



# ROSSMOOR NEWS

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## Republican Perspective

*By John Littig*

### The Politics of Personal Destruction

Brendan Eich, the inventor of JavaScript, was appointed CEO of Mozilla, the company behind the Firefox browser. (Neither JavaScript nor Mozilla nor Firefox is a household word in my household, so don't worry - this essay is not about techie stuff.)

Eich, co-founder of Mozilla, was forced to resign on April 3 after just two weeks as CEO because he was - or had been - against gay marriage. In 2008, he had contributed \$1,000 to the campaign for Proposition 8, which banned gay marriage in California.

"Gay rights" crusaders have denounced the intolerance of those who, like Eich, believe in a traditional definition of marriage. A couple of years ago, they organized an ill-fated boycott of Chick-fil-A, because its president Dan Cathy had stated in an interview that he supported traditional marriage.

There was no allegation that gays patronizing or working for either Mozilla or Chick-fil-A were mistreated. Instead, the assault on these executives was simply because they personally did not believe in gay marriage. And said so - off the job.

Gay marriage advocates have hung their hats on the need for "tolerance." Fair enough. But as they attack their opponents for holding a contrary point of view, aren't they themselves exhibiting intolerance? Some gay rights advocates, like Andrew Sullivan, think so. He says his compatriots have become intolerant and "It's a bad self-inflicted blow...all of us will come to regret it."

Let's face it: the public's views on gay marriage have changed. In 2003, public sentiment ran 59 percent to 37 percent against (yes, there were some fence sitters), but in 2014, it's 55 percent to 34 percent for legal recognition of gay marriages. A huge reversal. And support among younger people is even stronger, suggesting that the change in sentiment is here to stay.

In addition, at the time of Prop 8, only two states recognized gay marriages - now it's 17, including California. The point is that gay marriage is now generally accepted and is gaining strength. So the gay marriage advocates have, essentially, won their battle.

Can we congratulate them and go about our lives? Apparently not.

These champions of diversity and tolerance are, as it turns out, intolerant of those who do not subscribe to their gay marriage orthodoxy. As demonstrated in the Mozilla situation, the gay marriage forces will not accept triumph gracefully. Instead, they plan to wage war against those who opposed their march to victory. For them, winning is not enough. They must destroy their former opponents.

Although this sort of vendetta seems patently un-democratic, un-American and even un-civilized, there's a certain logic to it. It sends a diabolical message to all who would oppose them: The fight won't be over - even after we win. Vanderbilt professor of management and sociology, Bruce Barry, says the point is to cause executives to self-censor for fear of later getting in trouble or of not advancing in their careers.

Then-President Bill Clinton decried “the politics of personal destruction.” But his frame of reference was that Republicans (and indeed many Democrats) were attacking him for his personal behavior while he was in office. He could not have contemplated that such tactics would later be used to pursue those no longer in the arena. But so it is with today’s gay marriage zealots.

Just to place the anti-gay heresy of Eich and Cathy in perspective, please remember that President Barack Obama held their exact same view on gay marriage until he revealed on May 9, 2012 that he had “evolved” (conveniently just before the presidential election). “At a certain point, I’ve just concluded that for me personally, it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married.” Oddly, I don’t remember gay rights advocates calling for his resignation based on his previously espoused and presumably heartfelt views. But let’s just move on.

When we were kids, we were told “don’t be a sore loser.” Like most kids, I had plenty of opportunities to practice that wisdom. But we were also taught to be graceful winners. In the context of childhood, that meant not to gloat or “rub it in.”

As it turns out, there’s something immeasurably worse than a sore loser - and that’s a sore winner. Having won their fight, the gay marriage zealots have shown themselves to be sore winners, and it’s not pretty.

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