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## NATIONAL INTEREST

Dick Polman  
[dpolman@whyy.org](mailto:dpolman@whyy.org)



### A modified limited hang out

May 13, 2011

By Dick Polman

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To set the stage for today's topic - Mitt Romney, and his latest bid to defend/explain/finesse his Massachusetts health care law - let us first trek backwards to 1973, where Richard Nixon and his top aides are trying to figure out how to best spin the Watergate scandal. Should they lie, come clean, or calibrate somewhere in between? Let's go to the audiotape.

*Nixon:* "You think, you think we want to, want to go this route now? And the - let it hang out, so to speak?"

*Haldeman:* "It's a limited hang out."

*Dean:* "It's a limited hang out."

*Ehrlichman:* "It's a modified limited hang out."

If John Ehrlichman wasn't dead and gone in 2011, I would swear he was working for Mitt Romney. Because what we got yesterday from Romney, in his latest torturous bid to placate the Republican right and stoke his tenuous presidential prospects, was classic MLHO.

Romney had no choice but to be "honest" (his word). He had to embrace his '06 health reform law - which features a government mandate requiring Massachusetts citizens to buy insurance - because if he had renounced it yesterday and apologized for having been so foolish, he would have further burnished his well-earned reputation for inconstancy. No way he could afford to do that; his flip-flop account is already badly overdrawn. So instead he opted to present himself as a man of principle with unshakeable convictions.

Accordingly, in his much-awaited speech at the University of Michigan, he declared himself "proud" of the Massachusetts law that conservative Republicans loathe. He said he had no desire to "just stand up and say this whole thing was a mistake." On the contrary: "I, in fact, did what I felt was the right thing for the people of my state."

But then came the modified limited caveats.

Why Romney thinks this will work is anybody's guess, but he went with it anyway: While sticking to his guns and



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heralding the law that he championed as governor, he insisted that his health reform is substantively different from President Obama's health reform. Which is a fascinating argument, given the fact that they are fundamentally similar. And that might even be an understatement; as Michael Cannon, health policy director at the libertarian Cato Institute, told the press yesterday, "It doesn't even seem fair to call them similarities, it seems like their identicalities."

Without getting into the policy weeds, here's the gist: Both laws are grounded in the belief that universal health care is a great idea. Both laws pursue this goal by requiring everybody to buy health insurance. Both laws provide government subsidies to those people who can't afford to buy the insurance.

Romney tried yesterday, as he has done previously, to finesse those similarities by insisting that it's fine for an individual state to enact these policies, whereas it's a "power grab" if Washington enacts those same policies nationwide. His argument is obviously aimed at primary-season conservatives who believe in state's rights, but there are two problems with it:

Huge swaths of the Republican primary electorate hate the idea that *any* government would require its citizens to buy health insurance - state mandate, federal mandate, what's the difference? Secondly, it just so happens that Romney has previously extolled the Massachusetts mandate as a policy worthy of export to the rest of America.

Those previous statements do wreak havoc with yesterday's MLHO. Here's Romney on *Meet the Press* in 2007: "I think it's a good model for other states. Maybe not every state, but most." He said that if every state required its people to buy health insurance, "I'd think it's a terrific idea...Those (states) who follow the path that we pursued will find it's the best path, and we'll end up with a nation that's taken a mandate approach."

In other words, Romney's primary season rivals still have plenty of rhetorical ammo. They can tag Romney as a "big-government conservative," which, in some right-wing quarters, is akin to "child molester." All Romney's foes need to say is essentially this: "He stands by the health reform law that he championed as governor, a state law that impinges on individual liberty by requiring everyone to buy insurance, and he has stated that he hopes this law will be a model for America." Or perhaps simply, "Obamacare owes a debt to Mitt Romney for making it all possible."

The health care albatross is a key reason why Romney, the purported Republican front runner, continues to draw just 20 percent of party voters. Nothing he said yesterday is likely to boost his share. Health care per se is not even the issue. As evidenced by his MLHO, the real issue is credibility.

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# **Mass Health Care** — Nalaka 2011-05-13 10:22

Most surveys suggest that 60-80% of Massachusetts residents support continuing Romneycare. Thus, if Romney came out against it, he would not only be flip-flopping, he would be against a bill that is quite popular. While unappealing, his states' rights argument is probably the best option out there for him. Interestingly, I know of a few conservative acquaintances who are currently directly benefitting from Obamacare (because their 21-26 year old children can continue their health care under their family plan), yet most do not realize this significant benefit is a result of Obamacare. They and their children will be in for a \$2000-\$3000 per year surprise if Obamacare were repealed. At the end of the day, though, the most important aspect of Obamacare is the removal of the pre-existing conditions clause and the Medicare cost-containment committee.

# **Romney...** — frankg962 2011-05-13 11:11

The only thing that seems to stay in one place and never move is Romney's hair. The man, as Polman has pointed out, is about as steady as a weathervane. The idea that he's the front runner is laughable.

# **Heritage Foundation Care** — pollman 2011-05-13 11:12

What's truly pathetic is that Romney took his plan from the right-wing Heritage Foundation which wrote a paper proposing it. In other words, "Romneycare" or "Obamacare" was a good conservative idea until it became liberal when Obama supported it. If Romney had any stones he would point that out.

# **Your timeline is way off** — F.Inahoy 2011-05-13 11:42

The Heritage Foundation did entertain the idea in the early 90's, but the idea was shelved long before Obama became president. Here's a link (PDF file) to a Heritage Backgrounder from early 2001 where they are presenting their recommendations to incoming president George W. Bush. The approaches are all market-orientated and decry the government's imposition of mandates on coverage. So it would seem your charge of hypocrisy based on opposition to Obama is pure nonsense. <http://www2.econ.iastate.edu/classes/econ344/otto/documents/HeritageBackgroundhealth.pdf>

# **A Snoozer** — Logathis 2011-05-13 11:33

I watched Romney's entire half hour long speech. Even for a political junkie/policy wonk like me it was hard to stay focused. The man is just so robotic. Occasionally flashes of human emotion pop in: an anecdote here, a joke there. But his speaking style is truly sleep-inducing. And as Polman pointed out, the substance of his speech was essentially hogwash. He had a good idea as governor, and it's a sad commentary on the current GOP primary electorate that he has to run away from such a popular program.

# **Logan** — Phil Checchia 2011-05-13 12:35

The most qualified republican candidate is Newt, however the press would demonize him, and rightfully so, for his private peccadillos. Chris Christie would beat Obama, handily if economy doesn't improve, in a close match if it does. Seems like he is softening his no run stance. Allen West down here in Florida is a

**On health care, should United States follow Massachusetts?**

May 16 - Taunya English

Last week, putative presidential candidate Mitt Romney tried to point out the differences between the federal health law and the insurance changes he championed as governor of Massachusetts. Monday night, a speaker at Philadelphia's Free

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May 16 - Patrick Cobbs

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rising superstar. He is black, and his inclusion on next years ticket may appear to be pandering to blacks, so I see him as a threat in the future. My dream ticket is Christie-Jindal. In your political career in La La land did you ever work for Moonbeam, and if so did you meet Linda Ronstadt? She is by far my favorite female singer ( Blue Bayou and Songs of my Mother, a Mexican album she did). As for Romney, if he had Clinton's charisma he would be a shoe in, and yea, I know, If my aunt had ba--s she'd be my uncle.

