

Why So Many Americans Hate Obama

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I can explain why so many Americans are angry about President Obama and dislike or hate him with passion, and why it has little to do with his actions and policies. But first I must examine the confluence of two historical inflection points that explains so much resentment and opposition to Obama.

The first is the increasingly recognized but painful reality that in almost all respects that matter to citizens the USA is no longer the great nation it once was. As a recent Time magazine issue proclaimed, especially a [great essay](#) by Fareed Zakaria, the US is in decline, similar to what happened to other once dominant nations. The Great Recession and the huge numbers of unemployed, underemployed, foreclosed, homeless, hungry and other pained citizens have drilled into the public consciousness that America is like a terminally ill cancer victim. There is little realistic hope for truly better times. For example, new research data show that upward mobility in the US is now worse than in a number of other industrialized countries, such as France . The American Dream, in other words, is dead. The game is lost.

Consider the incessant use of Obama's new phrase "winning the future." This time it is for his campaign to stay in office. In one rational sense it seems to recognize that current times are bad, but Obama has totally refused to acknowledge that the country he leads has already "lost the present." He is in a dangerous state of denial or, alternatively, cannot find the courage to be brutally honest to his citizens. To openly confront the truth about the present would provide the motivation and a needed sense of urgency to adopt policies and programs to turn the curve around. It would make the notion of winning the future against so much domestic corporate corruption and foreign competition a whole lot more challenging.

The thing to notice about President Obama when you look at him when he talks about national conditions and what needs to be done, or when he has to speak about national tragedies, is the lack of visible, genuine and strong human emotions. He seems always to be talking about things in an intellectual, professorial style. Analysis, rather than principles seem to shape his thinking.

Great leaders connect to their audiences by openly expressing deeply felt passionate emotions. They feel our pain through much more than mere words. You relate to them because they really seem to relate to you. Obama has what psychiatrists speak of as flat affect. When he campaigned for the presidency a [New York Times writer](#) referred to "his soft diction, flat affect and refusal to project anger." Sure he can give great speeches now and then, but ordinarily his style shows an existential dissociation from the painful realities he is talking about and addressing through presidential actions. While Obama personally won the

future through timely smiles and clever words, he hardly ever connects to most people in a visceral way when it comes to the most painful situations.

The result of his personality and style is that there is little reason for Americans to feel confident that Obama can or will turn the nation around for the better.

Now consider the second inflection point. In the history of American presidents Obama defines a historic inflection point, namely when white Americans have lost their majority status to minorities, notably blacks and Hispanics. The first African-American president with a foreign name represents a remarkable departure from history, not just our line of presidents but something much larger for American society. He won the presidency because non-whites, not whites, voted so strongly for him.

Put the two historic inflection points together. The US has lost its greatness and at the same time American society has shifted from a white to a darker skin character.

Those Americans, who harbor so many strong negative feelings towards Obama in their own minds, either explicitly or implicitly, create causality between the two inflection points. In other words, the loss of national greatness is blamed on the loss of a white, Caucasian society. This is far different than ordinary racism. It runs deeper. This explanation also helps explain why so many of the people who reject Obama do not see themselves as racists. No, with my explanation it is better to see all the anger and hatred about Obama as connected to a patriotic, nationalistic frame of mind. Of course, Obama-hating people have put the blame on the wrong people. The single most powerful reason why the US has declined is its capture by a white-dominated corporate dictatorship and wealthy upper class.

Obama himself shoulders considerable responsibility for wrongly blaming non-white people. His intellectual detachment or existential dissociation from conditions that are greatly impacting so many Americans, especially whites who have lost a good middle class life or economic security, makes him seem alien, not a genuine part of American culture. This sustains all the nonsense about him not being an American citizen.

Obama does not connect in all the right and necessary ways to be a true and effective national leader, not like Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton did. The inevitable consequence of his shortcomings is that he pursues public policies that are wrongheaded and ineffective in delivering what the public wants, including deep reforms of the political and government system. He has not delivered the changes so many Americans were waiting for and that he once promised. How can he? He does not really connect to most suffering Americans that see their country already a loser in the new global reality at exactly the same time it has become a nation overrun by people of color. He does not openly and strongly attack the corporate dictatorship that hijacked the US economy and political system. So many Americans, not just those on the conservative right but also progressives on the left, see Obama as the president of elites, the wealthy, the powerful, not their own. Also, like Republicans, he can be seen as someone sacrificing the middle class and the American economy to globalization, foreign competitors, and the corporate powers benefiting from foreign activities.

When Obama speaks of winning the future he reminds Americans seeing themselves as victims that we have lost the present, something he refuses to acknowledge. His existential dissociation keeps him from being one of us. For being a great leader and president, being smart is not enough.

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