

OPINION SECTION

Nation moves forward with Obama

Felicia Skriver
News Editor

The 57th quadrennial presidential election is finally over, and to most of Americans it comes as a relief.

It was a close call, but in the end President Barack Obama won with the popular vote of 50.5 percent, Mitt Romney on the other hand only had 48 percent. The president now faces a partisan divide in houses. Congress has a house majority of Republicans while the Democrats keep control of the Senate.

Obama thanked the American people at his victory party in Chicago for ensuring that this nation will continue to move forward even if it proves to be a hard struggle.

"Tonight, in this election, you, the American people reminded us that, while our road has been hard, while our journey has been long, we have picked ourselves up, we have fought our way back," Obama said in his victory speech. "We know in our hearts that for the United States of America, the best is yet to come."

The demographics of the

election were very apparent; while older generations such as the baby-boomer generation born from the forties to the sixties were very pro-Romney but it was Obama who gained the trust of the younger generation and the minorities of the states.

Romney was the richest man in history to run for president; however that didn't help in the end. His ideals of bringing religion into schools, opposing same-sex marriage and his belief to add 100,000 troops didn't win over majority of the American people.

"Mitt Romney quite simply doesn't get it," said Julian Castro, the Mayor of San Antonio, in his keynote address. "We know that in our free-market economy, some will prosper more than others. What we don't accept is the idea that some folks won't even get a chance."

Obama has promised the people to keep looking forward; he wants to invest in renewable energy to reduce greenhouse emissions, bring equality to same-sex couples, is pro-choice and wants to reduce the spending in defense so that it might help the country climb out of a recession.

"This election is not simply a choice between two candidates or two political parties," the Democratic platform said, "but between two fundamentally different paths for our country and our families." Measures such as the legalization of marijuana for those who are over 21 were passed in Washington and Colorado. Initiatives legalizing it for medical purposes in Massachusetts and Arkansas also passed. In Oregon, the measure to legalize private casinos failed, ensuring the continuation of cash flow in the community.

Same-sex marriage is now legal in Washington, Maine and Maryland. Obama will also see that subsidies to farming will continue to pour in, helping communities such as Clackamas ensure economic stability. Organizations such as the Department of Agriculture, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Education will continue to stand in for the aid of the American people; whereas Romney said he would have cut them if elected.

In Obama's first hundred days speech Obama stated that in the next couple months to follow the American people can expect more medical research into the H1N1 virus. The Congress and the Senate have passed a budget solution and now we can move this economy from recession to recovery and then ultimately to prosperity. Investments will be made in education, and making sure that credit card companies

don't hike up their rates and have harsh penalties.

"So I think we're off to a good start, but it's just a start," said Obama in his first hundred days speech. "I'm proud of what we've achieved, but I'm not content. I'm pleased with our progress, but I'm not satisfied."

Moving forward was Obama's slogan this time around; the next four years will tell if he stays true.



President Obama was elected for his second term in office after a very competitive campaign against Gov. Mitt Romney.

Whitehouse.gov

Marriage debate heats up after election

Chris Morrow
The Clackamas Print

Maine, Maryland and our neighbor to the north, Washington, have legalized same-sex marriages and Oregon may be next. President Obama, who spoke candidly of his support of marriage equality in an interview with ABC News, has just won his second term in office. I am not so naive as to think that any victories pertaining to this matter will go unchallenged, as American abolitionist and former slave, Frederick Douglass once said, "Without a struggle, there can be no progress."

The opponents of marriage equality say that gays want "special" rights, treatment, and protection. Is it a 'special' protection for a non-Caucasian to be able to file hate crime charges after walking down a street in a predominantly Caucasian neighborhood and getting assaulted by the resident skinheads? Is it a "special" protection for any follower of a religion or non-believer to be able to file the same charges should they be the victim of violence motivated by their assailant's issue with their particular brand of faith or lack thereof?

As for the right of marriage, I find it ironic, not to mention hypocritical that, so long as they're heterosexual, atheists and

the procreation impaired are spared from the right wing's rod, despite repeated insistence that marriage is a purely religious function meant only for producing offspring.

I see no efforts being made to deny their claims to the benefits and rights afforded to them by marriage.

Based on a misbelief that Civil Union is just "marriage under another name" the right accuses gays of being greedy and "demanding something they already have" without even putting forth the modicum of effort it takes to research the disparities between the two arrangements.

Civil unions and even same-sex marriages face disadvantages that their opposite-sex counterparts do not, not the least of which is that "marriage" provides 1,049 federal and state level benefits, whereas civil union only provides 300 state level benefits.

If a married heterosexual couple travels or moves to another state, all their rights and benefits go with them.

Civil unions and same-sex marriages are usually only acknowledged in the state in which they were recorded, so partners traveling or moving from a state that legally allows such partnerships to a state that doesn't are likely to find themselves in a bind.

Members of the right also make the claim that legalizing gay marriage is going to open a proverbial "Pandora's Box." Alright then, let's take this back to 1967. Mildred Delores Jeter and Richard Perry Loving, an interracial couple who married in Washington, D.C. were arrested upon moving back to their home state of Virginia, for violating the Racial Integrity Act of 1924, a statute on the state's law books that criminalized marriages between whites and non-whites.

Suppose that, instead of declaring the statute unconstitutional, the Supreme Court decided that it was best not to allow interracial marriages because later on down the road, the gays might try to follow in their footsteps. Or, suppose that instead of legalizing interracial marriages, it was decided that it'd be a matter best left up to the states. Some states decided to legally recognize interracial marriages, some states decided that since popular opinion was against them, it'd be best not to.

Some states offered interracial couples an option similar to marriage, but called it something else and only gave those unions a third of the same rights and benefits that were given to marriages in which both partners were of the same ethnicity.

History didn't play out like that: the Lovings' case resulted in the Racial Integrity Act of 1924 being ruled unconstitutional, but for the sake of argument, imagine that it hadn't. Would it be wrong for two people in committed interracial relationships to feel like they were being treated unfairly? Would it be wrong for them to want the same rights they saw being given freely to same-race couples? Members of the right scoff at any comparison

between the two struggles, but the parallels are there for any to see if they choose to look.

Thankfully, popular opinion isn't static, it evolves. Minds and hearts change and young takes the place of old. Those who refuse to examine and adapt their attitudes might find themselves juxtaposed with the bigotries of the past, their likenesses displayed on History Channel documentaries as their children and grandchildren ask "Did people really used to think and act that way?"

To those of you reading, I ask

that you reflect upon this; if we treat basic human rights as winnings in a race in which the victor is determined by who endured more injustice historically, there are always going to be losers.

"I believe all Americans, no matter their race, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry. Government has no business imposing some people's religious beliefs over others. Especially if it denies people's civil rights..." - Mildred Loving.



Preview



Join us

5:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 14

Learn about

Academic programs
Paying for college

Application process
Campus life

Find

Agenda, directions and RSVP at
vancouver.wsu.edu/preview

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
VANCOUVER