# Moonbeam — Logathis 2011-05-13 13:38

I worked a little bit on Brown's campaign for governor(this time, not in the 70s), but I never met Brown. I also worked on Gavin Newsom's campaign for Gov before he lost the primary to Brown. Most of the campaigns I've worked on are local, so you wouldn't have heard of them. And wasn't "Blue Bayou" a Roy Orbison song? I'm sorry to say, but Allen West has no future outside of Florida politics. He's too much of a bomb-thrower, especially with lines like "I support all options against Iran." No one except the neocons wants another Middle Eastern war. Christie would be a formidable opponent, but he might be too moderate for the primary voters. I will admit his speaking style is refreshing compared to most politicians. Bobby Jindal looks great on paper, but after his State of the Union response in 2009, most serious strategists wrote him off. He might re-emerge in 2016 to run since his second term as Governor will end in 2017. Why is Newt more qualified than Romney, Huntsman, or Daniels? He's never been an executive.

# The source — Logathis 2011-05-13 13:40

Still Indy might yell at me, so here's the link to the Allen West interview where he says "I support all options against Iran." [http://blogs.browardpalmbeach.com/pulp/2011/05/allen\\_west\\_interview\\_part\\_two.php](http://blogs.browardpalmbeach.com/pulp/2011/05/allen_west_interview_part_two.php)

# Blue Bayou — Phil Checchia 2011-05-13 15:29

Was indeed a Roy Orbison hit. But Ronstadt trumped him big time. Christie moderate? First I heard that, unions and teachers hate him which would play well with the rest of the country. Allen West is very intelligent, well spoken, no nonsense guy. I think you're reading his future wrong. I just love Jindal, makes me feel good to see and listen to him. Newt is smartest guy out there. The other three need charisma transplants. Newt dumping a wife with cancer will not play well with women voters. It's okay to be a predator like Clinton, women love his bad boy image, but not Newt. Bottom line Logan, if Christie runs, he wins.

# Not gonna happen — yobill626 2011-05-13 11:50

No matter what he says, too many 'Pubs will just never like him. Its a shame, because his experiences are tailor-made for attacking the problems in this Economy. His best shot was in 2008, but the 'Pubs went with McCain (who's best shot was 2000). The 'Pubs have been screaming about being able beat Obama, but its not going to happen if they keep up their habit of allowing potential no-way-in-heck winners like Palin, then Trump take up all the attention. Michelle Bachmann next? If Daniels' wife isn't really on-board he's a no-way-in-heck winner too.

# Diddy — swedesboromike 2011-05-13 12:25

You said " I stand corrected, you called him a "political hack", even though you've never heard one of Rev. Wright's sermons." ..... Oh I see, yet You're all over a Republican for any tiny excerpt of rhetoric . I; ve seen enough of Wrights sermons to see where he is coming from. You can spare me the rest. Thank you very much

# swedes — pdiddy 2011-05-13 12:37

"Oh I see, yet You're all over a Republican for any tiny excerpt of rhetoric"

No I'm not. Show me an example of when I've done that. You can spare me the rest. Thank you very much.

# swedes — pdiddy 2011-05-13 12:43

I'm not much for sitting through church sermons, but if I was condemning a priest as a "political hack" I'd at least listen to more than 2 or 3 sentences to find out what the guy is really about.

# Diddy — swedesboromike 2011-05-13 17:13

I think all we're asking for is the same standard to be applied regardless of race. Did you feel the same way of Imus's remarks. Or Senator Allen's on the campaign trail? let me know

# While the Massachusetts — tom - wilmington, de 2011-05-13 12:44

law may be popular, it has not been the success it was intended. Healthcare spending per person has risen 15.5% from 2006-2008, while premiums have also increased 12.2% for the same period. So, it has not controlled costs as predicted. Second, while the uninsured rate is just 2%, 80% of the newly insured receive either low-cost or no-cost coverage from the state. Those subsidies will cost \$830 Million and are rapidly rising. Total state healthcare spending as a percent of the budget has risen from 30% in 2006 to 40% today, while the national average is only 35%. Uncompensated care, which was supposed to be eliminated, rose 5% from 2008 to 2009, 15% from 2009-2010 and is at \$475 million, and emergency room care for minor illnesses rose 9% from 2004-2008 (supposed to go away with all the newly insured). This is because the average wait time to see a doctor is now over 40 days, as many doctors will not accept CommonwealthCare (state insurance plan) patients. It is so bad that the governor now wants to install cost controls on providers, because the law is not controlling costs. Rationing cannot be far behind. So, if Obamacare is the clone of Romneycare, just think of how wonderful things will be in the rest of the nation when that law takes effect.

# Bottom Line Tom — Phil Checchia 2011-05-13 15:32

is Mass. elected Sen Brown to vote against Obama care. That says it all.

# FYI - all that data is from — tom - wilmington, de 2011-05-13 12:45

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contributions. Candidates' last campaign finance report before the election covered contributions and expenses only through May 2nd. The... -Dave Davies

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the Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy. It is available online.

# **Thanks — Nalaka** 2011-05-13 14:15

Thanks for that post. After reading it, I was concerned about the costs from Romneycare, so I went to the Mass Devisiion Health Care Finance and Policy, but couldn't find a specific link. So instead, I went to Factcheck.org where they did a review of Romneycare costs. They generally found that the net added cost of Romneycare was 353 million in 2010, or 1.2% of the state budget. The URL is here:

<http://www.factcheck.org/2011/03/romneycare-facts-and-falsehoods/>

In regards to wait times, approx 68% of physicians felt they had not increased significantly. They also found that Romneycare allowed for coverage of 98% of Massachusetts citizens. So, the question that we need to ask is: does extending coverage to 98% of citizens justify a 1.2% increase in state expenses? This is, I suppose, essentially a philosophical question that relates to one's political perspective. It is worth noting that Obamacare includes more cost control mechanisms than Romneycare.

# **Nalaka, — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-13 14:41

here is the link to that report from Massachusetts that I referenced above...[http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dhcfp/cost\\_trend\\_docs/final\\_report\\_docs/health\\_care\\_cost\\_trends\\_2010\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dhcfp/cost_trend_docs/final_report_docs/health_care_cost_trends_2010_final_report.pdf)

Also, note that I am still looking in that factcheck link for the 1.2% number you quoted. However, there is a link there to a report showing "how those 401,000 got insurance" which shows that since 2007 health insurers margins have greatly decreased (many of them in Mass are non-profits but they are bleeding money). This has led to a sharp decline in "days in reserve", from which companies could fund healthcare expenses from their reserves. It shows the medical expense ratio is now over 95%. The median profit margin for all insurers is also negative, a loss. My point is not that having more people insured is a bad thing. My point is that if this is the blueprint for Obamacare, and it has not lowered premiums, uncompensated care, emergency room visits, led to greater waiting times, fewer doctors accepting patients, is that a good thing? I suppose it depends if you are one of those waiting over 40 days for a doctor visit or lab test.

