



**TDS STRATEGY MEMO:**

**DEMOCRATS: LET'S FACE REALITY –  
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A POLITICAL COALITION  
THAT ACTUALLY EXISTS.**

BY  
ANDREW LEVISON



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**DEMOCRATS: LET'S FACE REALITY – THE TERM “PEOPLE OF COLOR” DOESN'T DESCRIBE A POLITICAL COALITION THAT ACTUALLY EXISTS.**

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The term “People of Color” is now playing a central role in the Democratic discussion of political strategy because it is described by its advocates as being the key part of a new majority coalition that Democrats could create if they would simply abandon their effort to regain the support of white working class voters.

In an Atlantic article, Ronald Brownstein [quotes](#) two advocates of this view:<sup>1</sup>

“The electoral danger in Biden’s strategy of focusing so heavily on recapturing blue-collar voters,” says Steve Phillips, founder of the advocacy group Democracy in Color, is that “Democrats will be so focused on not alienating Whites that they will mute the policy agenda that could excite the sectors of the electorate which are much more receptive... People of Color and young people, [who] are also the growing parts of the population”...the party would be better served by investing more “in efforts to increase turnout of People of Color especially across the Sun Belt.”

Similarly, Taifa Smith Butler, the new president of Demos, a liberal think tank focused on racial equity, told me, “As this nation becomes majority People of Color you will have to think about the broader coalition of the electorate.” Democrats, she said, “cannot kowtow” to an older White electorate at the price of sublimating the priorities of “marginalized communities... that we could be lifting up and elevating rather than continuing to try to appease White moderates.”

Obviously, when the term , “People of Color” is discussed this way, it is not just being used as a neutral synonym for “non-white” or non-Caucasian.” It implicitly assumes that these groups actually do form a coherent political coalition that is united by common problems and common interests and that can consequently be counted on to act as a united political force in American politics.

Consider the following explanations that advocates offer of what the term “People of Color” is intended to imply:

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.theoptimisticleftist.com/2021/08/whither-white-working-class-voters.html>

“People of Color” will define their racial/ethnic background and their shared experience of bigotry from white society as their most important shared political identity and as a consequence will support progressive candidates who champion their shared needs and interests.

“[People of Color] is a solidarity definition, a commitment to work in collaboration with oppressed People of Color who have minoritized.”

It is understandable that progressives would tend to assume that African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and many people of Asian ancestry would all naturally embrace the concept of “People of Color” as the right way to view themselves and their historical experience since all these groups most certainly have encountered various forms of racism and discrimination during their social history in America. From a progressive-left perspective, in fact, it also seems clear that *this is indeed very emphatically the correct way* for them to see themselves: as allies in a coalition and common struggle.

This was certainly the aspiration when the term “People of Color” first began to be used in the 1960’s by various sectors of the Black liberation movement. Martin Luther King Jr. and Caesar Chavez explicitly called for such an alliance in 1967 and King’s last campaign—the 1968 Poor People’s Campaign in Washington D.C.—was very consciously designed to popularize and promote the idea of a united popular movement of poor Blacks, Latinos and Native Americans.

But the difficult reality is that major social movements and powerful political alliances between ethnic groups do not arise simply because progressives wish that they would. They emerge because the very distinct historical experiences of different ethnic groups convince them to set aside their differences and work together in unity. This was the experience of the Trade Union movement in the 1930’s when the common brutal conditions in the factories of the era convinced Italian, Polish, East European and Slavic immigrants to mute the profound inter-ethnic conflicts that existed between them and join together to support the organization of trade unions.

## **The Distinct Historical Experience of African-Americans and Mexicans**

In contrast, although both African Americans and Latinos suffered racial prejudice and discrimination, their historical experience since the 1960’s has been quite distinct and has shaped their political consciousness in profoundly different ways.

For the African-American community the period since the sixties was one that was defined by the struggle to overcome the barriers to equality. On the one hand, during the 1970’s a significant number of African Americans began to integrate previously all-white occupations, receive stable working class and lower middle class incomes and move out of the ghettos into better neighborhoods. By the mid-1980’s the existence of this upwardly mobile sector of the Black community became visible in daily life and was reflected in TV shows and commercials showing for the first time “middle class” African Americans.

