

Hood's titanic omission

Letter to the Editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 01.12.23

In his Dec. 29 column, John Hood ignores the elephant in the room. Explaining North Carolina's shift from overwhelmingly blue to its current "reddish tint," Hood says it was "partly" because conservative Democrats became Republicans. True, yet remarkably uninformative, like saying the Titanic's voyage was "partly" interrupted by an iceberg.

The "solid south" was overwhelmingly Democratic until the 1960's. Racial segregation and Jim Crow laws effectively disenfranchised black voters until Democratic President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination by race, color, sex or national origin, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, prohibiting racial discrimination in voting. Outraged "Dixiecrats" fled the Democratic party in droves. Republicans welcomed them with open arms.

The "Southern Strategy" was a deliberate effort by Richard Nixon to stoke racial resentment and turn southern Democrats into Republicans. Nixon's political advisor Kevin Phillips said so: "The more Negroes who register as Democrats in the South, the sooner the Negrophobe whites will quit the Democrats and become Republicans. That's where the votes are."

It worked, "partly." Republicans now dominate rural areas whose population is predominantly white. Nationwide, however, Republicans have lost the popular vote in seven of the last eight presidential elections.

After Mitt Romney's 2012 loss, Republicans performed an "autopsy" which concluded that the GOP is "marginalizing itself," and that "Young voters are increasingly rolling their eyes at what the Party represents, and many minorities think Republicans do not like them or want them in the country."

Trump lost the popular vote in 2016 but won the electoral college, which overrepresents white, rural voters. Republicans, though, were badly disappointed in 2018, 2020, and 2022. Trump is running again, and rivals like governors Ron DeSantis (R-FL) and Greg Abbott (R-TX) are competing to see who can be crueler to minorities.

If Republicans continue to marginalize themselves with young and minority voters, their national fortunes will continue to sink.

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