# **diddy, from yesterday, — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-13 12:49

just a couple minor points. First, while it has been reported that Obama graduated Magna from Harvard, I could not find where Harvard itself reported that fact. Harvard has only confirmed that Magna represents the top 10% of the class. Here also is one reason he should release his transcripts...he graduated from Columbia without honors, which meant his cumulative GPA was below 3.3. So, with such a low GPA, how did he get into Harvard, and what changed for him to improve his grades so drastically? Second, Harvard has also confirmed that being elected president of the Law Review is not based on academics, so it is not an indication of his grades. Third, there are 85-90 editors of the Law Review at the same time, so even if all 1,000 or so students eligible for the honor applied, there was still a 10% chance of being selected. So that also may not be an indicator of grades.

# **Minor points indeed! — landscape** 2011-05-13 14:13

These points are relevent to exactly what?

# **relevant to questions and — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-13 14:42

statements made by pdiddy yesterday, as noted in my caption which states "diddy, from yesterday".

# **Tom — pdiddy** 2011-05-13 14:54

But not relevant to the question of Obama's intelligence - which the is entire point.....

# **I surrender. — pdiddy** 2011-05-13 14:29

This is the birther argument all over again. I wasted several days of my life posting on this board about that stuff, and I'm not getting drawn into this BS again. Seriously, it never ends. If it's not his citizenship, it's his grades, if it's not his grades, it's about his religion (the Rev. Wright stuff), I think at this point I'll just concede. Go ahead and question his academic credentials. I've got no proof, and no argument that will convince you otherwise.

Why engage with someone who doesn't even believe the rumors himself, but is simply out to perpetuate them? This is silly. We're sitting here questioning Obama's intelligence; he graduated from Columbia, went to Harvard Law, was president of the Harvard Law Review, then went on to teach courses in law at the University of Chicago, who also offered him a full-time, tenure track professorship, multiple times, which he turned down.

# **typo — pdiddy** 2011-05-13 14:31

I meant "professorship".

# **I was just wondering. — pdiddy** 2011-05-13 14:52

I don't think Romney is a child molester, but I think we ought to discuss whether or not he is one. The question needs to be answered once and for all. After all, he has nothing to hide. He ought to issue a statement to dispel any questions people might have.

# **pdiddy - If someone makes an assertion — Still\_Independent** 2011-05-13 15:28

about Obama, I agree the onus is on the person making the assertion. That's the case of your Romney example. The birther mess was ridiculous because Obama DID provide evidence of his birthplace (i.e. the short form). All the other conspiracy BS should have required proof on the accusers. However, things like "graduated magna cum laude" were touted by Obama (or at least his campaign) as credentials when he

was a candidate. Therefore, the onus is on him to provide evidence in the positive. I agree it's not a big deal either way, and my support (or non-support) of him isn't based upon it. But it's not ridiculous to ask him to provide evidence for what he has claimed.

Conversely, any accusations about affirmative action are NOT Obama's to refute - it should be up to those claiming it to prove it.

And finally, it has nothing to do with intelligence. It has to do with achievement. Grades can be evidence of hard work as much as raw intelligence.

# **Scott** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-13 16:06

How do you prove affirmative action or set asides. They both exist and existed, and Obama certainly qualified. I think the best you could do as far as proving it is to know what his marks were and determine if he was admitted over students with better qualifications.

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-13 16:37

Even that wouldn't be sufficient as "proof" of affirmative action. There are other factors besides grades involved in evaluating an applicant.

# **Still** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-13 16:09

Obama and Michelle are supposedly married, right? How do I know? I've never seen a marriage license. Maybe he's just saying they're married because it would help him in the election. Are those really his kids? Let's see their birth certificates. After all, he claims that they are his wife and children. The onus is on Obama to prove these things.

My point is that there is doubt, then there is politically manufactured "doubt". Seeing as Obama was offered a tenure-track professorship at a prestigious law school, the "doubts" about his academic credentials/intelligence/work ethic are obviously political.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-13 15:42

I know there are certain aspects of criticism of Obama that set you off. Birther issue was justifiably so, you were correct about that. But criticism of Obama's intelligence rises a bit higher than birtherism. He has said many stupid and unintelligent things that the press merely put off by saying, Oh poor man is tired. And taken off teleprompter he is not the smooth talker he is on teleprompter. Of course, again, he can put all the questions to rest by releasing his records. And you know, just like the birth certificate, if it becomes a big enough issue he will release them. I think his records at Occidental will prove more troublesome than Columbia and Harvard. Bottom line is he was admitted to Columbia and Harvard.

# **Verbal steroids** — **stevie** 2011-05-13 16:11

You do have a point. The media was all over Quayle for potatoes...yet;

"I've now been in 57 states -- I think one left to go." --at a campaign event in Beaverton, Oregon

"The Middle East is obviously an issue that has plagued the region for centuries." --Tampa, Fla., Jan. 28, 2010

"No, no. I have been practicing...I bowled a 129. It's like -- it was like Special Olympics, or something." - -making an off-hand joke during an appearance on "The Tonight Show", March 19, 2009 (Obama later called the head of the Special Olympics to apologize)

"I didn't want to get into a Nancy Reagan thing about doing any seances." --after saying he had spoken with all the living presidents as he prepared to take office, Washington, D.C., Nov. 7, 2008 (Obama later called Nancy Reagan to apologize)

"Let me be absolutely clear. Israel is a strong friend of Israel's. It will be a strong friend of Israel's under a McCain...administration. It will be a strong friend of Israel's under an Obama administration. So that policy is not going to change." --Amman, Jordan, July 22, 2008

No, it doesn't diminish his academic credentials; but it does call them into question.

# **Steroids** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-13 16:32

In the sports section of today's Orlando Sentinel a columnist Mike Bianchi speculated about whether Tiger Woods and his health issues are related to steroid use. He cites the Canadian Doctor Woods employed for blood transfusions, who provided steroids to ARod and other athletes. Cited Woods loss of power, he ranks 69th on tour in driving distance, nagging injuries and his famous temper (roid rage). No proof, but definitely worthy of discussion. Right now, two, or maybe three phillies fit into same situation. Jimmy Rollins is a poster boy for steroid use, MVP with thirty homers to four homers last year, now much smaller in build, like Woods, and injured frequently. Chase Utley too fits into same category. Since MLB crackdown he too has lost power and is oft injured, taking long periods of time to heal. Ibanez too, after MLB crackdown on HGH, he went from a twenty homer half year to three or four the second half. He too looks smaller and less powerful. What are these guys thinking when they do them, that they're different and it won't adversely affect them. Any sports fans on the blog, what think you?

# **Steroids** — **JimR** 2011-05-14 07:05

Where did the idea of any of those 'Phils on steroids' come from?

# **Hey Jimmy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-14 17:15

Last year on the baseball blogs. Lot of discussion, especially on Rollins, who looked like a miniature Sammy Sosa the year he hit thirty dingers. Check him out now. Yea, he was probably stuffin'. Utley lost a lot in a hurry, don't know about him. Ibanez had that monster half year, then the crackdown on steroids and he has gone downhill since.

