out of his own wallet for last-minute ads.

What other races could surprise? Out of a group of about 20 possibilities, I've picked three below. The decision was based as much on their possible lessons or significance for the future as on their "wow" factor.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Not a single Republican currently represents any of the six New England states in the House. Marilinda Garcia, a 31-year-old state representative from New Hampshire, aims to change that. She is running a plucky campaign against Democratic freshman Annie Kuster, who is almost twice her age. Kuster won her first term in 2012, 50 to 45 percent, on the strength of Barack Obama's coattails. Running for reelection, she has decided to hide her liberal voting record. She has declined to hold a single town-hall meeting, agreed to only two debates, and has stored up \$1 million in cash for attack ads against Garcia — almost all of them focused on abortion and social issues.

Garcia, who is pro-life, told me that it is nonetheless frustrating to be outspent 4 to 1 on television over an issue that is involved in less than 2 percent of the roll-call votes that Kuster casts in Congress. "She wants that to be the entire campaign," Garcia said, "while I travel every day and talk to small-business owners who have to drop health-care coverage due to Obamacare or have to buy a brand-new tractor to comply with a very small EPA regulatory change."

Garcia, an accomplished harp player who has also earned a master's degree from Harvard's Kennedy School, would be the freshest face possible for the Republican party. Despite her smaller campaign budget, she is making an impact. Who is ahead pretty much depends on which of two statewide independent polls you give most credence to. The poll run by WMUR-TV and the University of New Hampshire this week has Garcia leading 41 to 37 percent. But the survey published at the same time by New England College gives Kuster a 50–38 percent edge. Much of the difference can be explained by different interpretations of just who will actually vote. What is certain is that Kuster's campaign is suddenly acting as if the race has closed. Her campaign manager sent out a statement this week saying that her lead had been "erased" and that the race was "a pure toss up."

HAWAII

Hawaii is perhaps the most Democratic of all the states. Barack Obama won 71 percent of the vote there in 2012, and only one Republican serves in the 25-member state senate. But a three-way race for governor presents the GOP with an opportunity. Democrat David Ige defeated unpopular governor Neil Abercrombie in the Democratic primary this year, but he has struggled to separate himself from Abercrombie's record of tax hikes and service cutbacks.

Republican Duke Aiona served two terms as lieutenant governor of Hawaii under Linda Lingle, who was only the second Republican ever elected the state's chief executive since statehood in 1959. Aiona lost to Abercrombie by a 3-to-2 ratio in 2010, but since then his criticisms of state government have gained credibility. The latest *RealClearPolitics* average of polls shows Ige with 40 percent, Aiona with 38, and 9 going to Mufi Hannemann, a former Honolulu mayor running as an independent.

Aiona is certainly a moderate Republican, but he has released compelling position papers spelling out how he would right the state's financial boat without raising taxes as well as address the state's burgeoning homeless problem — the worst in the nation, by some measures.

NEBRASKA

Republican Lee Terry was elected to the House from Omaha in 1998 to a seat once held by Howard Buffett, the father of uber-investor Warren Buffett. But Terry won in part on the strength of his pledge to serve only three consecutive terms in Congress. But only five months after winning election, he changed his mind on the term limit, saying he could better serve his constituents without it.

Ever since, a sizable chunk of his district's independent voters have looked at him askance. In 2012, Terry won reelection with only 51 percent of the vote, even as Mitt Romney carried his district with 53 percent.

Since then, Terry has moved leftward in his composite conservative rating by *National Journal*, falling from 77 percent in 2011 to only 58 percent in 2013. That led him to underperform over a poorly financed GOP challenger in this year's primary.

Although his seat was rated "likely Republican" by various pundits for much of the summer, Terry has seen the gap between him and Democratic state senator Brad Ashford consistently close. An upset may be in the making.

Right Turn

[Ebola crisis becomes an electoral nightmare](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

The Ebola crisis — the outbreak, the halting response, the lack of federal credibility, the anxiety, the media coverage of the panic and every permutation thereof — comes at an inopportune time for the Obama administration, which had not gotten over the Secret Service scandal nor demonstrated that it had a cohesive plan for destroying the Islamic State.

