



APRIL 5, 2009

- HOME
- POLITICS
- MEDIA
- BUSINESS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- LIVING
- STYLE
- GREEN
- WORLD
- CHICAGO
- COMEDY 23/6
- VIDEO
- BLOGGER INDEX
- ARCHIVE
- Twitter: Follow Us
- Get Email Alerts
- Make HuffPost Your HomePage



Michael Giltz

Posted December 1, 2008 | 11:45 AM (EST)

- BIO
- Get Email Alerts
- Become a Fan
- Bloggers' Index

Swingers: The New Voting Bloc That Could Change Politics Forever



Read More: [2008 Election](#), [Barack Obama](#), [Hillary Clinton](#), [Independent Voters](#), [John McCain](#), [Mitt Romney](#), [Moderates](#), [Politics](#), [Swing Voters](#), [Voters](#), [Politics News](#)

Buzz up! Be the First to Submit This Story to Digg

Get Breaking News Alerts

never spam

Share Print Comments

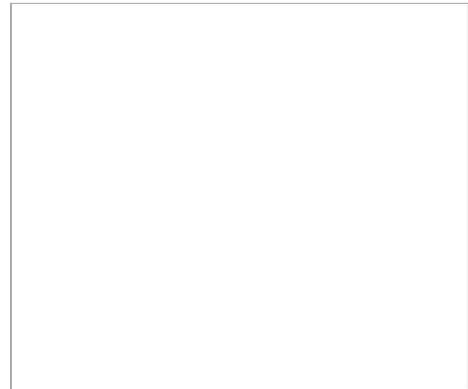
Barack Obama has inspired a wave of young voters to get involved in politics for the first time. Like Ronald Reagan, Obama might be at the forefront of a Democratic majority for the next three decades the same way the Republicans dominated during the last three.

But in fact the biggest news of this election was not a new Democratic majority. It was the rise of the Swinger. That's the independent/moderate voter who dislikes candidates that cater to the fringes of either party. Is the US a center-left or a

center-right country? The truth is that it's a center-center country, with most voters -- whatever their party affiliation -- representing a moderate middle that likes practical solutions to the real problems that face us and have no patience with special interests and the parties who are beholden to them.

Let's look at the facts. [Exit polling asked voters to identify themselves](#) as either liberal or conservative or moderate. 22% called themselves "liberal" and 34% "conservative." But 44% of voters call themselves "moderate." Both parties tried to claim those moderates for themselves and indeed on many issues the moderates fall into the progressive camp. Nonetheless, they prefer to ID themselves as moderate. In truth, there's nothing "liberal" about a concern for global warming, for example; it's just common sense.

What about party affiliation? 39% of voters were registered Democrats. 32% were registered Republicans. And an astonishing 29% were registered Independents. Given the trends of the last 25 years, it's far more likely that the Independents will pass the Republicans before the



Right Now on HuffPost

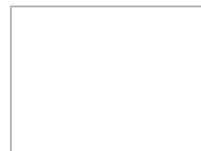


REPORT: NORTH KOREA LAUNCHES ROCKET
 SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea defiantly carried out...

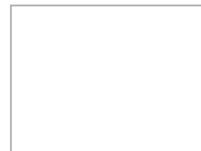


Sunday Roundup
 In Strasbourg yesterday, the president was...

Popular Stories on HuffPost



Fashion Face-Off! Michelle Obama And Carla Bruni-Sarkozy Finally Meet In France (VIDEO, PHOTOS, POLL)
 *Video, poll and slideshow



Levi Johnston Talks Safe Sex With Tyra Banks (VIDEO)
 UPDATE 8:30pm: People.com is reporting that Sarah Palin has issued...

Republicans tie the Democrats again. That's right: in 2016, the two major blocks of voters will more likely be Democrats and Independents instead of Democrats and Republicans.

Heck, let's look at the two major candidates in the election that just happened. It wasn't the Republican base that nominated John McCain. They preferred Mitt Romney and Mike Huckabee. But Swingers swept in and made McCain the front runner. It wasn't the Democratic base that nominated Barack Obama; the establishment was solidly in line for the coronation of Hillary Clinton. But Swingers stepped in and turned Obama from an inspiring story to the real deal.