# **stevie** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-13 16:38  
Weak point.

# **Phil / Tom / whoever else cares** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-13 16:21  
There is no way to convince someone who thinks Obama is stupid/lazy/whatever otherwise (as there is such thing as definitive, all-encompassing "proof", which seems to be what his detractors demand on this score).

That said, no reasonable person can deny that he has excellent academic credentials, which are indicative of his intellectual capacity - unless of course, you suspect that he was somehow given a free pass by Occidental, then Columbia, then Harvard Law, then by U of Chicago. But whatever. I'll let it go at this point.

# **Double standard** — **stevie** 2011-05-13 16:33  
Let's use the Bush Benchmark...He graduated from Yale, yet the media labeled him a dope...and of course, no reasonable person could buy into that, or could they?

Academic assassination is in play when it comes to politics and it pays no attention to the academic acumen of the person under assault. Is it devious...yes...but, turnabout IS fair play. Hey, politics is a contact sport. The issue is HOW the media portrays the person under assault or how it protects (selectively) that person's academic reputation. And anyone with the IQ above that of a rock knows that they slammed Bush (the national media) and yet, have given Obama a relatively "freed ride" when it comes to gaffes. Enough said!

# **stevie: WTF?** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-13 16:43  
If you're saying this is character assassination, then you're saying it's not legitimate. Making sh\*t up is "fair play"? You need a time out.

# **Diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-13 16:52  
You cut me to the quick. Metaphorically, it's academic assassination, not literally. No one can say that Obama or any President is a dope, to the contrary, no one can reach the office of president without having a superior intellect or the concept of one. It is the depiction of the media that I detest, when they paint a president, as they did Bush, as a dope. NO ONE is saying that about Obama and it would be wrong to do so. I am protesting the lack of equal treatment by the main stream media. That my friend is undeniable.

# **stevie** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-14 00:08  
I disagree with your analogy between Bush and Obama. I do think Bush was a special case. I don't question Gingrich's or Romney's intellect, for example. Nor do I think Democrats as a whole are smarter/more hardworking or whatever. But I do think Bush opened the door to a new kind of Republican of the Palin/Bachmann genus that hasn't been seen before. This type of political figure has found a niche in the GOP, and its a niche that glorifies ignorance. The fact Palin was almost second in command of the U.S. is frightening.

# **Diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-14 09:52  
Again, you can attest to the shift in political agenda fostered by Bush and Palin, the same can be said about Obama, he is not following Clinton by any means, nor should he...he is the president. So many people find Palin frightening as some do with Van Jones being in the cabinet, albeit not as potentially a VP. And ignorance is a relative term, what is ignorance to some is the doorway to enlightenment to others. There is a certain tranquility in ignorance and BOTH parties exhibit it. Read Animal Farm by George Orwell and why straight line politics, abject Judas Goat party voting, is destroying us, victimizes the voter and steals elections.

# **stevie** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-14 13:44  
I disagree. Sure there are morons in both parties. But there is no analog within the Democratic party to someone like Michelle Bachmann in terms of national profile. More importantly, she represents a particular kind of Republican that is relatively new.  
  
The healthcare plan Bill Clinton tried to get in the 90s was more bold than Obama's. In fact, Obama's more modest plan was a reaction to Clinton's failure - it was in fact akin to the plan that Bob Dole wanted. This whole nonsense about him being a socialist is just that, nonsense.

# **stevie** — **pddiddy** 2011-05-14 13:46  
Come on, Van Jones? Van Jones? He was special advisor to the president for green jobs.

# **Diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-14 15:08  
No analog in the Democratic Party...try Olberman, Matthews, Blitzer, Cnn, etal...And Van Jones, a lawyer, who was appointed to a position who signed a Truther Petition, and stated he didn't read what he signed? That's just one example. But I am sure you would be just as benevolent if a Repub. did a similar appointment. And yea, there is Fox, Linbaugh, etal...but I am not denying that this exists in BOTH camps. Again, you exhibit obsessive compulsive devotion to straight line politics. That's OK, but don't defend the obvious from criticism.

# **diddy — stevie** 2011-05-14 15:37

Come to think of it your right, yes your reflections on Bachmann is noteworthy, however, err.....is Bill Maher the male version?

# **Bush got called dumb — Rich** 2011-05-13 17:33

because he has the public speaking skills of a drunken frat boy (not surprising, since that's basically what he is). No rational person could say the same about Obama.

# **Yea, you're right Rich — Phil Checchia** 2011-05-13 17:40

Can you imagine, Bush only visited 50 of the 58 states that Obama did. You idiot.

# **Rich — stevie** 2011-05-14 09:41

You are a fool.....how many frat parties did you attend at Yale with Mr.Bush? When was the last drink YOU shared with him at his house or yours? Stick to drinking Tokay from a paper bag and leave the adults alone, go outside and play with the kids.

# **Deal for Diddy — swedesboromike** 2011-05-13 17:14

We'll stop questioning Obama's intellect and asking for his grades if you and the complicit media will stop telling us how smart he is. Deal?

# **thanks for offering — pdiddy** 2011-05-14 00:38

No, by all means continue. It might give Trump a another boost - until Obama decides to clown him again. Maybe we can let this stuff grow long enough so that Romney gets sucked into it.

# **stevie — JimR** 2011-05-13 18:20

You can find refs to the verbal tripping of both Obama and Bush in the MSM. All the quotes you posted were certainly available in newspapers. And, I haven't seen anything recently telling us how smart Obama is.

# **JimR — stevie** 2011-05-14 09:37

You circumvent my point. There is a profound difference between actual intellectual acumen and media biased, intellectual evaluations founded on their differing political positions. We can agree the President Obama is a highly educated man as was Bush, they differ in their philosophical approach to politics. The media has not treated them equally when it comes to depicting Bush as pseudo intellect and extol Obama as highly intellectual.....that is bias and if you deny it you are denying your existence. And no one should take offense if our president is praised for being bright.....he is. But EVERYONE should question when someone calls the president a dope....that being said, I am sure your were appalled by that reference when Olberman, Matthews, Blitzer and company more then once, called Mr. Bush's intellect into question; much as your should be when Lindbaugh, Beck and company insinuate the same. This is just another example of straight line party politics and throwing the voters under the bus, like kids in a school yard pointing fingers, my dad is smarter then yours.

# **Phil - your steroid/HGH question — Still\_Independent** 2011-05-13 23:34

Some of them I doubt. Before discussing any of them individually, I must ask - WHAT crackdown on HGH? They only test in the minors. Now individually. Utley had been plain old hurt the past few seasons. His power (and all his numbers) have been on a downward trend since 2008. Ibanez, rather than wondering about the decline, just had two aberrant years (2006 and 2009) where he got over 30. He's a career 18-20 HR guy. Last year at age 37 he hit 16, so not much of a dropoff. Again, he's now 38, so I'd offer that not dropping off would be more of a sign. Rollins is sort of the same. That 30 HR year was a fluke - he's a career 15 a year guy. Even last year, he only hit 8, but only played in 1/2 their games, so not much of a dropoff. I mean any of them could have done it, but their power dropoffs all occurred in different years (Rollins only hit 11 in 2008). Also don't leave out four years of making the playoffs. Playing an extra month or two every year does take its toll.

