

## GUEST COLUMN

# Mitch Henck: The Wisconsin Trump Vote

*November 6, 2016*

Is there a Trump under vote in Wisconsin? I mean people who won't tell pollsters that they will vote for Trump but will vote for the Donald after they close the curtain. After all, they watch the most powerful Republican office holder in the country, Paul Ryan refuse to campaign with the Trumpster. They watch Hillary Clinton call Trump voters xenophobic, homophobic, racist, islamophobic deplorables. Would you tell your friends or co-workers that you are voting for Trump? Although it is more of a taboo in Dane County to be sure, people apparently don't care up north.

"Early voting is up in Marathon, Oneida, Brown, Winnebago, and Door Counties," says a Republican insider who chooses to remain nameless in this article. "That's a good sign for Trump," he says. The problem is that the same operative told me the early vote in deeply red Washington, Ozaukee, and Waukesha counties, otherwise known as the "WOW" counties, was below what was needed by Wednesday of last week. He was hoping for an early vote surge on Thursday and Friday. It is true that Conservative leaders like talk show host Charlie Sykes in Milwaukee and Dane County GOP veterans like blogger David Blaska and talk radio regular Rick Berg have been crusading against Trump from the beginning. I spoke to one former Dane County official who said, "I will vote for Trump, but I don't want to say it publicly."

But further north, Congressman Sean Duffy has embraced Trump. He can see all the Trump signs. Even a reluctant Senator Johnson appeared with Trump in Eau Claire last week. One of the reasons why Johnson has cut the Feingold lead to one point is that the Republican has made gains in northern and western Wisconsin, according to the Marquette poll. "It's ironic but Donald Trump could help Ron Johnson win this race," says that same Republican insider who is keeping his name out of it.

In the Marquette poll, 81% of Republicans in Wisconsin support Trump, while 89% of Democrats support Hillary. Clinton leads urban voters by 27% and suburban voters by 10% in the Poll. Hillary leads women by 15% and college educated whites by 7%. She trails non-college educated whites by 4%. That smacks of northern Wisconsin more than the Milwaukee suburbs to be sure. To drive the point home, Trump leads rural voters by 12 points.

So in more sophisticated circles, Hillary does just fine in Wisconsin. But is there really that deep a divide among Conservatives? That depends greatly on whether there are

Trump voters hiding in the shadows. Former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell calls it the "Frank Rizzo Factor". Rizzo was a cranky Mayor of Philadelphia who fell out of favor with Philadelphia elites due to his gruff demeanor and racial overtones. Says Rendell, "Frank would always do 3-to-4 points worse in the polls than he would do Election Day because people would vote for him in the privacy of the voting booth."

If that happens in Wisconsin, Trump loses to Hillary by two points instead of six. It's a phenomenon that has Michael Moore, the producer of the movie "Trumpland", believing Trump could still win what he calls "The Brexit States." They are states like Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin. He compares working class white voters in those states to voters in Great Britain who confounded pollsters by deciding to break from the European Union. To put it in perspective, about 65 million people, eligible to vote in presidential elections, stay home every four years. If Trump can pick up on his record number of first time primary voters to get 10% of the 65 million to vote for him Tuesday, he gets 6.5 million more votes. Romney lost by 5 million in the popular vote. If he could have redistributed just 700,000 votes in the Electoral College, he would have won the race.

Shoulda, Coulda, Woulda ... I realize. Just as Trump struggles with sophisticated Republicans, he appeals to the great unwashed. They are Reagan Democrats who may not have voted since the Gipper was running or they may have never voted at all.

Wisconsin is one of about 10 percent of states that has same day registration. Republicans elsewhere better hope that strict guidelines requiring early voter registration don't turn away those who want to vote for Trump on Election Day. The Donald might even say that system was rigged.

Shoulda, coulda, woulda ... I realize. Just as Trump struggles with sophisticated Republicans, he appeals to the people those very Republicans regard as "The Great Unwashed." They are Reagan Democrats who may not have voted since the Gipper was running or they may have never voted at all. It is also possible that those Trump voters are Christian Conservatives of all education levels who view the Supreme Court as more important than anything crass that Trump might say on a bus.

Wisconsin is one of about 10 percent of states that has same day voter registration. Republicans elsewhere better hope that strict guidelines requiring early voter registration don't turn away those who want to vote for Trump on Election day. The Donald might even say that system was rigged.

*Mitch is a Madison, Wisconsin based commentator, broadcaster and standup comic.  
The Mitch Henck Show is broadcast live 8-11a.m. Monday-Friday at [www.mitchhenck.com](http://www.mitchhenck.com).  
Contact Mitch at: [mitch@mitchhenck.com](mailto:mitch@mitchhenck.com)*