At the same time, however, for the people who remained behind in the ghettos, and especially the generation of young men who reached adulthood in the 1980’s, the continued lack of decent jobs and opportunity coincided with the emergence of crack cocaine and the hugely profitable

drug gang infrastructure that distributed it. The cynical Reagan-era “zero tolerance” policy for crack but not powder cocaine then condemned vast numbers of Black youth to long prison terms, producing an entire generation for whom a prison sentence became as normal a part of growing up as going to college was for middle class white Americans.

Although both the more fortunate African-Americans who escaped the ghetto and those who remained behind had vastly different experiences, both groups nonetheless perceived their historical experience as having been shaped by race – by either the successful struggle against racial barriers or by continuing injustice.

### **The Mexican Experience**

On the other hand, the experience of by far the largest group of Latinos in America—the men and women of Mexican descent who constitute 65% – two-thirds – of all U.S. Latinos—also included experience of prejudice and discrimination but was radically different from the African-American experience.<sup>2</sup>

The historical experience of Mexicans in America has been defined by successive waves of immigration and assimilation.

Many of the American citizens who are originally of Mexican origin are the descendants of people who have lived in the United States for generations. In Texas, California and the Southwest these Mexican-Americans often lived in majority Latino communities and were an accepted part of the towns and cities where they resided. As one person quoted in a [New Yorker article](#) noted:<sup>3</sup>

“We didn’t cross the border. The border crossed us.” The roots of their family in New Mexico went back five centuries. When Valencia was three years old, her father, Jack, was elected to the Las Cruces City Council. She recalls walking precincts with him as a child and learning about Latino politics and public service through him. “I grew up in a community where everybody looked like me and sounded like me,” Valencia said. “I didn’t ever feel like an outsider.”

Another person interviewed presented a similar view:

As a child in New Mexico, Valentin Cortez, 46, was raised by two parents who voted as Democrats, but were personally conservative. Mr. Cortez was around “a lot of cowboys and a lot of farmers” who were also Hispanic, but he never felt as though he was part of a minority and said he never personally experienced any racism.

Beginning In 1980’s, however, a demographic explosion of young people in Mexico coincided with the limits of continually more subdivided plots of agricultural land. Vast numbers of young Mexicans in rural Mexico simply could not make a living farming the small plots that were

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<sup>2</sup>(The historical experience of Puerto Ricans and Cubans, the second and third largest groups in the U.S. Latino population, are so sharply distinct from that of Mexicans, and also from each other, that they can only be intelligently discussed as completely separate political cultures. And, of course, the Asian population in America is not only radically different from both the African American and Latino populations but is also composed of profoundly distinct sub-groups – Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, South Korean – each of whom have had entirely different historical experiences with American racial prejudice and discrimination.)

<sup>3</sup><https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/deconstructing-the-2020-latino-vote>

available to them. In conversation and in song the widespread crisis was simply called “*La Miseria*” – “the Misery.”

They had been raised in a harsh world, accustomed to work “*De Sol a Sol,*” from sunup to sundown, and to live in poverty. In the U.S., although they were generally paid either at or even less than the minimum wage, it was still enough to live day to day and to also send some money back to their families in Mexico. Single men supported their mothers, fathers and relatives, married men supported their wives and children. By 1990’s remittances from the US had become a major source of income for families in Mexico.

The border was easy to cross at that time and many went back and forth. Whole industries – meat packing, carpet making, food processing and others became heavily dependent on Mexican workers. As communities grew some immigrants began to bring their wives and children to the U.S. while others started small businesses – restaurants, grocery stores, “*panaderias*” (bakeries), money transfer and document services.

They generally stayed in their communities – in the small towns where the plants and factories that they worked in were located and in lower income neighborhoods in the larger cities. Although the fear of deportation was omnipresent, in reality the odds against being arrested were low. Employers did not seriously examine documents and police generally left Latinos alone as long as they stayed in the lower income housing projects and trailer parks “*where they belonged*”. By the end of the 1990’s they began to branch out beyond jobs like meat packing and lawn work. Men became notably visible on construction sites, women as waitresses and maids.

By 2000, the peak year for Mexican immigration, a backlash was growing but Mexican immigrants were already deeply imbedded in America. Their children, born in the US, began filling the seats in public school classrooms. These second generation Mexican-Americans were U.S. citizens who spoke English, watched American TV, played video games and listened to the latest music.

