

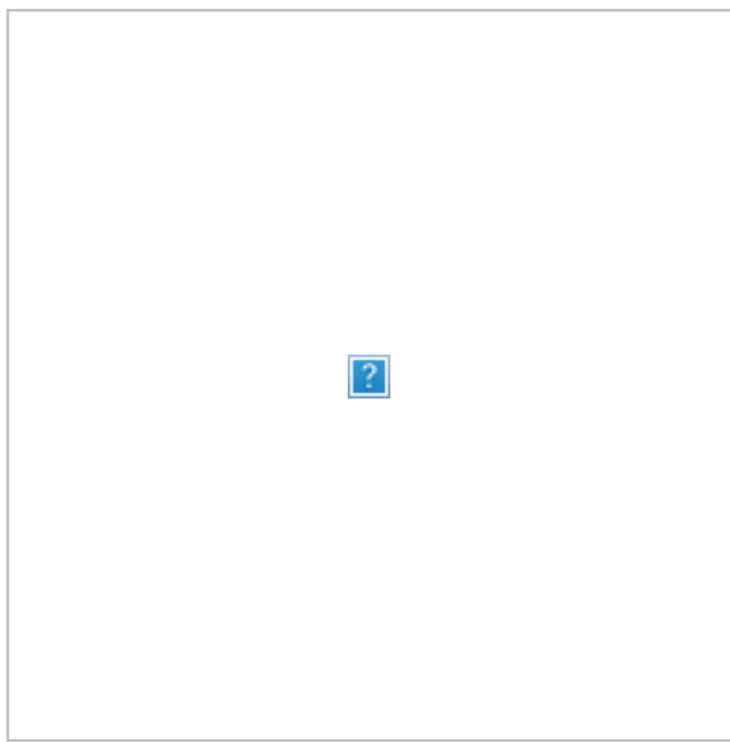


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## ONCE MORE UNTO THE INTERNET — OR PERHAPS NOT BY TOBY MILLER

Nov 9, 2012 | Uncategorized | 0 |



Yet again, the US Presidential election was a televisual one. Yet again, we were told it was not.

No matter how many people follow the

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election cycle on TV, no matter how much time and money the campaigns spend on it, there remain internet bores/boors who won't face facts.

Their cybertarian obsessions lead them time after time—it's actually decade after decade now—to proclaim that 'legacy media' are on the way out in the United States. Television's demise is routinely announced or predicted.

So far that hasn't happened. The internet isn't taking over. TV matters much more. Sorry.

Every time I give a paper on this topic or write about it, I am met by incomprehension.

But the facts are in, once again.

How many US residents who watched the debates between Mitt Romney and Barack Obama preferred the internet to TV as their source?

3%.

How many watched on both TV and the internet?

11%.

How many people shared their reactions online?

8%.

Yet there has been a successful cybertarian infiltration of television—a potent sign of their rhetorical success. The very people who make TV walk among these true believers, either sagely or anxiously foreshadowing their own demise.

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So this year's election-night coverage focused on digital imagery and social media as much as human beings and broadcasting (which I assume is part of the 'anti-social' media).

The *Los Angeles Times* described network TV that evening as 'a visual monument to the iPad generation' via 'walls and crawls and ever-shifting checkerboards of imagery'. But that was only part of the story.

The *Washington Post* actually deemed the networks to be all too human. It highlighted 'the crazy coverage of election night across the TV networks, in comparison to which, Comedy Central's election night anchoring by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert looked like Chet Huntley and David Brinkley'.

On Fox, serial college dropout (I'm one, too) Karl Rove fought against statistics to insist that Ohio had not been won by Obama.

On ABC, George W Bush political consultant Matt Dowd advised viewers that 2012 'may be the last election that we see two white men run against each other for president'. Right. Who knew critical race studies had percolated through the Republican Party in its deconstruction of the 44th President's racial subjectivity?

And the social as well as the anti-social media ran hot with unkind claims that ABC's Diane Sawyer was drunk.

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They Might Be Giants tweeted 'Diane Sawyer declares tonight's winner is...chardonnay!' Big story: this was re-Tweeted by Rikki Lake. Then Sawyer's network was overcome by a power outage as it was declaring the result. CBS pofacedly but perhaps delightedly reported these stories.

