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After Trump's election: 'There are two Americas now.'

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Nearly two weeks after the election of Donald Trump, this is how divided America has become: People have moved beyond staring at the vast gulf that divides them and proceeded to arguing over who is to blame for it, what to do about it and even whether it exists at all.

"This idea that we're now divided is being manufactured and spread by the media," said Trump supporter Loy Brunson, 60, a musician in Provo, Utah.

The protesters on the street? "Paid professionals hired to provoke," Brunson said. The anger and vitriol online? "Hillary's fault ever since she called us deplorables." The growing number of hate crimes? "Played up by the left."

To Kelcey Caulder, 22, the division is painfully real. The college student from Athens, Ga., feels its looming presence every time she thinks about her grandma, a Trump supporter and ardent opponent of abortion rights.

They haven't talked much since Caulder's grandma found out that Caulder was voting for Democrat Hillary Clinton and told her granddaughter bluntly, "You're going to Hell."

Caulder tried to be understanding.

"I think, in her way, she was trying to be protective of me," Caulder said. "She wasn't saying 'Kelcey, go to Hell.' It was more like she was saying, 'Kelcey, don't you know this could send you to Hell?' "

But when her grandma unfriended her on Facebook, Caulder said, it was hard not to take it personally. Now, she is nervous about Thanksgiving, although she hopes the family dinner could be a chance to reconcile.

[\[A question on Americans' minds: What does Trump's win say about us as a nation?\]](#)

Korey, a student at the Georgetown University Law Center, said he is skipping Thanksgiving altogether because of lingering resentments in his family over the election. After he posted an anti-Trump message on Facebook, his father stopped talking to him, and his mother's ex-husband threatened to write him out of his will.

Korey, who asked to be identified by only his first name to avoid further angering his relatives, said he's not ready to reconcile. In fact, he said, he plans to confront his father over his willingness to overlook offensive statements by Trump about immigrants, minorities, disabled people and women just to beat the Democrats.

"The lesson I took," Korey said, "was you can do and say anything you want as long as you're running as a Republican against Hillary Clinton, which cuts against everything he's ever taught me about doing the right thing even when it's not easy."

Even companies and commercial products have been forced in recent days to take sides. New Balance shoes were suddenly declared the official [footwear of white supremacy](#) by neo-Nazis and set on fire by some anti-Trump customers after a spokesman expressed support for Trump's trade policies.

Trump supporters threatened to boycott Pepsi after PepsiCo chief executive Indra Nooyi said her employees were in mourning. At least three NBA teams said they would no longer stay at Trump hotels. Twitter was celebrated and castigated as it suspended the accounts of various leaders of the "alt-right," a loose collection of far-right conservatives and white nationalists.

Even the Girl Scouts organization in New York got drawn into controversy after sending out a postelection email noting: "Throughout the past two days, our girls have been calling us to express their worry about the future — and THEIR future."

From her home in the Bay Area, Shannon Coulter, 45, has been updating an [online Google doc](#) of companies with ties to Trump that she and many other

women have decided to boycott. The list includes several big retailers, such as Nordstrom and Macy's, that carry Trump's ties, daughter Ivanka's shoes and other Trump brand products.

Before this election cycle, Coulter, an independent public relations consultant and registered Democrat, said she tried to understand Republicans and other conservatives: "I thought we had enough in common."

Not now.

"We just elected a guy who questioned the nationality of our current president, who talks about how much he likes to grab women by their genitals, who is bringing a white nationalist into the White House," Coulter said. "That's just not something I can work with."

"There are two Americas now," she added. "I am not part of one of those Americas, and I realized I shouldn't bother trying to be."

For many Trump supporters, the anger of the left feels similarly alien.

"Once everything calms down, they'll see how much good Trump will accomplish and that will unite us," said Ralph Case, 39, a residential contractor in North Canton, Ohio. During the campaign, Case knocked on thousands of doors for Trump. He is now eagerly awaiting the change Trump promised.

But for many opposed to Trump, that change is what they fear. Activists who have taken to the street talk about turning their waning protests into a longer term movement to oppose the new president. Tens of thousands of people are donating to civil rights groups such as the ACLU and NAACP. In a subversive move, at least 20,000 people donated to Planned Parenthood in the name of Vice President-elect Mike Pence, an ardent opponent of abortion rights.

Many minority groups also feel under attack, especially as Trump has tapped a steady stream of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim conservatives for his administration.

Among Muslims, there is disagreement about what to do next, said Colin Christopher, a leader at the Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, one of the largest mosques in Northern Virginia.

"There are a lot of people normalizing what's going on, as a coping mechanism," Christopher said, referring to the tendency of some Trump opponents to assume his administration won't be so bad.

"Other folks in minority communities are normalizing it because they want to have a seat at the table and they think that that's a survival strategy," Christopher said.

Still others are trying to channel their anger and fear into action.

The debate over how to react to the new president has dominated the conversation in the still-nascent opposition camp. Should one stay angry and resist at all costs the idea of normalization? Or should one reach out, listen and understand because — as some believe — a lack of empathy is what led to Trump's rise?

Sitting in his Miami living room on a recent morning, Tommy Torres, 44, said he was pained by how divided this country had become. A popular Puerto Rican singer, Torres poured those feelings into a song that he posted on YouTube.

"If you voted for Trump, I want to know your reasons," Torres said. "I have to comprehend them before they can comprehend me."

Writer Leon Wieseltier, trying to work out similar feelings in his home library in the nation's capital, came to a different conclusion.

"I'm all for empathy, but empathy is not agreement," said Wieseltier, 64, who penned a [call to arms](#) published in The Washington Post under the headline, "Stay Angry. That's the only way to uphold principles in Trump's America."

"There's a moral imperative here," Wieseltier said. "You can't be for or against racism. You have to be against it. You have to agitate for what you believe in."

Staying angry requires sacrifice and vigilance, he said. It means resisting efforts to prettify Trump and make him more palatable, resisting the idea that supporting Trump is a way of supporting America.

"There is honor in loss," Wieseltier said. "All you have to do is wake up the next morning and start fighting again."

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