# **pdiddy - and all this has taken — Still\_Independent** 2011-05-13 23:42

a semi-ugly turn that I never intended. Listen, I think Obama's a smart guy. I also think he gives a h\*ll of a speech, on or off prompter. I don't care for his verbosity at times (I don't think the words "yes" or "no" have escaped alone from his lips since 2006), but there is no denying he is a great orator. But I don't think he has great political instincts (and that may actually be a compliment). He can sometimes be refreshingly open (when he writes), yet ridiculously guarded (why not just release the !@#S% long form!) I put the college records into the latter category. If there is nothing to hide, and nothing embarrassing (and I have no reason to believe there is) then just release the freakin things. Fine, he doesn't HAVE to. Why not just do it because not releasing them isn't worth the hassle?

# **Still — pdiddy** 2011-05-14 00:33

I don't think these are honest questions. You may argue that Obama would be wise to respond to dishonest questions, and there's some merit to that approach. But I don't think responding to this stuff is wise, as it may solidify this type of nonsense as a fixture of political discourse in the long run.

# **... — pdiddy** 2011-05-14 00:49

The fact that we're having this conversation now, roughly two weeks after Obama released his long-form birth certificate, serves my point. It's the impulse behind the question that is really at issue, and releasing his college transcript won't solve anything but will embolden that impulse.

# **Diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-14 09:59

Yes, it's time to stop beating a dead horse.....like a good western, let it ride off into the sunset, vio condos.....

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-14 11:17

Watched The Stalking Moon last night on encore Westerns. Saw it a while back, but the end was quite suspenseful. Well acted by Gregory Peck and Eva Marie Saint. Worth watching. Did you see the Wild Bunch yet?

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-14 15:03

Wild Bunch is in my Netflix queue. I've been watching a lot of silents recently.

Just curious, one of my favorite shows was The Wire. As an ex-detective, what did you think of that show? Crime noir is another of my favorite genres.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-14 15:30

I never did get into the Wire. Many people liked it, if they start running it again I will watch it. Stevie advises Prince of the City, that is excellent advice. The first year of NYPD Blue with David Caruso as Kelly was by far the best detective drama I've seen. He was a detective. There's a scene where he visits his dying mother in the hospital, and she thinks he is his father. Great scene. Unfortunately Caruso, a real life kook, decided he wanted to hold up ABC for a new contract. They said no and we got Bobby Simone. (Jimmy Smits) Diddy also queue up Appaloosa with Ed Harris. You will like that movie.

# **diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-14 15:12

Take a look at "Prince of the City"....a gritty detective/crime drama, steeped in corruption and realistic.

# **The Big Heat** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-14 16:37

Not realistic, but check out Fritz Lang's The Big Heat with Glenn Ford, Gloria Graham, and a young Lee Marvin. Love that movie. A theater near me was playing it a month or so ago, and I got the chance to see it on a big screen. When Bannion slaps around Laganna's thug then asks Laganna, "You gonna pinch hit for your friend?" Great scene.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-14 17:23

Take it from me, if Prince was anything it was realistic. The interaction between cops and lawyers was right on. Great acting, Treat Williams, Jerry Orbach. I saw it with a bunch of cops at a Joe Baltake preview. Everyone liked it.

# **diddy, I have never stated** — **tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-14 19:38

Obama was dumb, and I have never stated he was an idiot. True enough that grades are not the only indicator of intelligence. However, you cannot watch Hardball, Cenk Uygur, Rachel Maddow, Schultz or any other show on MSNBC and probably CNN without hearing about the intelligence of Obama. Some have even stated he is probably the most intelligent president in our history. So, on what is all this based? For example, like you I have heard liberals tout Obama going to Columbia and Harvard as a sign of his intelligence, yet Bush went to Yale and he is labeled a dummy regardless. Some liberals say Bush got into Yale because of his father, so let's see how Obama got into Columbia and Harvard? I have two daughters who are half Japanese, and the college they attended not only accepted them as multinational students (one despite being on the lower end of academic requirements), they each got an additional \$10K grant for being multicultural. During the campaign of 2008 it was all over the media how McCain finished low in his class as the naval academy, but nobody ever questioned Obama on his Columbia/Harvard placement...it was just assumed he was intelligent because he went there. At Columbia, he graduated without honors, so that means his GPA was lower than 3.3...yet he got into Harvard Law? He cannot be touted as the most intelligent president in our nations history yet not have any media scrutiny into why he is considered that, can he?

# **Tom** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-14 19:49

"I have two daughters who are half Japanese, and the college they attended not only accepted them as multinational students (one despite being on the lower end of academic requirements), they each got an additional \$10K grant for being multicultural."

This is proof that you're an asshole, Tom

# **Say what?** — **JimR** 2011-05-14 21:01

"This is proof that you're an asshole, Tom" The connection as proof is...???

# **The connection is....** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 17:27

Using his own daughter as evidence of racially preferential treatment.

# **Tom** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-14 21:03

Just a follow up question, to clarify my harsh response above.

Do you think being half-Japanese has given your daughters an unfair advantage in life? I'm really interested in this. My father was Indian, my mother Irish. I happen to have received my mother's skin, my brother received my father's skin color. My last name would be what most people would call "ethnic". I wouldn't trade my name or background for anything, but it's been a struggle. So when I hear someone call Obama's being black (really, mixed-race), an "advantage", it kind of hits close to home. During the first Gulf War, I was in high school. I caught grief on a near daily basis, which I always pretended didn't matter (I was a "tough guy" back then). I wouldn't call it a handicap, but it's certainly not an advantage - and being black carries a stronger stigma than being half-Indian.



**# beating a dead horse — pdiddy** 2011-05-14 20:24

Know what strikes me about Bush's transcript? That he received mostly Cs and the only science course he took was geology (C).\*\* Then he goes to Harvard Business School? If his father wasn't GHWB, they wouldn't have even considered him. Bush's major advantage was that his millionaire father was a U.S. Representative, UN Ambassador, Chairman of the RNC, and CIA Director, among other things. (note that nobody ever accused Bush I of being stupid). Obama's "advantage"? He was black. Obama worked as a community organizer for several years before grad school, in a leadership role. He became president of the HLR. He later received an offer to teach law at a well-respected law school. Academically, there's no comparison. GWB was a special case.

\*\*I think liberal arts courses are valuable, but a C in philosophy means you learned basically zilch.

**# My fellow Americans, I have — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-14 19:44

decided to throw my hat into the ring for president of the united states. I have a law degree from Yale, and a Bachelor of Science degree from Dartmouth in Political Science and an MBA from NYU. Prior to attending Dartmouth I was a student at Boston College for two years. I will not release any of my academic records, neither of my college theses, and have instructed all universities not to provide any of my transcripts to the media. You just have to take my word for it that I am telling you the truth. Besides, Chris Matthews, Anderson Cooper, Rachel Maddow, Eliot Spitzer and Laurence O'Donnell have all attested to the fact that I am probably the most intelligent person ever to run for president, so that should end all speculation. Anything negative stated about my academic standing, or questions about my truthfulness is just right wing conservative spin and is racist against my Irish background.