## The Immigrant Parallel

They did encounter racism but realistically, for most, the experience more closely resembled the experience of previous waves of immigrants. In the early 20th century vast numbers of Italians, Poles, Jews and others immigrated to the U.S. They also experienced anti-ethnic bigotry, lived in insular ethnic communities and only gradually became accepted and acculturated as their children and grandchildren came of age.

This parallel is evident in the statistics. As Noah Smith points out in his [Substack commentary](#).<sup>4</sup>

On many indices of upward mobility Latinos are making clear progress. Rates of college enrollment have gone up 15% to near parity with whites, high school dropout rates fell from 34% in 1996 to 10% in 2016 and as early as 2011, 67% of Latinos were saying that they were better off than their parents.

Noah concludes:

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<sup>4</sup><https://noahpinion.substack.com/p/hispanic-voters-and-the-american>

In other words, despite starting from a very humble base, Hispanics are treading the same upward path that American immigrant groups always tread. The history of the Irish, Italians, Poles, and so on is repeating itself. ...as a result, it is not surprising that many Mexicans do not define or think of themselves as “People of Color.” On the contrary the majority define themselves as either like previous immigrants or simply as “hard-working decent people.”

A uniquely in depth study of how Latinos define themselves was conducted by a group of organizations and public opinion companies which solidly confirmed this conclusion.

The lead author of the study, Professor Ian Haney López describes the [study’s findings](#) as follows:<sup>5</sup>

Progressives commonly categorize Latinos as People of Color, no doubt partly because progressive Latinos see the group that way and encourage others to do so as well. Certainly, we [the authors of the study] both once took that perspective for granted. Yet in our survey, only one in four Hispanics saw the group as People of Color.

In contrast, the majority rejected this designation. They preferred to see Hispanics as a group integrating into the American mainstream, one not overly bound by racial constraints but instead able to get ahead through hard work.

The [study itself concluded](#) that three conceptions of race predominate.<sup>6</sup>

**People of color:** 25% see Hispanics as a group that, like African Americans, remain distinct over generations. Individuals in this group are more likely to be younger, U.S. born, members of the progressive base, and to prefer “Latinx” (even so, within this group “Hispanic” or “Latino” remains the overwhelming favorite, 65% to 6%).

**White ethnics:** 32% view Hispanics as a group that, like European Americans, over generations become part of the American mainstream. Those in this group are more likely to be older, immigrants, and bilingual. Compared to those who see Latinos and Latinas as People of Color, this cohort is almost three times as likely to believe that “People of Color who cannot get ahead are mostly responsible for their own situations” (38% versus 14%).

**Bootstrappers:** 28% perceive Hispanics, not primarily as People of Color or as white ethnics, but as a group that “over generations can get ahead through hard work.” Compared to white ethnics, they tend slightly more conservative regarding race, class, and government, and are the most likely to be Republican.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/18/opinion/biden-latino-vote-strategy.html>

<sup>6</sup><https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ef377b623eaf41dd9df1311/t/5fc55c8d4e98326c02c48eb6/1606769814244/Project+Juntos.summary+briefing.092620.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>In understanding why this is true, one factor that is important to recognize is that many Americans defined as “Hispanics” or “Latinos” in national statistics – particularly men and women descended from parents with strong Spanish ancestry or intermarriage with whites – are extremely fair skinned and do not consider themselves in any sense “Brown” or as being in any way a “Person of Color.” Even many people with distinct Latin features (for example actors Antonio Banderas or Catherine Zeta-Jones) are not seen or defined by American society as “Brown” or “People of Color”.

## The "Natural Democrats" Fallacy

It was easy to ignore the fact that the majority of Latinos did not define themselves as "People of Color" so long as Latinos voted majority Democratic. In presidential elections since 1980 the GOP generally only won between 25 to 35% of the national vote.

But even long before 2016 a threat could be seen on the horizon. Aloof, rather patrician GOP establishment candidates like George Herbert Walker Bush and Mitt Romney only received 25-30% of the presidential vote but more "down to earth" candidates like Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush received support ranging from the high 30s to as much as 40 percent support for Bush in 2004. George W. Bush had also been quite popular with Latino voters in Texas during his campaigns for governor. It was therefore clear that style and personality could make a significant difference.

And Democrats had also always had problems with the large Cuban exile population in Florida because of the deep anti-Castro sentiments in that community to which Republican candidates very successfully appealed.

