Why do Americans vote against their own self-interests?

It is likely that there are a number of factors that contribute to this phenomenon including: keeping people uneducated, deeply religious, and scared.

Republicans constantly wave the Bible furiously in one hand, and the Flag, just as furiously in the other. Those tactics have a much greater chance of success if they can keep the people as uneducated as possible, which they do by constantly attacking education and belittling those who have it (by calling them "snobs" or "elites"). They homeschool their children to protect them from science and history, both of which contradict what their Bibles teach them.

They constantly play on people's fears with topics like gun control and foreign threats. America spends more on our military than the other top 10 countries *combined*. However, this is necessary to prevent an invasion ... by Ecuador.

But in the end, it's always about the money. How do you convince most of the 99% to vote in favor of enriching the 1% beyond their wildest dreams?

It sounds impossible, but recent American history proves it's not. In addition to the factors listed above, I propose another: team loyalty.

We are all familiar with sports teams. People who go to a game, don't go to root for the best team - they go to root for *their* team. In politics, America is divided into two main teams: Democrats and Republicans. Many issues have strong points on both sides; but many issues do not. Yet, it is usually the case that even on issues that should have higher than 90% support, we find the public nearly evenly divided. That can seem mind-boggling to rational people, but once you grasp how team loyalty works, it becomes easier to understand how people can make the most amazing rationalizations for terrible positions ... and defend them.

They will vote against their own self-interests rather than be disloyal to their team.

It should be noted that there is another reason why people vote against their own self-interests: morality. Altruistic people will sacrifice themselves for the greater good. These people are almost never found in the Republican Party.

Here is supporting evidence for my hypothesis:

<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2014/02/07/1275771/-Obama-v-Reagan-Fun-comparison-I-did-to-piss-off-a-wingnut-on-Reagan-s-B-day?detail=facebook?detail=email>

Notice how all the positions that Conservatives claim that they are against ... are suddenly okay when their side does it?

That's called hypocrisy, which is a hallmark of religious thinking.

That is strong evidence that it is not always the issues that determine which side they are on. Their position is usually determined by which side their team is on ... at the moment.

If that sounds like I'm describing a herd of sheep, that's because sheep is what "ideologues" are; which brings me to my favorite quote (though I will admit to a slight bias, as it is one of my own):

"Overcoming ideological thinking,

whether Liberal or Conservative,

is equivalent to giving your brain an enema."

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2014