

MAGA Danger: It May Not Be Safe to Remain Friends With MAGA

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Trump voters have told you they will hurt you. It's reasonable to believe them. (*As May Angelou said, "When someone tells you who they are, believe them the first time!"*)

Donald Trump is a candidate of whiny resentment, so it shouldn't be a surprise that many of his supporters are celebrating his victory by whining resentfully. A viral example is Tiktokker @autumnwitbeck, who [posted](#) a tearful video in which she said that her mother, sister, and grandmother had stopped speaking to her because of her vote for, and advocacy for, Trump.

"I never did this to them when Biden won," she said, looking bravely into the camera as her features quiver. "My own family (has) unsubscribed from my life." (*Of course, Biden never threatened to put everyone who disagreed with him out of business, or deport jail or kill them!*)

Lots of people on social media have been unimpressed with this orgy of fascist self-pity for obvious reasons. Most responders point out that when you vote for a rapist who has promised to crush women's rights to bodily autonomy (as one example), that's an aggressive attack, and people are going to respond as if you've attacked them. As tiktokker readtheseasics puts it, "You voted against your friend's fundamental human rights, and now you're shocked that they don't want to talk to you any more?"

I don't want to downplay the validity of that reaction. When your friends or family show that they do not care about you, it's reasonable to respond by distancing yourself.

I haven't seen a lot of discussion of another important reason why you might want to stop talking to Trump voters though. It's not just because they enabled a Trump presidency which will cause a great deal of harm to a great many people. It's because once you've established that you're willing to choose the fascist state over your loved ones, your loved ones can no longer trust you. If you've betrayed them once, there's a reasonable fear that you will betray them again, in ways that may be more directly catastrophic.

That may sound a little paranoid. But we are now living under fascist rule, and life under fascist rule requires and demands a healthy dose of paranoia. For marginalized people especially, keeping safe under Trump is going to require care. It's going to mean relying on friends and family. It's going to mean keeping certain information—about which medications you're taking, about whether you're pregnant—on a need to know basis.

It's not hard to come up with examples here. Let's say you're pregnant. Do you want your MAGA sister to know? What if you need abortion care, and have to travel out of state, or out of the country to get it? Will your sister keep your secret? Will she report you? You know she chose Trump over you once. Why wouldn't she do that again?

Or what if you are trans, or have a trans child who needs hormones and medical care? Can you trust your MAGA friend or relative with that information? Are you sure that they will support you? You either have to keep them carefully at arms length, or trust them with your safety and the safety of your child. Do you know undocumented people? Do you know legal immigrants? Maybe some work in your retirement community. If you mention having a conversation with them to your sad MAGA granddaughter, will she call the cops?

Fascism is designed to empower favored groups to police, harass, abuse, and intimidate disfavored groups. People who vote for that are voting to police, harass, abuse, and intimidate disfavored groups. If you are in a disfavored group (which includes opponents of Trump!), then you have a target on you. And the whole point of fascism is to give supporters broad power to fire at that target.

MAGA voters may say they feel no hate in their hearts, and/or that they were just voting against inflation, or what have you. But everyone knows that Trump wants to hurt people. If you voted to hurt people, then friends and family should probably presume that you want to hurt people, and that you will do so if given the chance.

And it's just a fact that Trump will in fact give people like Autumn Witbeck the power to hurt others. If your liberal sister irritates you, you can report her for teaching about LGBT issues in the classroom in a moment of spite, and conceivably ruin her life. If you oppose abortion, you can make absolutely sure your pregnant friend can't access abortion care. And so on.

MAGA whiners act as if they're victims because those close to them have cut them out of their lives. But MAGA true believers, or even MAGA casual believers, voted to give themselves the power to abuse, terrorize, and destroy those they disagree with, or those who annoy them. Maybe they don't plan to use that power. Maybe they would not throw their loved ones in prison, or in a camp, or in a ditch, at the first opportunity. But, again, they voted to give themselves that power. How can you be sure they won't use it?

Voting for Trump is an ugly statement of values and a harmful act in itself. But it's also a threat of future harm. People distance themselves from MAGA friends and family out of anger, in part. But I think they also do so out of fear. Whitbeck and those like her have made it clear that they want to hurt marginalized people and political opponents. They will now have the power to hurt marginalized people and political opponents. If you are a marginalized person or a political opponent, they are a real, concrete threat to your safety, your freedom, and your life.

I'm not saying everyone in every case has to cut their MAGA family out of their life. Different people are in different circumstances; you can't make blanket rules. But what I am saying is that, if you have MAGA relatives or friends, you need to evaluate your relationship not just on the basis of the ugly choice they made in the past, but on the basis of what that ugly choice says about what they might do to you in the future.