



Fear and Betrayal

I've been trying to figure out why I've felt so hurt and betrayed after the election. I knew that this was a possibility, a small possibility but always greater than zero. But it goes beyond the results of the election and goes deep into my friendships, how I see and value myself and how deeply we embed ourselves in communities that really are an unknown quantity.

It's also about where I am and where I want to be. About reactions and challenges moving forward. It's about being terrified of what's happening to the country and to me directly and indirectly. And, in the end, it's about happiness and the freedom to pursue it.

Betrayal

I'm amazed at the level of hypocrisy and venom spewed by people in the christian and catholic communities. I used to not care... I admit I was comfortable where I was and with the church family I had.

The early cracks started in 2008 when it was Romney versus Obama and Proposition 8. The wife of an elder of the church was soliciting signatures for a political campaign (illegal if the church wants to keep the tax exempt status) and when she approached me she said that Obama was against traditional marriage. When I corrected her that Obama was for everyone being able to marry she turned dismissive and, like you do with a 5 year old, told me that I had no clue what I was talking about.

A couple weeks after that a whole bunch of people in the Chinese congregation came in wearing t-shirts supporting Prop 8. I'll touch on this later when I start asking questions about these incidents.

But perhaps the most hurtful of these events was when you called a combined Sunday School to talk about Prop. 8 and related things and parents took their kids out of Sunday School and left rather than have them learn about other points of view.

But it wasn't until the 2016 election that this hit me personally close.

81% of white evangelical christians (and yes, I use the lowercase version

deliberately) and I don't know what percentage of Asian and Hispanic evangelicals voted Trump into office. They chose to ignore that he had violated the sanctity of marriage more than any gay couple, that he's a dangerous misogynist who has no problem by stating that he "grabs women by the pussy", a man who lies as a normal part of how he does business, who has multiple lawsuits against him for unpaid wages and sexual harassment.

It seems to me that this is an amplified version of these same Christians voting for Romney in 2007. It didn't matter that Romney was a white mormon running against a black Christian... and that Christians have called LDS a cult... but it didn't matter as long as he wasn't Obama, a black Democrat.

When someone who you (used to) respect claims that the only thing that matters is who gets to select the next justice of the Supreme Court, it hurts a lot. Mostly because I'm sitting here as a hispanic immigrant with a pre-existing condition who is wondering what the hell is she talking about and how many people will she drag with her down that path. I go from my criticism of who Trump is to also criticize the policies that he espoused as a candidate and the people who say this and who, by their words and actions, supported him.

A lot of people I've asked say they want political change. I have to question whether they want political change or political power for Christianity? I hold the people who remain silent as guilty, if not more, than the people who actively supported such a man. It doesn't affect you, you want political change.

I have questions for Christians:

What would you do if your child came out to you as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgendered? Would you still support them and love them like you did before they chose to trust you with their secret?

What would you do if it was a member of your family that needed access to ACA healthcare and it wasn't available because the exchanges closed because of cost and political maneuvering?

Fear

The water bottle incident

This was the day after the election. I was coming home

and hadn't been long since I had arrived back from London... I was full of excitement and happiness.

I had just gotten off the bus and started walking home. I saw an older man coming so I moved to my left (away from the street) and gave the man as much space as he needed. He didn't move so we bumped into each other.

Stupid me, I said something to the effect of "thank you, dude". Wasn't expecting the guy to back track and start yelling at me. I thought I would be able to defuse it with humor but it didn't work; what's worse, the guy threw a water bottle at me that hit me right above my forehead when glasses. As I'm there torn between beating the shit out of him and just walking away (with all the expected consequences of it) I see a police cruiser from MVPD pass by and I call "Officer" in my loudest projected voice.

I didn't think the officer heard me but all of a sudden I see him do a three point turn and come back towards where we are. The officer gets off the car and asks me what happened. I remember that as I answer what happened the old guy keeps telling the officer that I'm lying.

I'm shaking as the cops pull us apart and asks me for my ID and to tell the story of what happened. Then he went to talk to the older man and when he came back he told me the guy said he was trying to throw it on the ground. I look at the officer and say something to the effect of "I'm 6 foot tall and it hit me above my glasses, no way he was throwing it to the ground".

The officer asks me what do I want to do about this. I hadn't thought that far... I wanted not to have to hurt the guy and get in trouble myself; I tell the officer as much and he nodded. Then I ask the officer if I was in trouble... it's a throwback to when I lived with my dad. He had told me not to expect bail out (I imagine not right away at least) if I got busted by the cops.

The officer asked me where I was going and I pointed

towards home, fortunately it was away from where the old man was going. So I walked the rest of the way home... I never told my mom the story and I don't think I ever will... no reason to freak her out anymore than she already is.

It's been almost 10 months but this is engrained in my memory as if it had happened yesterday.

Why do I tell this story? because it frames everything that is happening and what I'm afraid of now.

There's a lot of fear around me moving forward.

Will I be able to have health insurance past 2018 and keep being an independent contractor? I have a pre-existing condition and before the ACA went into effect I was denied by every single plan I applied to, even high deductible / high premium. Even employer plans will change to where I might or might not get insurance because of lifetime caps... I hate uncertainty.

For the first time in almost 25 years I'm not certain I want to stay in the US and I wonder what the consequences of that decision (either way) will be for me and for those around me.

This quote matches the current situation very well... most of you are not hispanic, immigrants (although some of you may have naturalized but you still don't think this applies to you), muslim, or LGBTQ. By the time it does matter to you it may be (or will be) too late

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me –
and there was no one left to speak for me.

- <http://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2016/03/22/religious-affiliation-nones-atheist>
- <http://religiondispatches.org/watching-81-of-my-white-brothers-and-sisters-vote-for-trump-has-broken-something-in-me/>
- <http://religiondispatches.org/inside-intervarsitys-purge-trauma-and-termination-at-the-premier-evangelical-student-org/>
- <http://religiondispatches.org/betrayed-at-the-polls-evangelicals-of-color-at-a-crossroads/>
- <http://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2016/03/22/religious-affiliation-nones-atheist>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/meet-the-nones-the-democratic-partys-biggest-faith-constituency/2016/02/28/85e5b68e-d588-11e5-b195-2e29a4e13425_story.html?utm_term=.292bb155bacc
- <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/13/a-closer-look-at-americas-rapidly-growing-religious-nones/>
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- <https://caspertk.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/how-we-gather.pdf>