To say that Ebola coverage has crowded out other news is an understatement. (Who is in the World Series?) People normally unaware of politics are becoming experts in CDC protocols and second-guessing the president's moves. And this phenomenon is already beginning to wreak havoc on the embattled president and his fellow Democrats in ways large and small.

If you are an incumbent behind in a Senate or House race, you'll need a whole lot of luck to catch up. In a reversal of Hurricane Sandy, which froze campaigning and allowed the president to appear presidential (remember those days?), the current crisis and the enormous media cloud that hangs over it leave Democratic incumbents at a huge disadvantage, both halting any comebacks and reinforcing their connections to an inept administration. This may be the most nationalized midterm election in history, as individual races simply become arenas in which to debate just how badly the president has performed. It is certainly not going to be easy to introduce any new themes or drop that oppo research squirreled away for the sprint to the finish. Now we are looking at a race squarely about broken and incompetent government — in other words, incumbents' worst nightmare.

Obama obviously was already weighing down those Democrats who have dutifully and reflexively supported him since he was elected. The current emergency is helping to put the nail in the coffin

of the liberal welfare state, which already was on life support. There is nothing like gross, repetitive incompetence and lack of honesty to turn people off of big government. The only ads here on out with Obama and the Democratic candidate will be GOP ads.

The Ebola crisis's electoral implications were evident in the hearing on Thursday, when Democrats and Republicans alike grilled the head of the CDC. You can expect that the list of items that [Rep. Tim Murphy \(R-Pa.\)](#) came up with is going to get a whole lot of Democratic support — and raise more questions about why a Pennsylvania congressman seems more on top of this and more aggressive than the federal government. [Common-sense suggestions included:](#)

1. An immediate ban on nonessential commercial travel from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone;
2. A mandatory 21-day quarantine order for any American who has treated an Ebola patient, or has traveled to and returned from, the Ebola hot zone countries. This includes a prohibition of domestic public travel regardless of assumptions that the treating professionals wore or removed all personal protective equipment properly;
3. Immediate and thorough training for U.S. health-care and hospital workers on how to wear, use and remove personal protective equipment in the treatment of a possible Ebola-infected patient;
4. Identify and designate specific medical centers equipped and trained to treat potential Ebola patients;
5. Identify gaps in statutory language preventing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other federal agencies, including Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health, from taking more aggressive and immediate action to protect the public from Ebola;
6. Accelerate directives on development and deployment of clinical trials for all promising Ebola vaccines, investigational drugs and diagnostic tests;
7. Acquisition of additional airplanes and vehicles capable of transporting American medical and military personnel who may have contracted Ebola back to the United States for treatment;
8. Additional contact tracing and testing resources for public health agencies;
9. Provide information to Congress regarding any resources needed to assist on health interventions in Africa to aggressively stop Ebola.

Even those initially skeptical of a travel ban should, in order to limit the number of potential Ebola virus carriers and to tamp down on panic, favor the administration's cutting off nonessential travel from Ebola hot spots.

In sum, a health emergency that became a government failure that became a crisis of confidence is heading toward an electoral wipe out. Ebola will, if the trend continues, not be the cause for Democratic loss of the Senate any more than Sandy caused Mitt Romney's defeat, but it sure does not help the party that was already coming up short.

Right Turn

Distinguished pol of the week

by Jennifer Rubin

Who stood out?

Rep. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) has run a smart campaign, outfoxing his opponent's war on women tripe by supporting over-the-counter birth control pills. He has snagged the [endorsement of the Denver Post](#). And to top it off he [demolished](#) a false hit piece that claimed he had never played football in high school. As of this writing, he's pulling ahead of incumbent Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) by a few points, and in most recent polling has [kept the gap](#) between him and Udall among women to single digits, practically unheard of these days for a Republican.

It is worth noting that Gardener would not be the nominee if not for the "establishment" Republicans. "In this year's Senate race, Democrats hoped to face Mr. [Ken] Buck, who lost in 2010 after comparing homosexuality to alcoholism, among other verbal miscues," [the Wall Street Journal reported](#). "National Republicans intervened and coaxed Mr. Gardner into pursuing the Senate seat. Mr. Buck bowed out and is running for Mr. Gardner's House seat instead." And the GOP may win the Senate as a result of Gardner and other Republican nominees with mainstream appeal.