Mexican Americans, on the other hand, have been consistently assumed to be "natural" Democrats. As an article in [538.com](#) reported:<sup>8</sup>

Mexican Americans basically singlehandedly drive the narrative that Latinos are core Democratic voters thanks to their overwhelming numbers: 63 percent of the national Latino population is of Mexican descent, and that figure is even higher in swing states like Arizona, Nevada and Texas.

And they had generally voted more than 2 to 1 in favor of Dems.

But today the fact that Latino support for Trump actually increased in 2020 has profoundly shaken the "natural Democrats" assumption.

## The Expanded Latino Vote for The GOP in the 2020 Campaign

According to the Pew validated voter study, one of the most reliable measures of actual voting behavior, the Latino vote for the democratic candidate declined from 66% to 59% between 2016 and 2020 – a 7 point decline. The other most highly regarded source of demographic voting estimates, produced by the Catalyst Institute, used a slightly different calculation – the "two party vote share won by the Democrat" (i.e. excluding third party candidates) – and found that it declined from 71% to 63% – a nearly identical 8 point decline.

This was quite stunning because by 2020 Latinos had had four years to observe Trump's demonization of Latino immigrants and barely concealed bigotry. Yet instead of voting more solidly Democratic, Latinos actually increased their support for Trump.

In the Democratic postmortems of the 2020 elections it was belatedly recognized that the Trump campaign's Latino strategists, lavishly funded by the major right wing foundations run by the Koch brothers, the Mercers and others had conducted extensive polling and focus groups which

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<sup>8</sup><https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/theres-no-such-thing-as-the-latino-vote/>

correctly determined that Latino voters could be successfully targeted with pro-Trump appeals. The information was then put into practice by providing ample funds for pro-Trump social influencers in the Latino community and conducting extensive door to door canvassing and persuasion campaigns in Latino neighborhoods.

As the [head of one Latino organization noted](#):<sup>9</sup>

The Trump campaign maintained a consistent line of communication with, and outreach to, the Latino community that went beyond TV advertising starting two years before the 2020 election. Its Spanish-language strategy included in-person canvassing, mail, digital advertising, newspaper ads and a network of influencers who spread disinformation and echoed Donald Trump's talking points on digital media. The misinformation they peddled was not rebutted by the Democrats until it was too late in the election cycle to make a difference....

Since the 2000s, organizations like the Libre Initiative, a Latino conservative advocacy group within the Koch political network, have been working tirelessly to promote conservatism in Hispanic communities. Through them, the G.O.P. has built support while providing resources to the Latino community. For example, the Libre Initiative offers English courses, economic empowerment sessions and pathways to citizenship to immigrants throughout the South and Southwest. It also helps them study for driver's license exams, citizenship tests and the G.E.D.

Come election year, Republicans coordinated an aggressive social media campaign, accompanied by canvassing programs, and hosted car parades with well over 500 cars in Texas. They didn't need to empty their wallets in the final weeks before the elections because they had maintained a constant drumbeat of communication in the area for months.

This extensive Republican outreach included utterly cynical and dishonest pro-Latino slogans and messages. Incredibly, on Spanish language TV Trump actually promised to *pass citizenship for Dreamers* by executive order. At the same time the campaigns dramatically muted Trump's attacks on immigrants and focused his vitriolic attacks instead on African Americans, riots and crime.

The result was clear. As a commentary by [The Brookings Institution noted](#):<sup>10</sup>

Latino voters' perception of President Trump shifted significantly from 2016 to 2020. Most notably, perceptions among Latinos that President Trump was "hostile" to Latinos dropped from 55% in 2016 to 29% in 2020... this shift is undoubtedly due to the movement away from hostile language about Latino, and predominately Mexican immigrants in 2020.

In fact, while many left-progressives continued to believe that Latino support could be won by appealing to their solidarity as "People of Color," the Republican strategists had figured out that many Latino voters would not be repelled by attacks on African-Americans as criminals and rioters. On the contrary, such attacks would resonate with many because the reality is that a substantial current of hostility has long existed between the two groups.

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<sup>9</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/01/opinion/latino-vote-midterms-2022.html>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2021/06/17/immigration-and-the-latino-vote-a-golden-opportunity-for-democrats-in-2022/>



This has been true for many years. As a [2007 commentary](#) in the *Los Angeles Times* noted:<sup>11</sup>

Animosity between Latinos and blacks is the worst-kept secret in race relations in America. For years, Latino leaders have pointed the finger of blame at blacks when Latinos are robbed, beaten and even murdered. Blacks, in turn, have blamed Latinos for taking jobs, for colonizing neighborhoods, for gang violence. These days, the tension between the races is noticeable not only in prison life and in gang warfare (where it's been a staple of life for decades) but in politics, in schools, in housing, in the immigration debate.