**# Tom — pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:16

Left-wing spin? The Weekly Standard, FoxNews, and practically every other conservative media outlet has referred to Obama's magna cum laude distinction in the course of their journalism. You can question it, but don't tell me it's left-wing spin.

**# ... — pdiddy** 2011-05-14 20:42

By the way, the only reason Bush released his transcript was because it was leaked first. The other thing that struck me about Bush's transcript was that he didn't even take any business courses, or business-related math courses. He was also rejected by U. of Texas Law School before he applied to the Harvard MBA program. Forgot to mention that his father was also a Yale alumni.

Look, there are plenty of very smart, hardworking people who didn't get stellar grades. Interpersonal skills, which Bush by most accounts had in spades, are important. But he wasn't an intellectual. He didn't read that much even after he left school, by his own admission. I'm pointing this out because the analogy being drawn between Bush and Obama in this regard is completely bogus.

**# Juicing — JimR** 2011-05-14 21:10

Phil, the Phillies entire team has been probably more distant than most from the steroid bullseye. Even when Romero got caught up in the 'banned substance' stuff (where he really got screwed over) there was no whiff of juicing on the team. Some of those guys had some good seasons but they get paid insane money because they are all pretty good athletes. They've all been injured while playing an intense,reckless, free style. When hurt, the numbers and the sense of invulnerability take a dip.

**# He should be proud! — jkpsr@usa.net** 2011-05-14 21:14

Romney should be proud to have been one voice promoting required healthcare. The US must join the rest of the world in taking care of its citizens in a consistent way. We are fast becoming a backward nation!

**# Prince of the City vs. the Wire — yobill626** 2011-05-15 01:35

Both were groundbreaking in their times, with the Wire having the advantage of being able to more deeply fill out characters. Both deserve repeated viewings. As far as the differences in the intellect of Bush & Obama — maybe part of it seems that Obama has spent part of his life trying to prove to Academia that he is as smart as any of them, while Bush has tried to show that he's not some privileged rich kid, but really just a regular guy. Neither one becomes President if they don't successfully convince most people of this,

**# Yobill626 — stevie** 2011-05-15 08:45

Prince of the City is realistic - it mirrors the very real story of "5 Squad, Narctois Unit" in the Phila. PD, pull some articles on that. It shows how greed and corruption (regardless of the profession) works; when you dance with the devil you don't change the devil, the devil changes you! Wire, did indeed have more character focus, both are well worth the watch. And at the risk of redundancy - NO one can call the President of the United States a dope, and NO one should be offended when they praise their intelligence. You can criticise the President, but if you can not be loyal to the man...be loyal to the throne, but most important remember when criticism is character assassination (Diddy,rhetorically) and NOT an objective evaluation of the man..

**# diddy, I will respond to your — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-15 08:36

name calling in this manner. Being half Japanese does not give my daughters an unfair advantage in life, it is just how the school tries to ramp up its diversity. However, you erred in thinking my comment was to Obama being black. It was not. It was pointing to the fact he would have received an advantage being Kenyan, meaning multicultural. The fact you see everything through the prism of race is one reason why you cannot have an open, honest debate. The other reason is because you are such an idiot you cannot have a thought of your own, it all goes back to race. Disagree with the president, you are a racist. Want to see his college records, a stupid discussion based on the presidents race. Birther issue, had to be because of his race, nothing else. Call Bush an idiot, think he knew about 9/11, think he lied about Iraq WMD, want to see his military records, college transcript, talk about past drug use, all legitimate questions and debates. Want the same from this idiot president who cannot put sentences together to answer a question without the use of a teleprompter, all racist. Even question about his past drug use (a former roommate said Obama's grades were poor at Occidental because he spent all his time getting high) are closed because, well, that is just too racist. Yes, you are an idiot, and my responding to you is over. I have much better things to do with my time than

waste it on you.

# **thought provoking Tom** — **stevie** 2011-05-15 09:47

First I am not stepping on your dialouge with Diddy.....

There can never be a homogeneous America as long as POLITICIANS keep us divided by demo graphs. The only reason they do this is to manipulate the vote and pander to the voter. We are viewed as; White American, Black Americans, Catholic Americans, Jewish Americans, married – gay – straight –single.....ad nausea. Programs are developed by ethnic, gender and racial design, all under the banner of equal opportunity, while eliminating one group and embracing another, creating - animosity, and then the POLITICIANS capitalize on our dissent and promise to address the discrepancies. THEY create class war fare, the main stream media carries the banner, left and right journalism re-enforces this vitriolic propaganda to those that are politically vulnerable and gullible, and too many are willing to buy into it.

The most disconcerting result is the creation of the victim mentality in our society and those individuals who evaluate everything as being "victimized!" Facts never cloud the issue in their analysis of subject. The stock/playbook response is.... "Your criticism is only because he/she is (fill in the blank)." Thus totally ignoring genuine debate on an issue, but then again, there is certain tranquility to ignorance.

# **stevie** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:45

Who wants a homogenous America?

# **diddy** — **stevie** 2011-05-16 10:08

Isn't a homogenous (metaphorically) America, one that we are striving for; where everyone is treated equal, where the playing fields are level for everyone, isn't that the goal? Oh, but perhaps a heterogeneous (again, metaphorically) America is more suited to those who see diversity and multiculturalism as an advantage to exploit the "main stream" ideology that we are all one...yea we are, as long as I can still maintain the authority to disenfranchise myself, in order to gain some advantage over the someone else.

Again, Diversity and multiculturalism have been hijacked by those who see it as a way to manipulate the system to their advantage, again at the expense of their fellow citizens.

# **Tom** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:36

Tom, I do think you're an asshole for making that comment about your daughter. The fact that you attribute your own daughter's acceptance to her race is...traitorous. And you can't speak for your daughter's experience as a biracial individual. It's one thing to say Bush received special treatment because of his father's connections, it's another to counter this by saying your own daughter received unfair treatment because of her race in her acceptance to college. If she got into the Harvard MBA program with mostly Cs and no business background, then I'd wonder.

It's not like you can definitively know that your daughter was accepted to college because of her ethnic/racial background. Yes, grades/test scores are the main factors, but there are other factors - her recommendations, her extracurricular activities, her essay, her interview, for example.

Also, way to attribute arguments to me out of thin air. I never argued Bush knew about 9/11 beforehand. Show me where I posted that. You can't, because I didn't. Nor did I call Bush an idiot. I said his academic record doesn't stack up to Obama's. I never brought up Obama's drug use, or Bush's, because I think it's irrelevant.

# **Hey, you know what, a** — **tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-15 08:39

white person born in Kenya from a white Kenyan would have received the same advantage as my daughters in college. Is that racist? That white Kenyan or South African isn't black, but there are still African. Go figure.

# **Tom** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:38

Diversity isn't synonymous with race.

