**THE SKEPTIC ARENA.COM**

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**How Democrats lost the Deep South**

**By Jake Miller, CBS News**

**Let's pickup at paragraph 5 when Jake begins to talk about Southern politics in general.**

***The South was once Democrats' most reliable stronghold: Before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Democrats enjoyed a monopoly over statewide elections in the South, holding all of the region's governors' offices and Senate seats. That grip began to slip in the decades that followed, but as recently as a decade ago, Democrats still held a majority of senate and gubernatorial seats in the Deep South. Not a single one will remain in their control after November's victors take office next year.***

***Cordes explained, "It's not just that Senate Democrats have been wiped out in the South, it's that there are no longer any Democratic governors. There are no longer any Democratically-controlled state legislatures....It really is a clean sweep."***

***Analysts see a number of demographic, cultural, and political factors behind the collapse of the Democratic party in the region. Merle Black, a professor of political science at Emory University who specializes in American politics in the South, directed the lion's share of the blame at a national party leadership that has lurched leftward over the last decade.***

**Jake, by "lurching leftward" Black must be referring to the fact that Democrats have been progressing in their views of morality and the function of government, while Republicans remain mired in a biblically-dictated ancient morality, and a desire to rid themselves of government interference; in particular, interference where African-American discrimination is concerned.**

***Merle explained "The Democratic Party is now dominated by very liberal politicians from the Northeast and Pacific coast and from the metropolitan areas of the country. Their priorities, interests, and values have very little appeal among white southerners."***

**Jake, the only groups of people I can think of, whose priorities, interests, and values, line up with white Southerners would be either Nazis or fanatical Muslims.**

**To be clear, since people always try to twist words, my statement does not refer to all white Southerners.**

***Black cited a turn away from the center-left Democratic platform of former President Bill Clinton, who famously declared an end to the era of big government, toward a more recent agenda focused on "enlarging the role of the federal government."***

**Jake, the Confederacy has been trying to resist the federal government for 150 years. They were defeated militarily, but the battle for the hearts and minds of the white overlords in the South goes on to this day. LBJ, a white Southerner, was an exception ... as history has proven.**

***Merle added, the passage of Obamacare in 2010, has been the "driving force" behind the opposition to Landrieu and other Southern Democrats among white voters in the region.***

**Jake, the South is the region in most desperate need of Obamacare. They are the ones who would have benefitted most if their Republican leaders hadn't refused the Medicaid expansion. As a result, thousands will die and millions more will suffer.**

**This makes me suspect that we may be watching natural selection in action: Southerners, most of whom now vote Republican, are being slowly removed from the gene pool. Unfortunately, evolution is an agonizingly slow process.**

**What we need is some punctuated equilibrium.**

***Others have blamed the Democratic Party's near-unanimous embrace of progressive causes like abortion rights and same-sex marriage for its sinking fortunes in the South, given the dominance of Christian conservatism in the region.***

**Jake, bingo!**

**These people, like all religious fanatics, are less evolved, both intellectually and morally, than their fellow citizens.**

**The saddest part is that their ignorance is bringing down the whole house. That is why we can't give up on them. We have no choice but to help them find their way out of the Conservative mindset that is destroying our nation.**

***Cordes recalled "You used to have this cadre of conservative, southern Democrats who were culturally, religiously conservative, and you really don't see that any more."***

**Jake, that's called progress. If Democrats can evolve ... then so can Republicans.**

***Cordes continued: "The party is pretty solidly pro-gay marriage ... pro-abortion rights, and that's something that just doesn't square with a lot of rural, southern Democratic voters."***

**Jake, that's also something that wouldn't square with Nazis or radical Muslims either ... so maybe I had a point earlier?**

***Black added "The Democratic party has become a much more secular party than it has been historically. Most of these white voters in the south are Christians."***

**Jake, since 75% of Americans are Christian, the Democratic party has to be majority Christian. The number of secular Americans is tiny by comparison.**

**The difference you are ignoring, isn't in the *number* of Christians in each party, but the huge difference in the *type* of Christians who make up each party.**

**Democrats have modern, progressive Christians, while Republicans attract Evangelical Christians.**

**And Jake, Evangelical Christians aren't called "The American Taliban" for nothing.**

***Opposition to the president has undoubtedly played a role in accelerating the demise of Democrats in the South,***

**Jake, the large numbers of African-Americans don't oppose the president; neither do the large number of Hispanics; so you must be referring to white Southerners. You should have made the effort to break down your statement rather than generalizing. Once it gets broken down, it is obvious that it is the Confederacy which is behind the anti-Obama sentiment. 150 years after their defeat, and their butts are still steaming over losing their slaves.**

