

The Real Loser in the Midterms: Individuality

After the election,appy statements on social media exhort us to bow down in praise that the first minority this or the first woman that was elected and how this means we have catapulted our nation out of the Neanderthal era. Funny how no one mentions Young Kim's victory – but she is not a Democrat so it does not count. It's funny how no one cheered women of color when Condoleeza Rice was secretary of state. Instead she was called an Aunt Jemima and a house nigga' in a nationally syndicated cartoon.

Now it is acceptable to call young conservative black students enjoying their visit with President Trump “N-words in Maggot hats” and ridicule them as “props.” What racist insults! Undoubtedly, the prominently positioned little black boy at the Affordable Care Act signing just happened to be strolling outside the White House East Room.

These “first” types would rather we forget that we had a black Senator from Mississippi, Hiram Revels in 1870. Or that by 1920 the first black female millionaire, Madame C.J. Walker employed up to 40,000 women and lived in the same neighborhood as John D. Rockefeller.

Yes, the road to acceptance was long and paved by female businesspersons, physicists, pilots, and physicians, among many others. The road is littered with boorish people and men who targeted women for abuse.

There was a time when minorities and women advanced because they were accomplished, assertive, and strong. When Madame Walker was denied a speaking slot at the National Negro Business League convention, she admonished, “Surely you are not going to shut the door in my face. I am a woman that came from the cotton fields of the South.” The next year, she was the keynote speaker. Although only 10 percent of my medical school classmates were women (and a handful of minorities, including myself), the top two students were women. Sure it was a slog, but competence won the day.

Then something politically expedient happened. We lost the grit and pluck that propelled Madame Walker to success. Women became victims who feel they are always being stepped on by others, ignored or abused. And only women could rescue them from their evil white male oppressors. Now being a minority or a woman has become a shield against legitimate criticisms, setting back the struggle to simply be judged by the content of our character. One wonders how the press would report the botched Broward County ballots if Elections Supervisor Brenda Snipes were a white male.

Sadly, the focus on victimization has expanded to all Americans. The key to getting votes was to let people know how miserably unfair their lives are. Just like in George Orwell's Animal Farm, the beleaguered seek to improve their lot through rigid exclusionary rules: “Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.” The newly minted pathetic wretches are exhorted to join the morally superior tribe who will protect them from those who disagree with their point of view. After all, they are likely racist sexist homophobes.

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The “longshoreman philosopher” Eric Hoffer pointed out in his classic, *The True Believer*, “people whose lives are barren and insecure seem to show a greater willingness to obey than people who are self-sufficient and self-confident.” Such persons tend to value equality and fraternity more than freedom. Such persons will also more readily accept in their medical care government control, rationing, and paint-by-the-numbers treatments (or non-treatments).

Before getting excited about the midterm election results, chew on this. Lying during a political campaign is protected by the First Amendment. *Animal Farm*’s core commandment, “All animals are equal” devolved into “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.” Analyze why the uber-rich with \$42 million private jets financed the campaigns of the socialist-leaning candidates. Are they thinking, I’ve made it to the top thanks to the capitalistic system of hard work and rewards, but you can take the crumbs and sit on your lazy butts watching me pontificate on TV? How will the Bernie Bros and Single-payer sisters who voted to expand government health insurance with their \$1000 iPhones feel when their toys are taxed out of existence? And our modern-day feminists who define themselves by their gender rather than competence have no right to be insulted if a patient says, “I prefer not to have a woman doctor.”

My congratulations go to all the women and men — voters and candidates — who are independent critical thinkers, who display the grit of Madame C.J. Walker, and who follow the words of the abolitionist, William Ellery Channing: “No power in society, no hardship in your condition can depress you, keep you down, in knowledge, power, virtue, influence but your own consent.”