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## The Tea Party Of The Future.

I think Cato's **Gene Healy** is misjudging how integration works [here](#) while imagining the future of small government conservatism:

Yet, here's an interesting fact: Recent Census Bureau figures predict that the working-age population will be 55 percent minority by midcentury. It may be hard to imagine the Tea Party movement becoming a Rainbow Coalition. But it's even harder to believe that minority voters will enjoy paying for the (mostly white) baby boomers' retirement and health care while they're working to support their own families.

The looming entitlement crisis may scramble existing political coalitions, with traditional GOP constituencies becoming even more resistant to cuts, while Democratic ones begin to resist paying the freight.

Healy's problem is he's looking into the future with a mind-set that the eroding tribal rivalries of the present will resemble today. We won't be in a post-racial utopia by 2050 either, but think about the leaps made toward a more racially integrated and equitable society from 1960 to 2010, or for that matter from 1910 to 1960.

Social scientist **Richard Alba** [predicted](#) in his book, *Blurring the Color Line*, that the influx of nonwhites into the work force heralds the kind of dramatic cultural shift in integration that we saw happen with white ethnics in the aftermath of World War II. Because this diversifying of the work force will be a natural consequence of a diversifying society, the fading racial rivalries that are fading even now will be even more diminished by 2050, because nonwhites won't be "taking" jobs from whites -- they'll be filling available spaces.

We won't be colorblind, but our understanding of who represents a racial "other" will be very different, and I think it's likely that it will be more tied to class than ever before. As a result, I don't think a browner America will have a problem with "paying for the mostly white baby boomers' retirement and health care" because there won't be as many cultural barriers to identifying with those retiring baby boomers as Healy seems to think there are today.

At the same time, it is also possible that "traditional Democratic constituencies" may be more friendly to small-government ideas than they are now, but that won't be because of racial rivalry -- it will be because that rivalry has diminished.

-- A. Serwer

Posted by Adam Serwer on April 1, 2010 10:42 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Share](#)

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The other problem with that prediction is that by 2050, most of GenX will be retired and they will surely represent the vast majority of those getting benefits. The leading edge Boomers will be about 95 and I think we can safely expect their numbers to be sharply reduced.

Posted by: drkrick | [April 1, 2010 11:11 AM](#)

I don't expect to be around in 2050, but I do surmise that many who are today "Hispanic" will label themselves "white" -- and many who are "white" now may label themselves "mixed race" or some other 21st century identifier.

"Race" is both enduring and flexible.

Posted by: [janinsanfran](#) | [April 1, 2010 11:42 AM](#)

Good gravy, Serwer! If we ever get to even a "blurred" society, what the devil are you going to write about?

Posted by: Anony mous | [April 1, 2010 12:03 PM](#)

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