If Gardner prevails — and [one poll](#) now has him at 50 percent — Democrats' path to holding the Senate becomes circuitous. They would have to pull an upset in a red state (it likely won't be in Kansas where Sen. Pat Roberts made a comeback), stage a comeback against Joni Ernst in Iowa and then make sure neither Scott Brown or Thom Tillis wins their close races. Possible, yes. Likely? Less and less so with each passing day.

For all that — and for being one key piece of the puzzle in the GOP quest for a majority in the Senate —we can say well done, Congressman Gardner.

Right Turn

Obama is scaring women

by Jennifer Rubin

If “Life of Julia,” President Obama’s 2012 online version of liberal paradise characterized by cradle-to-grave dependency on the government, were to be revived, the Republicans might be the ones to benefit:

Julia’s grandfather has been waiting for treatment from the Department of Veterans Affairs for years and lives with pain. She liked the idea of Obamacare at first, but it turned out to be a nightmare to sign up and very expensive. She is now paying more than she used to for health care while her salary has been flat for several years. To keep up with expenses, she tries to take on extra work and rent out her spare room through Airbnb, but the [city is threatening to shut that down](#). Her son, a recent college grad, is back living at home since he’s got a boatload of debt and rotten job prospects. Her younger child keeps getting A’s but doesn’t seem to be learning much; Julia worries whether she will be college-ready. The school choice program the state set up sounds great, but the Justice Department is suing to end it.

Meanwhile, her brother is getting discharged by the Army, part of the recent cutbacks. Having lived through 9/11, Julia is more nervous than she has been in a long time because terrorist groups seem stronger than ever and Iran may get the bomb. Ebola has freaked her out, and she has had to stop watching the news, which brings on panic attacks. With the Fed keeping interest rates so low, she is not getting the sort of return on her savings she counted on, and she’s worried Medicare is not going to be there for the long haul. The president sounds like a teenager — nothing is ever his fault.

That’s one scenario I can come up with, and it’s hardly far-fetched.

[Tina Brown](#), doyenne of the limousine-liberal set, has it right when she opines about women: “I think they’re feeling unsafe. They feel unsafe, economically; they’re feeling unsafe with regard to ISIS; they’re feeling unsafe about Ebola. What they’re feeling unsafe about is the government response to different crises.” For good measure, she adds, ““I think they’re beginning to feel a bit that Obama’s like that guy in the corner office who’s too cool for school. [He] calls a meeting, says this has to change, doesn’t put anything in place to make sure it does change, then it goes wrong and he’s blaming everybody.”

Brown, however, is only partially right when she says Republicans are not offering much. In some cases, that is true. The anti-government right-wingers sound hysterical or angry or both, which is hardly comforting. [As Mona Charen writes](#): “Republicans should not fear women voters. They are not an army of Sandra Fluke shock troops. They are repelled by perceived extremism, and they are interested in whether a candidate can improve daily life.”

Hmm, that sounds a lot like reform conservatism — a thoughtful alternative to the liberal welfare state that is based on conservative values but applied to current problems. It addresses “uncertainty” — of both genders — and focuses on issues essential to the middle and working class. Contrary to claims of anti-government libertarians, helping people is not anathema to modern conservatism; it is at the root of it.

[Henry Olsen writes](#): “The reason conservatives embraced Reagan was that he expressed their most deeply held values. He did not speak about government power; he spoke about justice. He spoke about how government could help average people do things that they could not be expected

to do for themselves — and how it should expect average people to do those things that they could. The American government would neither keep its hands off nor heavily place its hands on; it would offer everyone a hand up.”

His advice is sound and has the incidental benefit of appealing to security-conscious women:

Republicans and conservatives can succeed only if they come home to Reagan’s vision of America. That vision sees government as a danger but not an enemy, and looks for ways to make it useful rather than harmful to the advancement of a free society. It is a vision in line with the spiritual heritage of Lincoln’s Republican Party — one that gives average people a hand up, not a hand out. . . .

First and foremost, however, it requires a renewed emphasis on an old goal: helping the common man advance in life. This has long been the driving purpose of American politics and the stated aim of just about every successful political coalition in our history. But in many respects it has ceased to be the goal of the Republican Party, and it needs to become so again. . . . If conservatives can understand that they are the party of government by and for the people as opposed to the party that wants to repeal all government entirely — that they are the party of a hand up rather than the party of the handout or of hands-off government — then, and only then, can they continue to lead America further on what Ronald Reagan called mankind’s journey from the swamp to the stars.