Leaders in both communities have always very carefully muted their discussion of this issue in the mass media for fear of inflaming the situation but ministers, social service providers and other local leaders who work in the African-American and Latino communities are very well aware of the hostile underlying attitudes that do exist in the two communities.

(**Note:** An important first step to reduce African-American-Latino tensions and encourage unity began during the Black Lives Matter's protests in the Spring of 2020. Initiated by the youthful activists in the movement, serious discussions about unity began between members of both communities for the first time. While this is a very encouraging development, it just begins to scratch the surface of the substantial tensions that exist between the two groups.)

### **Latinos are a Working Class People**

Equally if not more important, Trump's campaign recognized that working class Latinos could be successfully appealed to as working people using the same messages that had built Trump's support among white workers.

As an [NBC News postmortem](#) noted:<sup>12</sup>

Although President Joe Biden won a majority of votes from Hispanics, 59 percent in the 2020 race to Trump's 38 percent, there was a significant difference in preference based on education, Pew reported.

Biden won 69 percent of college-degreed Latino voters, compared to 30 percent for Trump, a 39 percentage-point advantage. But Biden's advantage over Trump narrowed with Hispanics with some college or less, 55 percent to 41 percent, a 14-point advantage.

This presented a huge threat because, according to Pew estimates, Hispanics are the most heavily working class group among nonwhites, with 80 percent falling into that category. If future GOP candidates could exceed that 41% level with working class Latino voters, the entire group could essentially become a 50/50 swing voter category rather than part of the Democratic base.

There were a range of factors involved. [One postmortem noted](#) as follows:<sup>13</sup>

Interviews with dozens of Hispanic men from across the country who voted Republican last year rejected the idea that Latino men would instinctively support liberal candidates. These men challenged the notion that they were part of a minority ethnic group or

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<sup>11</sup><https://www.latimes.com/la-op-hutchinson25nov25-story.html>

<sup>12</sup><https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/latinos-supported-trump-likely-lack-college-education-rcna1306>

<sup>13</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/05/us/politics/latino-voters-democrats.html>

demographic reliant on Democrats; many of them grew up in areas where Hispanics are the majority and are represented in government. And they said many Democrats did not understand how much Latino men identified with being a provider – earning enough money to support their families is central to the way they view both themselves and the political world.

This was echoed by other journalist's interviews,

Jose Aguilar grew up in McAllen, Texas, in the 1960s, raised by parents who had limited means for buying food and clothing. They were hard workers and instilled in him that "if you apply yourself, you will get what you deserve." His family welcomed relatives from Mexico who stayed for a short time and then returned across the border; some managed to immigrate legally and become citizens, and he believes that's how anyone else should do so.

"We were brought up the old-school way, that men are men, they have to provide, that there's no excuses and there's no crying. If you don't make it, it's because you're a pendejo," he said, using a Spanish term for idiot. "Maybe that's not nice, but it breeds strong men, mentally strong men."

Trump's tough, blustering style also suggested that he could be trusted to be a sincere advocate for the "common man." As one Latino [noted in an interview](#):<sup>14</sup>

Trump's image as a straight-talking businessman was definitely part of what appealed to my dad. He liked that the former president grew up with men similar to those who worked with my grandfather. "We'd run into the electrical contractor's union or somebody else working in houses, building houses. Every one of them talked like Trump," my dad said. "No big words. Everything was very, very simple. And Trump learned to do that. He learned to master that, where he can communicate."

This was echoed by two opinion analysts who conducted [extensive interviews](#) with white working class Trump supporters:<sup>15</sup>

After spending the past few years living in white working-class Democratic communities that voted for Trump, we are not surprised by the President's cultural appeal across racial lines.

. . .Exit polls show that his supporters especially admire the President's strength. When asked to identify the quality that mattered most in voting for President, a 32% plurality of voters said "a strong leader." Among those citizens, 71% voted for Trump. That figure was even higher in heavily Latino Florida, where 81% of such voters did likewise...the citizens we encountered praised Trump in general terms, for his "strength," "energy," and "balls."