***though some dispute remains about whether that opposition is rooted in policy differences or personal animus.***

**Jake, I would go with "both."**

***Outgoing Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe, a Democrat, explained the day after the election "It's Obama. It wasn't just Arkansas. It was all over the country. There's only one common denominator."***

**Jake, tell the ex-governor to grow up and take responsibility for his own defeats rather than trying to blame others.**

***Exit polls reflected a significant contingent of voters who cast their midterm ballots to express opposition to the president.***

**Jake, they should have done that during the presidential election.**

**If you take hours out of your day to go vote, and instead of basing your decision on the candidates or the propositions, you vote based on your dislike of a man who isn't even running ... you are a moron.**

***In Arkansas, where Democratic Sen. Mark Pryor fell to GOP challenger Tom Cotton, that number was 40 percent. In Georgia, where Democrats failed to capture an open Senate seat, that number was 36 percent. Republicans in those races sought to nationalize the conversation, casting their contest as a race between the president's foes and his allies.***

**Jake, if Democrats had defended their president and ran on the successes he had, especially by highlighting the improvements in virtually every sector of the economy, combined with the atrocities foisted on Americans by the party for the rich ... they likely would have done much better.**

***CBS News Elections Director Anthony Salvanto explained "That local vs. national dynamic helps explain part of the Republicans' long-term upward trend in Southern Senate and Congressional seats. Views of the Democratic party were negative, overall, among voters in Louisiana in November, and most disapproved of how the President was handling his job. In many areas, that national party image often matters more now than the local party image, as Senate and Congressional races used to see more ticket-splitting among voters than we see today."***

**Jake, when you reflect on how close the Republicans came to nearly destroying the American economy only one year ago, yet still survived politically, it has to make you wonder if maybe Republicans are adding something to the water in those states.**

***A handful of Democrats, mindful of the South's complicated history on race and civil rights, see outright discrimination behind white southerners' opposition to the president.***

**Jake, say it ain't so. Next you'll be tellin' us that Arabs are prejudiced against Jews.**

***Landrieu herself, perhaps hoping to drive up enthusiasm among black voters ahead of the runoff, has nodded at that possibility.***

**Jake, Landrieu sold out her last ounce of integrity when she pushed the Keystone Pipeline in a last-ditch effort to save her job. So there is nothing she could do that would surprise me.**

**The only positive thing to be learned from that, is that corruption is spread among both parties and both sexes. I'm not saying it is spread equally, just that it is found in both. Many of these legislators would sell their own mothers into slavery if they thought it would buy them an extra year in power.**

***Landrieu told NBC News in an interview in November "I'll be very, very honest with you."***

**Jake, stop right there. When a politician, especially one like Landrieu, tells you she's going to be "very, very honest with you" that should send your bullshit detector into the red zone.**

***"The South has not always been the friendliest place for African Americans."***

**Jake, so Landrieu's idea of honesty is to make the understatement of the century and act like it's breaking news?**

**Damn, these people are so crooked they have to pay other people to call their dogs for them.**

***"It's been a difficult time for the president to present himself in a very positive light as a leader."***

**Jake, she's right. How can Obama do that when Democrats refuse to defend his accomplishments?**

**Every single one of those losers should be sued for abandonment.**

***Black argued, though, that the opposition to the president has less to do with his race and more to do with his agenda.***

***"There may be a little bit of that," he said of the possibility that white voters oppose Obama because of his race, "but that is a much smaller part of it than the policy positions of the president."***

**Jake, if people weren't so blinded to the fact that Republicans only work for the rich, they might be able to get our nation back on track. But as long as their ignorance prevails, it looks like we are going to be going in the wrong direction for a long, long time.**

***Black pointed to the victory of Sen. Tim Scott, R-South Carolina, as evidence that white voters in the South "will vote for a black candidate if they perceive he represents their interests and values."***

**Jake, if you ever get a chance to talk to Scott, why don't you ask him how it feels to walk into the state capital in South Carolina and see the Confederate flag flying proudly?**

**Ask him if it gives him goosebumps. Ask him if he swells with pride knowing that he represents a state that still worships slaveholders.**

***Looking forward, unfortunately for Democrats, there seems to be no easy way to remedy their deep deficit of popular support in among white southerners.***

**Jake, that's no different than saying there is no way for Jews to make fans of the surrounding Arab populations. Don't blame the victims Jake. In each case, both Jews and Blacks, it is not they who need to evolve into modern, educated humans; it is the ones who persecute them who are in need of years of serious psychological counseling.**

***Black said "You've got to get a Democratic Party out there that's perceived as advancing the interests of working class white people."***