Once women — and men — see competent and calm Republicans working to help solve their real problems and forcefully addressing threats from abroad, they will embrace them.

Free Beacon

The Macaca Democrats

Why the GOP Is Winning Election 2014

by Mathew Continetti



Something peculiar has happened. As I write, none of the Republican candidates for Senate has become a public embarrassment. On the contrary: For the first time in a decade, it is the Democratic candidates, not the Republican ones, who are fodder for late-night comics. That the Democrats are committing gaffes and causing scandals at a higher rate than Republicans not only may be decisive in the battle for the Senate. It could signal a change in our politics at large.

Yes, at any given moment, one of the Republican candidates could say something stupid, could be revealed to be unethical, could act like an idiot. These are human beings we are talking about. There is a little more than two weeks to go before Election Day—plenty of time for Republicans to screw it up. But the fact that the GOP field has come so far *without* committing unforced errors is news in itself.

Since 2006, when Republican Senator George Allen of Virginia referred to an Indian-American Democratic tracker as “Macaca,” GOP candidates have found ways to provoke, to offend, to annoy, to spawn unpleasant narratives, to let themselves become the story. In 2014, though, the Macaca moments aren’t coming from Republicans. They are coming from Democrats.

In Montana, Senator John Walsh bowed out after he was exposed as a plagiarist. His replacement: [avowed “punkuator” and socialist Amanda Curtis](#). In Kentucky, Alison Lundergan Grimes won’t reveal her presidential vote, citing—I am not making this up—[the constitutional right to privacy](#) (maybe what she had in mind was her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination). In Colorado, Mark Udall’s pro-abortion strategy is so tone-deaf, so extreme, that the press has dubbed him “[Mark Uterus](#).” In Louisiana, Mary Landrieu is saddled with charges of taking [improper charter flights](#), and of [claiming her parents’ home as her own](#), raising questions of residency. In Arkansas, Mark Pryor couldn’t give an answer when [a reporter asked if he approved of the president’s handling of the Ebola crisis](#). In Alaska, Mark Begich had to pull [a scurrilous attack ad](#). In New Hampshire, Jeanne Shaheen is outraged by [a Washington Free Beacon story revealing her involvement in a business that sold stolen goods](#).

Rep. Bruce Braley of Iowa is in a category all his own. His classless remark about [longtime Senator Chuck Grassley being a farmer](#) had such an impact that months later, when Braley said at a debate that his first call as senator would be to the Iowa Republican, the audience [burst into laughter](#). Then there is the story of how Braley threatened a neighbor with [a lawsuit over her pet chicken](#). It revealed him to the world as Congressman Schmuck.

The chicken is illustrative. It shows how candidate skills can be the key factor in a race. On one level, 2014 resembles 2010. The country is pretty much evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans. President Obama is unpopular, the economy is improving but only the rich are really feeling it, and Republicans have a lead in the generic ballot.

The difference? The Republican candidates are of much higher quality. After years of running Foleys and Akins, the GOP has marshaled an impressive slate of Senate prospects: McConnell, Gardner, Cassidy, Cotton, Sullivan, Brown, and Ernst have waged slick campaigns with few mistakes. In 2010, the Republicans fielded lightweights Sharron Angle and Ken Buck and “I’m Not a Witch” O’Donnell. It cost them the Senate. [Chickens played a role in Sue Lowden losing the Republican Senate nod to Angle](#), helping deny the party Harry Reid’s seat. Four years later, they may play a similar part in Bruce Braley’s undoing.

Indeed, this year may be less like 2010 than 2006. The varnish of power, of legitimacy, of seriousness is wearing off the incumbent party. It is not only that we are in the sixth year of a two-term presidency. It is also because the grand dreams of the president’s reelection—the major reforms, the gains in House and Senate seats, the talk of enduring majorities—are no longer

tenable. The president's approval rating is cratering; voter frustration and anger is mounting; the party of government is presiding over a time of government failure and malpractice.

The condition of the world and of America is awful and getting worse. Putin, Assad, the Islamic State, Ebola, Libya, child refugees on the border, war on the police in Ferguson, Iran, head-choppers in Oklahoma, market crash, the IRS, the VA, the DOJ—all this, and president is ready to amnesty illegal immigrants and empty Guantanamo Bay.