Progressives are endlessly frustrated by the fact that Democratic candidates invariably offer programs that are objectively far more favorable to working class people than those of the GOP. But these arguments invariably run up against the fact that many working class people do not

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<sup>14</sup><https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2021/03/22/latino-men-trump-2020/>

<sup>15</sup>Trump's democrats - <https://fortune.com/2020/11/06/trump-support-black-latino-men-rappers/>

read policy papers or carefully listen to policy debates. They “*vote for the candidate, not the platform*” and tell pollsters that they base their choices on which candidate they think seems to “*care about people like you,*” “*is on your side,*” “*will fight for you*” or, in the commentator’s most recent cliché, “*is someone you would like to have a beer with.*”

And Trump, despite his privileged childhood and vast inherited wealth, displayed a blustering, Archie Bunker/Tony Soprano style that seemed more authentic to many working class people than that exhibited by many of the more “*typical Washington politician*” candidates and media commentators who criticized him.

The GOP also appealed to working class Latinos by focusing attention on the aspects of the Democratic platform that seemed unfavorable to working people or indifferent to their interests. Many working class Latinos in Texas, for example, have good, very high paying blue-collar jobs in the many oil and gas refineries and in pipeline construction and maintenance. Democratic rhetoric about eliminating fossil fuels seemed to directly threaten their livelihood. A substantial number of Texas Latinos also work in law enforcement, including the Border Patrol, and view rhetoric about “defunding the police” or “open borders” with scorn. GOP commercials made these ideas appear to be the defining elements of the Democratic platform.

More broadly, GOP rhetoric that cast Republicans as “job creators” and defenders of small business seemed plausible to many working class Latinos when contrasted with what Republicans described as the “job-destroying” Democratic agenda. Had Democratic messaging been sharply focused on refuting these attacks they might have been blunted. But, in many cases across the country the primary Democratic appeal to working class Latinos was to emphasize instead Trump’s inhumane policies and disparaging remarks about immigrants.<sup>16</sup>

## Conclusion

The conclusion that must be drawn is clear: the term “People of Color” does not describe any political coalition that actually exists today.

As leading Democratic political analyst [Ruy Teixeira notes](#):<sup>17</sup>

The use of the term “People of Color” frequently obscures more than it clarifies since it is typically used to imply a unity of experience, particularly disadvantaging experience, among all nonwhites. The inclusion of Asians already makes little sense when you compare the socioeconomic outcomes of Asians to whites, where the former are generally superior. But it is also the case that conflating the experiences of “black and brown”, a common locution among progressives, is also misleading. In fact, one needs to understand the distinctiveness of Hispanic experience in today’s America to have a prayer of understanding recent political trends among this population and what they may portend for the future.

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<sup>16</sup>Many working class Latinos also hold conservative views about abortion, GLBTQ issues and other aspects of personal morality that are reinforced by their Catholic or Evangelical Churches which openly support the GOP. Many working class African-Americans hold similarly conservative views but keep their moral attitudes separate from their political choices on election day.

<sup>17</sup><http://www.theoptimisticleftist.com/2021/08/understanding-distinctiveness-of.html>

In another column he [underscores this conclusion](#):<sup>18</sup>

Democrats will continue to have problems with the Hispanic vote until they face the fact that the Hispanic vote is basically a working class vote, not a “People of Color” or “marginalized persons” vote.”

The point can be stated more forcefully. There is nothing objectionable about the term “people of color” when progressives use it as a way to talk about the common problems faced by different groups who are affected by prejudice and discrimination.

On the other hand, however, there is absolutely nothing at all “progressive” about declaring that a major political alliance exists simply because from a radical perspective one feels that such an alliance ought to be present.

On the contrary, it is profoundly arrogant and condescending to assume that a social group like Mexicans or other Latinos will support a democratic candidate simply because they are “People of Color.” This may be the proper, politically correct way to describe them in college seminars, but the real attitudes of Latinos and their actual political choices will be determined by the daily “facts on the ground” and what the people themselves feel and say about their attitudes. If Democratic candidates want to understand what Latino and Latina voters think and not impose their own perspective, they must set aside preconceived notions about what “People of Color” are assumed to think and instead talk to the people themselves, listen to them and shape their political campaigns and appeals based on what they learn. There is no other way.

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<sup>18</sup><http://www.theoptimistleftist.com/2021/09/class-and-hispanic-vote.html>