**Jake, Black's argument is easy to kick over: Republican's do everything in their power to advance the interests of the super rich at the *expense* of working class white people; and yet they control every corner of government with the exception of the presidency. So what makes Black think that his strategy would work for Democrats when the Republicans have found so much success using exactly the opposite strategy?**

**The problem is with the people ... no matter how obvious the Republicans make it; no matter how destructive their policies and activities are; no matter what they do; they know that the masses are too ignorant to defend themselves. Republicans can do anything they want, with few repercussions ... and they know it.**

***"You have to get different policies. It's very hard for the Democrats to do this because their party leaders are concentrated in coastal regions and big cities."***

**Jake, the problem isn't where the Democratic leaders are located; the problem is that about half of all American voters are dumber than rocks; and that's not going to be an easy, or, a quick fix.**

[**http://beta.www.cbsnews.com/news/how-democrats-lost-the-deep-south/**](http://beta.www.cbsnews.com/news/how-democrats-lost-the-deep-south/)

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**Modern genetics confirm ancient relationship**

**between fins and hands**

**Paleontologists have documented the evolutionary adaptations necessary for ancient lobe-finned fish to transform pectoral fins used underwater, into strong bony structures such as those of Tiktaalik. This enabled these emerging tetrapods, animals with limbs, to crawl in shallow water or on land. But evolutionary biologists have wondered why the modern structure called the autopod--comprising wrists and fingers or ankles and toes--has no obvious morphological counterpart in the fins of living fishes.**

**Researchers argue that previous efforts to connect fin and fingers fell short because they focused on the wrong fish. Instead, they found the rudimentary genetic machinery for mammalian autopod assembly in the spotted gar, whose genome was recently sequenced.**

**Fossils show that the wrist and digits clearly have an aquatic origin. But fins and limbs have different purposes. They have evolved in different directions since they diverged.**

**Initial attempts to confirm the link based on shape comparisons of fin and limb bones were unsuccessful. The autopod differs from most fins. The wrist is composed of a series of small nodular bones, followed by longer thin bones that make up the digits. The bones of living fish fins look much different, with a set of longer bones ending in small circular bones called radials.**

**The primary genes that shape the bones, known as the HoxD and HoxA clusters, also differ. The researchers first tested the ability of genetic "switches," that control HoxD and HoxA genes from bony, ray-finned fish, to shape the limbs of developing transgenic mice. The fish-control switches, however, did not trigger any activity in the autopod.**

**Teleost fish--a vast group that includes almost all of the world's important sport and commercial fish--are widely studied. But the researchers began to realize that they were not the ideal comparison for studies of how ancient genes were regulated. When they searched for wrist and digit-building genetic switches, they found a lack of sequence conservation in teleost species.**

**They traced the problem to a radical change in the genetics of teleost fish. More than 300 million years ago, after the fish-like creatures that would become tetrapods split off from other bony fish, a common ancestor of the teleost lineage went through a whole-genome duplication - a phenomenon that has occurred multiple times in evolution.**

**By doubling the entire genetic repertoire of teleost fish, this provided them with enormous diversification potential. This may have helped teleosts to adapt, over time, to a variety of environments worldwide. In the process, the genetic switches that control autopod-building genes were able to drift and shuffle, allowing them to change some of their function, as well as making them harder to identify in comparisons to other animals, such as mice.**

**Not all bony fishes went through the whole genome duplication, however. The spotted gar, a primitive freshwater fish native to North America, split off from teleost fishes before that.**

**When the research team compared Hox gene switches from the spotted gar with tetrapods, they found an unprecedented and previously undescribed level of deep conservation of the vertebrate autopod regulatory apparatus. This suggests a high degree of similarity between distal radials of bony fish and the autopod of tetrapods.**

**They tested this by inserting gar gene switches related to fin development into developing mice. This evoked patterns of activity that were nearly indistinguishable from those driven by the mouse genome.**

**Overall, these results provide regulatory support for an ancient origin of the 'late' phase of Hox expression that is responsible for building the autopod.**

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**FAMOUS QUOTES**

**Robert Parry (1949) 65 years old**

**He is an American investigative journalist best known for his role in covering the Iran-Contra affair, including breaking the Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare (CIA manual provided to the Nicaraguan contras) and the CIA and Contras cocaine trafficking in the US scandal in 1985. He was awarded the George Polk Award for National Reporting in 1984. He has been the editor of Consortium News since 1995.**

**"It was the federal government**

**that essentially created the Great American Middle Class.**

**From the New Deal policies of the 1930s**

**through other reforms of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s,**

**from Social Security to Wall Street regulation**

**to labor rights to the GI Bill**

**to the Interstate Highway System**

**to the space program's technological advances**

**to Medicare and Medicaid**

**to the minimum wage to civil rights."**