Swingers are the moderate middle. They don't vote based on the tiny letter next to a candidate's name. They vote based on the policies that person puts forth. And catering to the Swingers doesn't mean you have to be a "centrist" who always compromises and takes the safe path. Look at US energy policy. Swingers take global warming and our national security seriously and they want dramatic action. They want a new national electrical grid, they want solar panels and wind farms to become dominant and not just curiosities shown in political ads. They're willing to see higher gasoline prices today if it means a healthier environment tomorrow, fewer dollars flowing into the coffers of cruel governments overseas, and real energy independence. Swingers love electric cars.

Swingers are tired of a few farm states perverting our national food policy by skimming off massive billion dollar payouts to agricultural conglomerates. Swingers like their privacy. Swingers don't get riled by single issue idiocies like gun rights or abortion or gays. They know reasonable gun laws will let people have all the weapons they want without handing out Uzis to felons. They believe in a woman's right to choose. And they don't really care very much about interfering in the ways other people live (gays) or die (Terri Schiavo). Live and let live is the American way to Swingers.

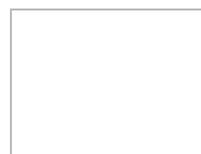
Every election seems to boil down to the independent voters -- and here we're talking about Swingers, not the mealy mouthed people who pretend they haven't made up their mind five days before the election just so they can be interviewed on CNN. The growing number of Independents will be the best thing in the world for *both* parties, keeping the Democrats and the Republicans focused on competence and compassion and away from the fringes who always seem to gain an outsized voice when a party stays in power too long.

If you like the idea of Swingers -- independent voters who choose the best candidate regardless of party affiliation; people who are focused on the real problems that face us -- they need your help to flourish. A number of practical steps need to be taken to let their voice be heard.

1. Choose the President by popular vote -- The [Electoral College](#) is a classic Swinger issue. Swingers think the Electoral College is an absurd joke, but tiny states are so vested in the process so they can have an outsized voice in choosing the President that passing a Constitutional Amendment to abolish it seems unlikely. Happily, there's a very viable work-around gaining momentum. The [National Popular Vote bill](#) would award the electoral college vote to whomever wins the popular vote. It would take effect once enough states have passed bills promising to award their electoral college votes to whichever candidate wins the national popular vote. Four states have already done so -- New Jersey, Maryland, Illinois (!) and Hawaii -- and momentum is growing. When Presidents are picked by popular votes, the sad farce of candidates ignoring the voters of hugely populous states like California and Texas to focus on a sliver of people in battleground states will be over. Get involved and get this passed by your state.

2. [Open primaries](#) -- They take many forms, but the basic idea is that voters can choose the candidate they prefer in a primary regardless of that voter's party affiliation. I'm a registered Republican in New York, but I would switch my party affiliation to Independent in a New York minute if that didn't mean I was blocked from voting in the primaries. I'll bet a lot of other people feel the same -- which is exactly why the Democrats of New York oppose the open primary system. Let people register any way they want and then vote any way they want and you'd see Swingers take center stage. Find out if your state has open primaries and push your elected officials to make the switch if it doesn't.

3. [Redistricting](#) -- Voters have to take away the power of redistricting from the politicians and put it in the hands of an independent panel, be it retired judges, a mix of voters and bureaucrats or whatever. The current system lets politicians design districts that virtually guarantee a seat for one party or the other forever. Since that means whoever wins the primary generally wins the election, that pushes politicians to cater to the fringes of their party that are far more active early on. It also makes it nigh on impossible to kick politicians out of office even after they've lost touch with voters. Districts should encompass reasonable neighborhoods that reflect their diverse communities, not convoluted and absurdly shaped districts that zig and zag to keep the Dems in one box and the Republicans in another so that the politicians in power can stay in power.



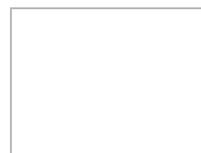
[Oscar de la Renta Slams Michelle Obama's Buckingham Outfit As Major Designers Feel Ignored](#)

While Michelle Obama has made lesser...



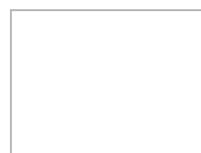
[Verena von Pfetten 7 Lessons To Be Learned From Carla Bruni](#)

So here's the thing. There's no shortage of articles dedicated to that certain je ne...



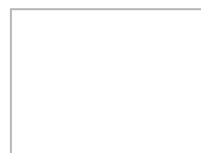
[Huff TV Arianna Discusses Michelle Obama's "Fantastic" Style On CBS' "Washington Unplugged"](#)

Arianna was on CBS' "Washington..."



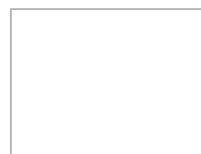
[Alex Leo The "Real Housewives Of New York City" Flowchart Of Hate](#)

I'm a little embarrassed to love this show as much as...