Of course, one key segment of the electorate was essentially ignored by the campaigns and their TV expenditures.

The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce released a damning report in the early Fall that showed 'Spanish-language advertising continues to represent a relatively small fraction of election advertising spending, even in the states with the largest and most electorally-significant Hispanic populations.' The figure was well under 5% of the national total.

In addition to my frustrated reaction to cybertarianism, I am exercised that the *bourgeois* Anglo media and political parties neglect *Hispano hablante* TV.

In the last decade, six new TV networks directed at US Latin@s emerged: Azteca America and LATV (both in 2001), Telefutura (2002), V-me (2007), Estrella TV (2009), and MundoFox (this year). The nation's total expenditure on TV commercials in Spanish exceeds the amounts paid in Spain and Mexico.

The leading *Hispano hablante* television service, Univision, is the fifth most-watched network in the country, just after CBS, ABC, NBC, and Fox. It often leads the ratings.

But when you read about TV in the US, whether it's in a British paper or journal or a US one, these stations may as well not exist.

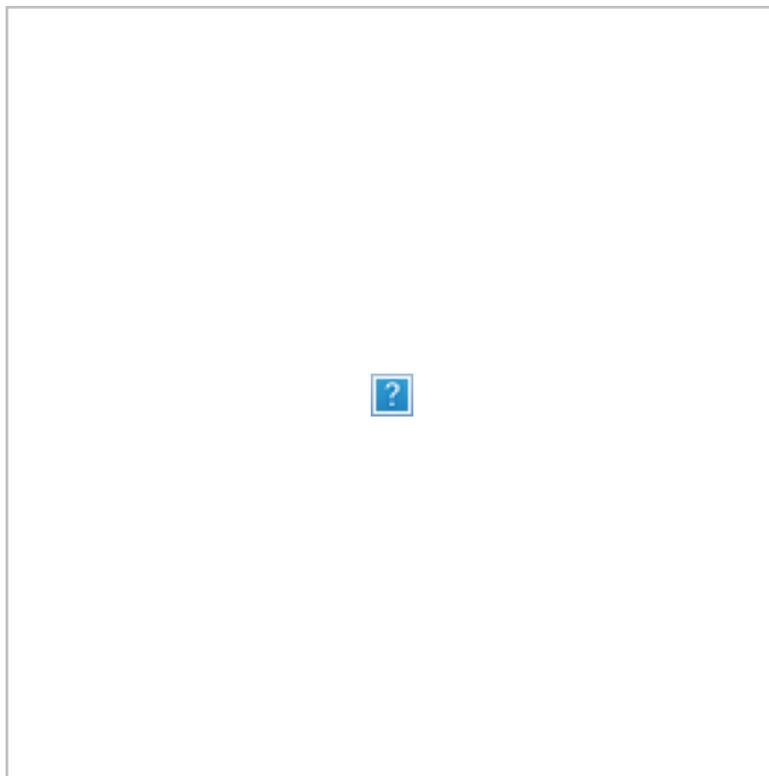
Academics, commentators, and consultants alike exclude the subject because, I assume, it is 'ethnic.'

Latin@s are, of course, invoked during citizenship and immigration debates. They become politically valuable—briefly—during intense moments when the Republican Party shows its nativist white credentials and the Democratic Party its cosmopolitan rainbow ones.

On the big day in 2012, Obama won 71% of the Latin@ vote, a four-point improvement from four years earlier. Colorado and Nevada were his thanks to Latin@ support.

But campaign expenditures suggest that Democrats and Republicans are en route to regarding Latin@s as they do African Americans—the votes are secure.

Latin@s are important. Of course they are. But directing campaigns at them? That would be going too far.



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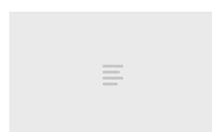
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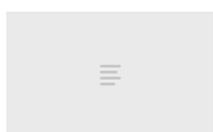
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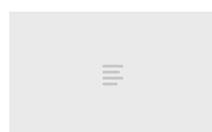
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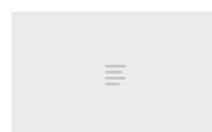
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