



Trump's win shows us who we really are

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I'd like to congratulate Donald J. Trump on his historic win a couple of weeks ago.

Those of you who have read some of my previous columns might find that a little surprising, but I mean it sincerely. Trump's triumph over Harris has given us a window into the soul of America that probably would have remained hidden had the election gone a different way.

In a very real and unambiguous manner, Trump has laid bare who we truly are. His campaign, and the response to it, has helped to clarify what many Americans currently value and how their perspective has evolved over the last couple of generations.

Seriously, we owe him a debt of gratitude for making it perfectly transparent what is – and what is not – important to most Americans these days.

Before November 5th, for example, many of us were under the impression human kindness was a quality that defined our society. Indeed, the idea we should care deeply about the plight of our neighbors was something many thought was synonymous with being an American.

Thanks to Trump, we now know most of us are selfish and self-centered, more concerned with our own wellbeing than those around us.

Oh, and not just individually. Countries that have looked to the United States since the end of World War II can no longer count on us to be there when threatened by empire-building murderous tyrants.

It is also abundantly clear character doesn't matter anymore. Certainly not in the way many of us thought it did once upon a time. My parents and grandparents instilled in me the importance of always telling the truth and living with integrity. Evidently, their old-fashioned notions are grossly out of step with what most Americans now believe.

Growing up, I remember getting into trouble for making fun of those who were less fortunate or calling people unflattering names based on personal characteristics they had no control over. If my mother caught me laughing at someone with a disability, I would not have been able to sit down for a couple of days.

Perhaps if Trump had been around when I was younger, he could have let my mother know it was OK to denigrate and disparage those who are different.

In a similar vein, Trump should also be commended for reminding us that racism, xenophobia, and misogyny are alive and well in many households and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream that one day we will judge people primarily by the content of their character remains an elusive aspiration.

Like many Americans, prior to Trump's win I honestly believed most Americans weren't fans of vulgarity, profanity, and disgusting language. But Trump set the record straight on that. Apparently, a lot of Christians are completely fine with all kinds of boorish behavior.

In my 8th grade Social Studies class, Mr. Sparks taught us all Americans are equal before the law. You've probably heard that rumor, too. But as Trump demonstrated conclusively, some Americans

can break the law repeatedly - committing crimes that would land most of us behind bars - and suffer no consequences.

And furthermore, having a criminal record is now something many Americans celebrate and even cheer. Kudos to Trump.

Which brings us to those infamous Ten Commandments we've been hearing about for most of our lives. In Sunday school, I was told it was a big deal to violate any of them. As Trump has shown, however, most Americans don't really care about God's laws - the fact that some want them plastered everywhere notwithstanding.

Finally, prior to the election I bet many readers saw America as a shining city on a hill, as Ronald Reagan so eloquently put it a few years ago. Now we know that's not the case. We are just as susceptible to being seduced by a corrupt, power-hungry, narcissistic, wannabe dictator as any other third-world country.

Again, congratulations to Trump for exposing the cold, hard truth about who we are. There is no American Exceptionalism; we are not immune from evil, anti-democratic authoritarian leaders with fascist tendencies.

So let's stop pretending we're something we're not.



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