

Independence Day May Only Work for Republicans

We conservatives often bemoan the commercialization and secularization of our traditional holidays. Christmas—or should we say the Winter Holiday—now begins around Nov. 15, Veteran's Day and Memorial Day are occasions for mattress sales, not solemn commemorations of the sacrifices made to preserve our way of life.

Now comes news from researchers at Harvard University that the July Fourth holiday commemorating the announcement of the Declaration of Independence may still be serving its intended purpose—promoting patriotism.

The good news is it only seems to work on Republicans.

According to the study by Andreas Madestam and David Yanagizawa-Drott, "There is no evidence of an increased likelihood of identifying as a Democrat, indicating that Fourth of July shifts preferences to the right rather than increasing political polarization."

The three key findings of those attending July Fourth celebrations:

- When done before the age of 18, it increases the likelihood of a youth identifying as a Republican by at least 2 percent.
- Celebrating Independence Day raises the likelihood that parade watchers will vote for a Republican candidate by 4 percent.
- Celebrating the Fourth of July boosts the likelihood a reveler will vote by about 1 percent and increases the chances they'll make a political contribution by 3 percent.

What's more, the impact isn't fleeting. "Surprisingly, the estimates show that the impact on political preferences is permanent, with no evidence of the effects depreciating as individuals become older," said the Harvard report.

It is worth noting that many of the grievances the Founders outlined in the Declaration of Independence had to do with taxes and big government, charges we regularly level at Democrats, such as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, so perhaps it is understandable that the sentiments commemorated on July Fourth don't resonate with establishment Democrats as much as they do with conservatives.

However, we are not sure that turning children into *establishment* Republicans is a good thing; they might find themselves, like Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, drawn to doubling the national debt, pork barrel spending, endless and inconclusive wars and bringing vast numbers of anti-constitutional immigrants to our country.

Given that movement conservatives are the last remaining American political movement to fully embrace the values and guidance of the Declaration of Independence, it seems to us that if there was ever a time for Americans to recall exactly why we declared our independence, it is this Fourth of July.