

editor's message



‘What’s Not to Like?’

I have come to the conclusion that this country is so starkly divided politically, no amount of dialogue, no facts, no strength of argument will ever convince anyone to change his or her mind. The best we can do—if we want to maintain harmonious family relations, business relationships, work environments, and friendships—is to not talk politics.

I have probably been slow in coming to this realization. But what finally brought it home to me was a brief conversation I had with a woman with whom *Bloom* does business. She is an intelligent, well-spoken professional, an entrepreneur who owns her own business. For the purpose of this column, I will call her Individual No. 1.

While meeting with Individual No. 1 in my office, I took a phone call from the Book Corner. Margaret, the owner, was calling to let me know that a book I had ordered, *Becoming* by Michelle Obama, was gift-wrapped and ready for me to pick up. In this fleeting telephone exchange, I mentioned Michelle Obama’s name.

When I did, I saw Individual No. 1 make a disapproving face. As soon as I hung up the phone, I asked her, “Don’t you like Michelle?”

“I can’t stand her,” Individual No. 1 responded.

“Don’t tell me you like Donald Trump?” I asked incredulously.

“What’s not to like?” Individual No. 1 answered.

“*What’s not to like?*” The words seemed to reverberate and ricochet around my office walls.

This is what I wanted to say: “What’s not to like? Do you have all day?”

But I didn’t say that. Instead, I said: “Maybe we shouldn’t talk politics.”

But Individual No. 1 wanted to get in a few jabs. She began telling me how great the economy is and how finally we have a leader with real vision and the guts to take on the Washington establishment.

I let it go. She wasn’t going to put even a tiny dent in my belief system and I knew I couldn’t put one in hers. For weeks afterward, in my head I heard that phrase, “What’s not to like?” It kept me up nights.

The past two years have been tumultuous, to say the least. The remainder of this presidency will likely be even more chaotic and discordant. Some of us believe Trump’s a thug; some believe he is the second coming.

So even though I think it is pointless to talk politics with people who hold opposing views, I do think that at some juncture, if our country is ever to come together, we are going to have to deal with the elephant (or donkey) in the room.

It’s been more than 150 years since the end of the Civil War, and North and South are still not completely reconciled. (Witness confrontations over Confederate flags and statues.) I seriously wonder if in 150 years America will have gotten past the divisiveness of Donald J. Trump.

Or, will some people still be saying, “What’s not to like?”

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