# **Beyond Obama** — **swedesboromike** 2011-05-15 09:32

Who is going to be the Democrats front runner beyond Obama? I can't really think of any. I certainly see no one in the Democratic party with the intelligence of Paul Ryan, the charisma of Chris Christie or the temerity of Marco Rubio. There just isn't any up and comers in the Democratic Party. The ideology within and among Democrats is reactionary liberalism, the conviction that whatever government programs exist should forever exist because they always have existed. Nothing progressive about that. And certainly no one emerging from the Democratic party with any fresh ideas.

# **Lost in my shock at being** — **tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-15 09:44

called such a name by diddy, a name I would not and have not in all my years of blogging on this site would use, and one I believe is deserving of an apology, was a legitimate question. Do I believe my two half Japanese daughters received an unfair advantage in their getting favorable treatment from their college. The answer is yes, I do believe it was an unfair advantage. The reason is because I do not believe anything should be based on race or status, but only on a person's achievements and ability. Do some people need help? Of course. However, that help should not be racially based. My next daughter going to Bowling Green is receiving no such advantage because she is not half Japanese, therefore she was not eligible for the multicultural scholarship they offer. Truth be told, aren't we all multicultural? Why give an advantage to some cultures not offered to others? Speaking of race and racists, last week I saw on MSNBC Al Sharpton commenting on racist attitudes. Here is a man who perpetuated a fraud against two white police officers in the Tawana Brawley case, a fraud for which the officers were arrested and charged, and a fraud for which he has never apologized. A fraud based solely on the officers race. A bigger racist in my mind does not exist, yet there he was on MSNBC speaking of racist attitudes.

# **Tom** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:45

Jesus. Bush got into the Harvard MBA program with mostly C's and no business background. You counter that by pointing out that your own daughter got into Bowling Green because she was half-Japanese? That makes you an asshole, sorry. Aside from being a bad comparison, it's repugnant that you'd say that about your daughter when you have no way of knowing that was the case. Seriously.

# **pdiddy** — **JimR** 2011-05-15 09:48

One of my daughters has the singing voice of an angel, which a college valued in thousands of dollars of grants. If a school wants to lower the bill for voice, ethnic identity, eye color, or favorite nail polish, you take advantage of it. It doesn't make one an AH. What is the need for crude and insulting rants?

# **JimR** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:09

Because no one has ever been oppressed because they had a good singing voice, or had a 90 mile per hour fastball.

# **Diddy** — **swedesboromike** 2011-05-15 10:15

What gives? You call Tom a name for taking advantage of a government grant? This is the same tired rhetoric we get from the left. No one on the right is supposed to accept social security or medicare or a grant. Of course the government had no problem confiscating the money from our paychecks for these things.

# **Swedes** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:48

see my 2 previous responses to Tom.

# **swedes** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:34

It's not about the grant. It's about him attributing his daughter's acceptance to Bowling Green as an undergrad to her being biracial. That's a creepy comment to make about your biracial daughter, especially when it's not THAT surprising for a middling student to be accepted to Bowling Green, not that BG isn't a respectable place. Getting into grad school at Harvard's another story.

# **minor error** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 17:39

got the daughters mixed up. Point's the same though.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-15 10:29

Your visceral reaction any time a blogger questions Obama's Intelligence or background is understandable, but not justifiable. I was a dark skinned Italian kid in a German-Irish neighborhood. I was called Dago MF from the time I can remember. My father was a policeman and that too caused me to be disliked. My dark skin and larger lips caused me to be called ni-er lips. In short I caught hell. Eventually I was accepted in the neighborhood because I was the best athlete. I understand that you are protective of Obama, in that you are both racially mixed. However, as much as you abhorred the birther issue it became a problem for him. Why? Because he refused to release the long certificate, maybe because it presented some sort of political advantage he intended to utilize. And now his school records, and legitimately so, are being questioned. Diddy, you see the gaffes he has committed, and you see that the press has given him a pass. His own admission that he was not a good student at Occidental and his questionable admissions into two of the country's best schools call out for an answer. Diddy, what my background taught me, is that I did not deserve any special treatment, which is the reason I do not give blacks a pass when they say or do something foolish. There are many unanswered questions about Obama. We know his racial makeup, that he is a citizen of the US, but we do not know how intelligent he is. And, as Tom says, when you run on your school background, you are obliged to provide records that justify them.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-15 10:44

I dispute your contention that Obama being a minority didn't help get him elected. First, in the primary, the press decided they wanted Obama. They gave him a pass on the rev. Wright issue and many of the stupid things he said. With Clinton, they chose to expose her as a liar, exposing her contention that she landed under fire on a visit to Iraq. They went as far as replaying the tape of her arrival. TRhat finished her. Secondly, many independents and some republicans have reported in polls that they voted for Obama due to some feelings of black guilt. Diddy, if Obama were a white guy from Maryland he would have never been the nominee. Race certainly played to his advantage, as is evidenced by that idiot Mc Cain who treated him with kid gloves because of his race.

# **Power** — **JimR** 2011-05-15 12:01

I have to challenge the ".the press decided they wanted Obama". If that's the case, how did others that the press didn't like ever get elected. We heard for years that the liberal press wanted to 'get' Bush. How did he get elected (ignoring that Kerry was a joke)? If the press held that much power, we'd just wait for editorial endorsements and appoint them. How do you know how many people didn't vote for Obama because they would simply never vote for anyone who wasn't a 50+ white guy?

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:16

Yes, and if Obama were pygmy from New Guinea he wouldn't have been the nominee either. What's your point? Okay, I'll play along. Blacks voted overwhelmingly for Clinton too.

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:07

Phil, I sympathize. But Italian is mainstream American, at least at this point. I don't protect Obama because he is racially-mixed. I've attacked Obama on all sorts of issues. Questions about whether he's an American and his intelligence are a different matter.

I actually got a good laugh out of your comment. Years ago I had someone try to reassure me by telling me, "I think you look Italian." I've encountered all sorts of confusion. In college during an argument a "friend" blurted out "sand nigger!" Funny thing is, I'm neither Arab nor Muslim - but it was an intentional

lumping of racial/ethnic categories in terms of slurs. It is an advantage in a way, in that you get to experience sides of people that other people don't see - unfortunately, it's often an ugly side, but it is knowledge nonetheless.

# **Diddy** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-15 16:35

I wasn't too happy gaining that knowledge when those Irish kids were kicking my butt. You're right, it made me stronger and less tolerable of people falling back on prejudicial treatment. You fight through it and move on.

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 17:41

Nah, it's justifiable, because there's a clear argument behind it.

# **Obama's "advantage"** — **yobill626** 2011-05-15 11:45

Phil: It may be your contention that Obama had an unfair advantage, but what proof do you have? I happen to agree with you that he got a lot of press attention because he was black (much like Jesse Jackson did when he ran), & it most certainly helped him. The Press always focuses on who's different. The contention could be made (& I agree with that one as well), that many people would NEVER vote for him because he was black. The \$64M question is did the advantage outweigh the disadvantage?

# **My proof** — **Phil Checchia** 2011-05-15 11:57

Is what I observed and what people said after the election. This guy was very short on experience and accomplishments. His main attribute was his skin color, and his ability to orate. Can you tell me what else led to his election?