The liberal agenda is stagnant. Liberal discourse is insular, sophomoric, divorced from everyday life. What liberals say about race and gender and climate change is designed not to persuade the unconvinced but to rally the base. [MSNBC is imploding](#). Vox.com [is a laughingstock](#). The *New Republic*, [now a hedge fund](#), is running articles calling for [revolution against straight, white, and middle-class men](#). Have they looked at their masthead?

The Democrats are in danger of entering a period of caricature and jest similar to what the GOP has so long endured. The onset is sudden. One minute you are on top: proud, exultant, vindicated, and rather vindictive. You feel invincible. You can't lose.

Then, without warning, the wheel of fortune turns. Your armor of confidence is ripped away. Loss becomes not a possibility but a reality. A few moments ago you were boastful, demanding, serious. Now you are a joke. And once you become a joke, it is difficult to persuade others to stop laughing.

There is plenty of time for Republicans to have a Macaca moment. But right now, as of October 17, 2014, the Republican Senate candidates have performed better than they have in years. For the moment, today, as you read this, the Democratic candidates are the jokes.

Savor it.

Washington Examiner

[Todd Akin turns left](#)

by Noemie Emery

For two years, Republicans have been haunted by Todd Akin syndrome, in which a spectacular gaffe in an abortion-themed context becomes a costly embarrassment to a candidate's party. And they were right. But the good news for them is that the bug is contagious. Democrats have lately been showing its symptoms, proving no one is immune.

The first sign their ear had begun getting tinny came early this year when Planned Parenthood head Cecile Richards wandered onto the "House of Cards" set to lend moral support to fictitious Claire Underwood, sinister spouse of the conniving vice president. Mrs. Underwood revealed to an aide that she had three abortions, two as a teen and one as a candidate's wife who called the thing off in the second trimester when it interfered with her husband's campaign.

The idea was that the glamorous Claire would make this acceptable. But the point is that the Underwoods are *supposed* to be killers. They performed an exceedingly late-term abortion on a Congressman whom Frank gassed to death in his auto, and then a female reporter whom he pushed under a train. So murderers are on board with late-term abortion? What a great selling point. Call this strike one.

Strike two is working itself out in the midterm elections, when the Democrats put all of their eggs in the birth-control basket, insisting that nuns subsidize contraception and that any restrictions at all on abortion mean war. They targeted Senate candidates Joni Ernst in Iowa and Cory Gardner in Colorado, with the happy result that both are now leading, quickly closing the gender gap among women. Last Friday, the liberal Denver Post rocked the political world by [endorsing Gardner](#) over the man called "Mark Uterus" because of his single-minded obsession. "[Sen. Mark] Udall is trying to frighten voters rather than inspire them," said the paper, correctly. "His obnoxious one-issue campaign is an insult to those he seeks to convince."

The same day, Wendy Davis — the pink-sneakered hope of the Left who soared to notoriety when she stood in them for twelve hours in the state house in Texas to deliver a plea for late-term abortion — tied the anchor around her neck even tighter when she issued an ad featuring the wheelchair of her opponent, Greg Abbott. She accused Abbott of accepting a \$10.7 million settlement from the owners of the tree that had crippled him, saying he had cashed in on his woes.

This in the party of Franklin D. Roosevelt, another guy in a wheelchair who ran for state office and became one of two people who saved the free world. The point is that if it's sense, sensibility or even minimal decency you're after, it's not to be found in pro-choice extremists, who wouldn't know what these were if they fell over them, which they so frequently do.

The other point is that it's not being pro-life or pro-choice that dooms people, but the way that they do it —which is to say, either side can lose by being extreme, stupid or crass. People forget this is an uneasy issue, about which many are deeply ambivalent, keenly aware of life's difficult corners but giving life at all stages more value than many pro-choicers admit.

That is why a sizeable portion of the public acquiesces to the legality of abortions it does not approve of, but changes its mind once a fetus resembles a baby, somewhere between months four or five. Urged on by the press, the Left often mistakes its fringe for the mainstream. But Akins, as we found out Friday, tend to appear on all sides.