["BRUNO" TRAILER! Calamity, African Babies, Chase Scenes And More \(NSFW VIDEO\)](#)

IT'S HERE! The trailer for this July's Sacha Baron Cohen...



[NATO Leaders Focus On Afghanistan, But Most Reject Obama's Plea For Troops \(SLIDESHOW\)](#)

STRASBOURG, France — On the eve of the NATO...



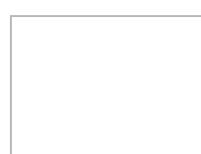
[First Lady Fashion At Friday's NATO Concert \(PHOTOS\)](#)

Another night, another fashion opportunity for NATO leaders and their spouses! See...



[Diana Palin, Sarah Palin's Sister-In-Law, Arrested For Breaking Into Home](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Police say Alaska Gov....



[John Oliver Explains The Real Reason You Never Touch The Queen \(VIDEO\)](#)

John Oliver was upset enough to drop his monocle when he...



[Obama Teases Reporter From India During Press Conference \(VIDEO\)](#)

Obama held a conference packed with press from around the world on Thursday. He called...



[Jim Cramer Declares The Depression "Over" \(VIDEO\)](#)

Are you a Swinger? And if you have any other ideas about how to let their voices be heard, let us know.

More in Politics...

Obama In Prague: Launches Effort To Rid...

Obama's Statement On North Korean Rocket Launch

Conservatives Holding Up Increasing Number Of Obama...

Sunday Roundup

digg™ HuffPost Stories Surging Right Now

Michelle Obama's Clothing Has Sean Hannity All Out Of Sorts

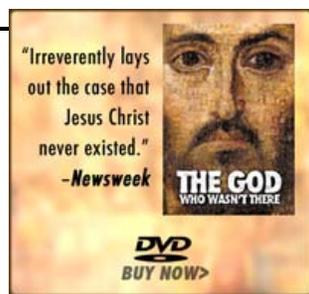
RICHARD POPLAWSKI, Pittsburgh Gunman, Kills 3 Police Officers

Dr. Rachel Ehrenfeld: Does Iran Harbor Osama bin Laden?

John Demjanjuk, Ohio Man Accused Of Being Nazi Guard, Avoids Deportation

Ads by Google

Obama's Brother In Kenya
Obama's Brother Lives In A Shack Read This Story Here!
www.russiatoday.com



Comments 13 Pending Comments 0

[FAQ: Comments & Moderation](#) [FAQ: HuffPost Accounts](#)

Want to reply to a comment? Hint: Click "Reply" at the bottom of the comment; after being approved your comment will appear directly underneath the comment you replied to

View Comments: [Newest](#) [Expand](#)
[First](#) [All](#)

YesWeCanada [See Profile](#) [I'm a Fan of YesWeCanada](#) [permalink](#)

It's old news that "liberal" has been demonized and that the preferred term now is progressive. Yes the centrist independents are very important. Obama used every opportunity to appeal to them and moved from the center after the primaries. McCain kept moving right after the primaries and never appealed to the center. Was it due to the rigid base? McCain's lack of creed with the base? Palin? Or just incompetence? Likely it was a combination of all 4.

[Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) [Posted 04:24 PM on 12/01/2008](#)

fpie [See Profile](#) [I'm a Fan of fpie](#) [permalink](#)

Well maybe these folks call themselves moderates or independents but all of the issues mentioned I say makes them liberals. Liberal philosophy is at bottom pragmatism. I know the "Conservatives" have gotten America to think liberalism is communism, socialism, fascism, nazism, satanism, just plain lightheaded, happy talk, insanity... But it is basic common sense, let's see if we can't figure out what works to make things run better.

So now we've seen what happens when those "Conservatives" get to try things their way (not that there weren't plenty of people who have been pointing out where it was all headed for years, we had the great depression to show the truth) it is time to give the pragmatic, common sense liberals (or what

On Thursday's episode of "Mad Money" host Jim Cramer declared that the depression...

Scientists Find Rocket Fuel Chemical In Infant Formula
ATLANTA — Traces of a chemical used in rocket fuel were found in samples of...

Least Wasteful Cities In America (SLIDESHOW)
It's great to love the city you live in, and better to love it for a reason like being green!
FastCompany...

HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES

Women's Rights	Michelle Obama	Europe
Newspapers	Cars	War Wire
Video	Financial Crisis	Barack Obama

[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES](#)

Books by this author

This Blogger's Books from [amazon.com](#)

A cabin of one's own: New England's MacDowell Colony celebrates 100 years of artistic utopia. And the gay and lesbian artists who prospered there celebrate ... (The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine)
by Michael Giltz

Affairs to remember: Farley Granger bedded Ava Gardner, Shelley Winters, and Leonard Bernstein. In his autobiography, Include Me Out, Hitchcock's muse ... (The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine)
by Michael Giltz

ever you think they should be called) another shot at once again fixing what the "Conservatives wrecked. They did it before and it took over half a century for the "Conservatives to screw it up again.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 01:40 PM on 12/01/2008

Michael Giltz See Profile I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz permalink

I agree about the demonizing of "liberal." But in the 70s the Democratic Party pandered to identity politics and the fringes rather than the major issues that mattered to most people and being so out of touch is why the Republicans gained a majority of state houses, governor mansions, the House, the Senate and the Presidency for most of three decades. When either party is focused on pragmatism and common sense, they will benefit. And again, I don't think there's anything "liberal" about thinking that the super rich aren't the first people who need a tax break or that the scientific consensus on global warming shouldn't be ignored. Thanks for reading.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 03:18 PM on 12/01/2008

GregJL See Profile I'm a Fan of GregJL permalink

This is true. The Democratic party became what George Lakoff describes as "neo-liberals". People whose views begin from a position of empathy and responsibility, but then go off on a tangent of "if we just help this group and that group and the other group, then everything will be alright, especially if we show 'em the facts and figures about how many people need this or that, yada, yada, yada." People who think reason is a disembodied thing and works the same in all persons. Heck, even you are guilty of that...."It's just common sense". Common sense is not as common as you might think. One person's common sense is another person's NONsense. conservatives don't deny global warming just to be obstinate, they REALLY don't see it. If you hold a lighter under their hand, they understand that it will burn. That's direct causation, and THAT is the only thing they understand. And you can shout facts and figures till you are blue in the face, if they don't fit the frame, they will be rejected. Period.

Err, sorry, went tangential there. The point I was trying to make was that these positions ARE liberal (progressive, if you like). They are based on a view of the world that says we are all in this together and we need to take care of one another. And that's liberal.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 12:50 PM on 12/02/2008

There are More Comments on this Thread. Click Here To See them All

mvy See Profile I'm a Fan of mvy permalink

To be involved in the National Popular Vote bill effort . . .

You can check the status of the bill in your state at
<http://www.NationalPopularVote.com/pages/statesactivity.php>

If it's still in play in your state, let your legislator(s) know what you think. If you need help to identify and/or contact your state representatives, senators, and/or governor about National Popular Vote, you can search by your zip code using online sites such as <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home> .

Sign up to get email updates - <http://www.NationalPopularVote.com/pages/getemailupdates.php>

Help get the word out and show your support.

Tell a friend- <http://www.NationalPopularVote.com/pages/tellafriend.php>

Distribute literature at political, civic, or other meeting, convention, or conference.

Post on discussion groups.

Write letters to editors, OpEds, and/or blog.

Responses to many common misinformed critiques are at <http://nationalpopularvote.com/pages/faq.php>

Up-to-date information and materials are at
<http://www.NationalPopularVote.com/pages/explanation.php>

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 01:37 PM on 12/01/2008

Michael Giltz See Profile I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz permalink

Great, useful post! Thanks.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 03:18 PM on 12/01/2008

▣ mvy See Profile I'm a Fan of mvy permalink

To make every vote in every state politically relevant and equal in presidential elections, support the National Popular Vote bill.

The bill is currently endorsed by 1,181 state legislators " 439 sponsors (in 47 states) and an additional 742 legislators who have cast recorded votes in favor of the bill.

It has been approved by 21 legislative chambers (one house in CO, AR, ME, NC, and WA, and two houses in MD, IL, HI, CA, MA, NJ, RI, and VT). It has been enacted into law in Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, and Maryland. These states have 50 (19%) of the 270 electoral votes needed to bring this legislation into effect.

see <http://www.NationalPopularVote.com>

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 01:36 PM on 12/01/2008

▣ jhNY See Profile I'm a Fan of jhNY permalink

Enjoyed the author's thesis, but can't agree on all points, especially as regards 'Swingers' voting on policy not party affiliation. Nearly nobody that voted had a clear idea of the respective differences between candidates on policy issues, and mostly they didn't care. Voters largely make up their minds on terms presented by candidates and their handlers involving the confected personae projected by the candidates and by a sense of personality and character they, the voters, imagine they perceive in the debates, as well as by the repetition of gotcha clips all over television. Were policy differences more significant, party affiliation wouldn't be so mutable from one election cycle to another. And were policy differences more sincere and foundational between the parties, it would be that much harder for each party to gather campaign money from the same sources. See recent series of bailouts for the downside of this lack of true distinction between parties.