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 14:51

Name another black U.S. president.

# **Phil** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:13

Let me amend that. Forget black. Name another president who was not a white male. Only one president was not married - James Buchanan.

# **Who could have guessed?** — **yobill626** 2011-05-15 11:58

That some racially mixed kid growing up without a pot to p\*ss in & with an absentee father could have such an advantage over the rest of us? Seriously though, it must have been way cool to grow up in Hawaii. IASTLY, Although I agree that Diddy was out of line in calling Tom an AH, but really guys, is there anyone here that hasn't been called THAT? Heck, my wife calls me that about once a month!

# **yobill626, LOL!** — **JimR** 2011-05-15 12:04

I have days when being called AH would be a good day, even a compliment.

# **yobill / jimR** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 15:23

For what it's worth, I thought Tom deserved it. I point out that Bush got into Harvard MBA with mostly C's (not a single A) and no business background - and he counters by trotting out his half-Japanese daughter's "special treatment" in being accepted to Bowling Green as an undergrad? What I found most insulting about it was that he was using his own daughter as an example of racially-based preferential treatment.

# **Observations aren't proof** — **yobill626** 2011-05-15 13:19

My point is can you cite statistical evidence that backs up your contention? For example, my own observations include that every time we select a new President, the majority view of the current President colors the perception towards the some of voting of the new one, starting with Carter. Carter beat Ford (a good man who pardoned Nixon) because he appeared to have a strong sense of morality. Reagan beat Carter (a micromanager) because he appeared calm & focused. Bush 41 inherited Reagan's good will but was made to look like he was out of touch with a sagging economy. Natural politician (but horndog) Clinton paved the way for happily married, born again Bush 43. The combination of Bush appearing to be a trigger happy Cowboy & McCain having too many of the same qualities is what gave the calm, cerebral Obama his shot. With that, I believe (but have no proof) that if the 'Pubs had given Romney the nom, a good slice of the electorate would not have taken a chance on the black, inexperienced Obama --- & who's whiter than Mitt?

# **yobill** — **TAL\*E\*BANNED** 2011-05-15 13:44

Pushing one of the Obama fallacies that he grew up poor. His step father was not poor and half his childhood he lived with his grandparents. His grandmother was a bank executive and he went to a prep school in Hawaii.

# **responses** — **JimR** 2011-05-15 15:57

pdiddy, some of your responses don't compute at all. Do you read the stuff to which you respond?

# **JimR** — **pdiddy** 2011-05-15 16:01

Tell me which one doesn't compute, and I'll provide the hooked on phonics version.

# **Firstly, listen to the arrogant,** — **tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-15 19:42

snobbish, better than y'all liberal speaking. Insulted that I brought up an example using my daughters, that is

MY DAUGHTERS. Not his, not Phil's, not Nigel's, but mine. And that is insulting to the arrogant liberal. Secondly, telling me I have no idea as to what happened during their acceptance, when I was there during the interviews, spoke with the administration, spoke to the financial aid people. Yes, I SPOKE TO THEM, not the arrogant liberal. And yet, he knows better than I what happened during the application and acceptance phases. Thirdly, while BGSU may not be Harvard, it was where my third, non-Japanese daughter chose to attend (he got that wrong several times btw). She, with her 3.4GPA and 1420/1600 SAT score could have attended other places she was accepted, but chose BGSU because they have an accredited Journalism program, good communications program, and she liked the campus. All important factors to anyone except for the arrogant liberal. Yeah, he states it is a middling school that would accept anyone (WRONG BTW), so my daughter must be academically challenged. He, having never met her and knowing nothing about her, can instantly see attendance at BGSU is by necessity and not choice (it is 550 miles away from our home). Lastly, he thinks I attributed statements to him in a post I made at 8:36 this morning when the only place his name appeared was in the title line. The statements were attributed to nobody in particular, but were general. However, in his arrogance, he believed they were attributed to him. Yes, just another arrogant, small minded, "I know best", "I'm smart/you're dumb", "I'm right/you're wrong" liberal. And I am the one called a profanity?

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**# Newt Gingrich recently — tom - wilmington, de** 2011-05-15 19:50

called Obama the food stamp president. Today, David Gregory on MTP asked Gingrich about that statement, saying it had a racial component to it. Today, with 1/6 Americans on food stamps, the highest percentage in our nation's history, a person still cannot make a statement about this president and his failure of his policies without it being tied to his race.

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**# Tom — Phil Checchia** 2011-05-15 21:01

Whenever the facts are against you, and/or you are losing an argument a lot of liberals will immediately resort to name calling, in this case racism. Again, just like in so many other cases, the MSM will twist itself into ungodly contortions to support and protect Obama. Standing alone, without a teleprompter, this man is a very ordinary person, who as I've maintained, would have never gotten the nomination if he were not a minority. And for those who disagree with that analysis, please tell me what Obama's qualifications and accomplishments were that made him a qualified candidate, and ultimately president. And again, Diddy over reacted to questioning Obama's qualifications and/or character. You citing your daughter's experience in gaining admittance to college was, I think, meant as an example of programs and advantages available to minority students, including Obama. It appears those programs and advantages were instrumental in Obama's admittance to Harvard and Columbia. As far as we can see, it wasn't his grades.

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**# Re — JimR** 2011-05-15 22:58

1-One of Obama's biggest qualifications was that he wasn't a Repub. George Bush had damaged the brand to the point that a number of candidates could have won. Remember, Gore got more total votes in 2000 and an empty suit like Kerry got over 59M votes in 2004, so it's not like the guy was ever a landslide winner. He wasn't a successful businessman or an academic either. The country often goes 'against' a candidate not 'for' the other one. No one really wins.  
2-programs like the one Tom's daughters used are put in place for a lot of reasons. My daughters aren't minority students but both were offered (and I jumped at) grant money for good voice, liturgical singing, graduating from the local Catholic school system, etc. One of my nephews received money because his father was a grad. Some schools don't want to look like snob academies so they allow poor students who could never afford to go there. Schools want diverse population for a dozen reasons. All it shows is that none of the tuition numbers are real in college

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**# agreed! — yobill626** 2011-05-15 23:43

If most Americans had believed that Bush was reasonably competent, Obama would not be President. I think 2008 was all about who was least like Bush. Jeb Bush is the Bush that should have become President. Good luck there now Jeb!

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**# Newt does have a history... — yobill626** 2011-05-15 21:42

of making some off-the-wall or out-of-the-blue statements that most reporters should question. Not having heard anyone else remark on this in the same way, Gregory's making the jump on his own to connect that comment to racism (or gin up his ratings). Hardly an MSM conspiracy. And, really now guys, nobody twists themselves into ungodly proportions to support or debunk contentions like most of the folks at FoxNews.

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**# Name calling — JimR** 2011-05-15 22:29

I have to disagree with some postings here. It's funny to see the assertion that it's only liberals who resort to name calling. Our former champion CD75 and many of those who post on Polman's Philly.com columns (conservative) regularly resort to name calling to the point of mocking Polman's name. No shortage of bad manners there.

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