Noemie Emery, a Washington Examiner columnist

Orange County Register

Thunder on the Left

by Joel Kotkin

Much has been written about the right-ward shift of the Republican Party, but far less about a [mounting left-wing movement](#) among Democrats. While the media tends to dismiss the right-wingers of the GOP as "wingnuts," it typically refrains from categorizing even the extreme left of the Democratic Party in a similar manner.

President Barack Obama has accelerated this leftward trend in two ways. First, his administration, particularly in contrast to that of former President Bill Clinton, has laid the rhetorical basis for a move to the left by shifting the party agenda on social, environmental and economic policies. Clinton may have declared that "the era of big government is over," but under Obama an ever-expanding federal government has become the essential *raison d'être* for the party.

Yet if Obama's soaring rhetoric set the stage, his weak record of achievement has sparked mounting concern among left-leaning activists. Obama's success has hinged in part on the far-left

portions of the party controlling their more-fevered passions, particularly about [ever-increasing income inequality](#) and bans on fossil fuel use.

But now many on the political left are openly critical of the president, notably for his close ties to the moguls of Wall Street and Silicon Valley. These moguls have been the predominant beneficiaries of his economic policies while [middle-class incomes](#) have continued to languish – and even fall.

This disenchantment can be seen among many professional progressives and their allies in the associated media. [Michael Moore](#), for example, recently suggested that in the future Obama would be remembered simply for being the nation's "first black president." This disenchantment is also spreading to the Left's grass-roots, with the president's favorability ratings [dropping even in such progressive bastions](#) as New York and California.

This situation resembles that which conservatives confronted in the waning days of the Bush administration. Bush's failure to construct a successful market-based economic agenda, as well as his ill-conceived foreign policy engendered widespread anger on the right. The initial Tea Party insurgency had its roots in the movement by Bush, a "big government conservative," to bail out the nation's giant financial institutions.

Now, it's the Left's turn to be disappointed, and some, such as liberal commentator [Sally Kohn](#), suggest that it's time to create their own progressive version of the Tea Party. These liberal critics, correctly, in my view, have been mortified by the Obama administration coziness – [taking a page from Bush](#) – with large financial institutions as well as increasing inequality.

The new left Democrats have little interest in embracing Obama's clever meme of portraying himself as a moderate, bipartisan figure, something that helped him both [win suburban voters and raise a ton of money](#) from parts of the corporate elite. Instead of expanding crony capitalism, which has been the Obama default, but the new Left openly seeks to reshape the economic system itself.

This leftward shift has been intensified by the growing geographic bifurcation of our political culture. Just as the Republican's rightward shift reflected the domination of the traditionalist South and, to some extent, the socially conservative Great Plains, the Democratic march to the left similarly mirrors the party's growing reliance on its urban Northeast and West Coast base.

Up until the early 2000s the Democrats were highly competitive, at least in local elections, in the Great Plains, Appalachia, the Intermountain West and even parts of the Southeast. Democrats from these areas, like the old Northeastern Republicans, exercised a moderating effect on the national party.

But under Obama, such elements of the party have crawled towards extinction. Since 2009, for example, the number of Blue Dog Democrats in Congress, a grouping of moderates, has [dropped from 54 to a mere 15](#). The broader New Democrat movement, which was spearheaded by Bill Clinton and of which I was a part, has already all but dissipated.

Some middle-of-the road Democrats, of course, may somehow survive this year's election; it will generally be due to the awfulness of Republican candidates or the presence of independents that could draw from the GOP base. But the overall Obamaism has redefined the Democrats from a broad national party to one that is essentially bicoastal, and urban.

Nowhere is this shift more evident than in energy policy. Tough controls on carbon emissions appeal to the well-educated urban liberals, mainstream media, entertainment and downtown real estate developers who are their main funders – all primary funding sources.

But this approach [undermines support for the party in energy producing areas](#) such as West Virginia, Louisiana, the Dakotas and Texas as well as those industrial states, such as Indiana, that rely heavily on coal and other fossil fuels.

In the new Democratic calculus, greens, wealthy venture capitalists, Hollywood producers feminists and ethnic warlords [matter much more](#) than coal miners, [factory or construction workers](#).



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LEAVING THE SCENE**

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TIME TO BREAK
OUT**



**THE WINTER
CLOTHES**





The hell?