Most hope resident in the electorate today has more to do with Obama the individual than with his party or the opposition. Should he prove to be a remarkably effective executive, his party will benefit. But should he not prove to be so, there will take place over the next couple of years yet another sea change of affiliation among the public, which just now is particularly fickle and impatient and bored with the fine print. They want good things to happen fast. They want the bubbles back. Woe betide any party who fails them.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 12:50 PM on 12/01/2008

▣ PATina See Profile I'm a Fan of PATina permalink

Prior to this election... I would have disagreed w/ you. I've been a registered independent (even living in a closed primary state) since 1988... and I do vote on policy not the person and when there's not much difference in policy I vote for who I think can really get the job done. But now that I've discovered blogs... I do agree. There are FAR too many people who voted for Obama because of Obama and could care less about any particular policies he may institute. He could increase the Bush tax cuts, re-instate the draft, start chanting "Drill baby Drill" and they would still support him and his decisions because he's just so brilliant... awesome... smarter than everyone else in the US... and by gosh... he knows what he's doing !!!!!

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 10:30 AM on 12/02/2008

▣ Michael Giltz See Profile I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz permalink

I agree with you about Obama: if he does well, the Dems will certainly benefit. But I don't think people expect instant miracles and will punish him and the Dems in the midterms if massive changes aren't immediately and positively enacted. Since the Dems won two in a row, I'd be surprised if they didn't have some losses in 2010. But I think most people are simply looking for adults to tackle the issues based on common sense and science rather than partisan bickering and special interests.

But I disagree strongly with your argument that there's no real difference between the parties or the Presidential candidates on substantial issues. Yes, voters need to keep on top of Congress when they do dumb things like sign off on massive no-strings-attached bailouts that won't solve any problems. But Obama and McCain had major and fundamental differences on many, many issues from the war to climate change to energy policy to tax policy to health care and on and on. There is a big difference between the parties. That doesn't mean the Dems are always right; just that currently they are focused on real problems and real solutions while the Reps generally are not.

♥ Favorite ⚙ Flag as abusive Posted 03:22 PM on 12/01/2008

Michale32086 [See Profile](#) [I'm a Fan of Michale32086](#) [permalink](#)

Oh boy, so many possible responses to this come to mind. :D At first I thought it was a Lifestyle commentary of which I was rarin' to respond to!! :D

But, I see the validity of your positions. I am a registered NPA (No Political Affiliation) and a demonstrable Obama supporter.. I don't vote for Partys, I vote for people. Sometimes a Democrat is the best person for the job, sometimes it's a Republican...

As far as getting the word out?? I think your motto should be, "NO... Not THAT Kind Of Swinger"... :D

Michale.....

[Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) [Posted 12:27 PM on 12/01/2008](#)

Michael Giltz [See Profile](#) [I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz](#) [permalink](#)

Hey, I just used "Swingers" to get people reading and for that catchy book proposal that will make me rich. :) Thanks for reading.

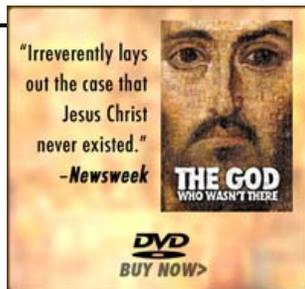
[Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) [Posted 03:23 PM on 12/01/2008](#)

Comments are closed for this entry

You must be [logged in](#) to reply to this comment. [Log in](#) or

Ads by Google

Obama's Brother In Kenya
Obama's Brother Lives In A Shack Read This
Story Here!
www.russiatoday.com



Google Custom Search

[HOME](#) [POLITICS](#) [MEDIA](#) [BUSINESS](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [LIVING](#) [GREEN](#) [STYLE](#) [WORLD](#) [CHICAGO](#) [COMEDY](#) [FUNDRACE](#)

[Advertise](#) | [Login](#) | [Make HuffPost your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Jobs](#) | [FAQ: Comments & Moderation](#) | [FAQ: Huffpost Accounts](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © 2009 HuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | [Archive](#) | [User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Powered by Movable Type](#)