

In the End and in the Beginning, by Barbara Snyder

In the end and in the beginning, it is all relative. You like something or you do not. For example, I hate mushrooms. Soft and mushy and a yucky taste. But I could be fooled, I suppose. Someone could sneak them into a dish; you would have to disguise the look, but I could be fooled. But mostly, I hate mushrooms.

So, most opinions and most beliefs begin with your own point of view. Relatively speaking, we like to think we are critical thinkers, that our perspective is unbiased and objective. In this day and age, that is so far from the truth. We hate Obama, we love Hillary. Everything else, all other positions we take, fall into line with the beginning, where it is all relative.

If we think the most pressing issue of the day is climate change, we are willing to take a stand with a 16-year-old girl, travelling the world, shaming us. We celebrate celebrities who fly in personal jets to conferences where nothing is solved, and everyone is seen. We find the research report that supports our argument and relatively speaking, we ignore every other differing view.

Relatively speaking, hate colors our view as well. We hate Trump and nothing he can or could do would be acceptable. We want him out of office so badly, we question his mental stability. We are sure his ban of travel from China was not early enough and yet, relatively speaking, he was excoriated by so many for being xenophobic. People at the White House serve at the pleasure of the President. You might argue with his choices, but every President has hired and fired when he determines to do so.

In the end, believe what you want. Remember this though, this President has stood before the American people and a hostile press almost every day for over two hours. He has discussed heartbreaking possibilities and news and has tried to cheerlead so we can get through this on the other side. He has answered questions and he has given time and voice to his medical team. He has backed them when under attack and he has allowed them to differ with him. This pandemic is unfolding daily. What experts thought two weeks ago, looks different today. Would we have masked ourselves and enacted social distancing when there were no deaths here? Did we ever think this was a possibility?

Relatively speaking, there is nothing easy about this. Relatively speaking, this will change nothing. Sometimes, we need to take a step back and try to find some good, in places where we least expect it. And, in a strong republic, we should remember how important it is to stand together.